

President's Letter

Rick Bauer—Yorktown, Virginia

It's hard to believe we're at the end of another year. Unfortunately, it seems that the years go faster as I get older. This past weekend I read an interesting article in my local newspaper with the headline "Power of a sense of purpose." It discussed the longevity value of having a sense of purpose. The article touted the value of having a purpose and suggested that people should spend more time on activities they enjoy or use work skills in new way. This is not the first article I've read that espoused these suggestions.

Now why am I bringing this up in this President's Message? I believe that active participation in the society can have positive benefits for all of us. I have been impressed with the skill sets of many of our members. While some have spent their entire careers in horticulture related areas, many worked in other fields where their passion for azaleas (and plants in general) had to take a back seat. Now many are focusing on their passion for azaleas, while others are in support roles, using their work-related skills to further the goals of their chapters and the society. This benefits the individual as well as the organization.

Organizations also benefit from a "sense of purpose." I personally believe that your membership is enhanced by belonging to an active chapter which has a purpose for its existence. Active chapters have a robust program such as sponsoring talks on azalea related topics, propagating and selling azaleas to the public, or working in collaboration with local gardens to expose the public to some of our thousands of beautiful varieties. One structured way to have a sense of purpose is to actively participate in the "Legacy Project." This project was elevated to a society project at the Board of Director's meeting in Hammond. More information on the project is on our website and in an article in this edition of *The Azalean*. Participation in this project can provide a structure and purpose for your organization's activities.

We have many members who are in areas where we have insufficient numbers to support a full chapter. In these cases, I'd recommend affiliating with the closest chapter or another whose program might be of interest to you. In the Northern Virginia Chapter, we have encouraged at-large members from across the United States and Canada to affiliate with our chapter. We keep them in the loop on all chapter activities and have been pleasantly surprised as members from Canada, Georgia, North Carolina, Texas, and Arkansas have shown up at our events in the past!

The bottom line is that there are benefits, both to the individual and the organization, by actively participating in the society and its chapters. Step forward to take leadership roles. Learn more about various aspects of azaleas and teach a class. You will find that taking an active role will be beneficial to you and the 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 2017-2019

President — Rick Bauer

Vice President — Charles R. Andrews, III

Secretary — Leslie Nanney

Treasurer — Paul Beck

Immediate Past President — J Jackson

Directors

Terms expire 2018 **Terms expire 2019**

Larry Miller

Jim Campbell

Jo Ann Smith

Kevin McCorkle

Chris Wetmore

Sally Perkins

Chapter presidents

serve as ex-officio directors.

Chapters

Ben Morrison
(chartered May 1980)
Budne Reinke, *Pres.*

Northern Virginia
(chartered May 1980)
Barbara Kirkwood, *Pres.*

Louisiana
(chartered June 1981)
Allen Owings, *Pres.*

Tri-State
(chartered Oct. 1981)
Beverly Knight, *Pres.*

Texas
(chartered May 1989)
Robert Thau, *Pres.*

Vaseyi
(chartered June 2001)
J Jackson, *Pres.*

Lake Michigan
(chartered May 2003)
John Migas, *Pres.*

Alabamense
(chartered May 2005)
Patrick Thompson, *Pres.*

Rev. John Drayton
(chartered May 2010)
Tom Johnson, *Pres.*

Central Carolinas
(chartered October 2013)
Kevin McCorkle, *Pres.*

For the Record

Barry Sperling took the photo of Jane Newman and edited the "In Memorium" text about her shown on page 62 in the Fall 2017 issue of *The Azalean*.

Correction needed on Vice President's name: Charlie Andrews' full name should have been shown as Charles R. Andrews, III, on pages 51 and 64 of the Fall 2017 issue.

At-Large Contact

Robert Thau

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. For information and a membership application, write to Leslie Nanney, Secretary, 8646 Tuttle Road, Springfield, VA 22152 or visit www.azaleas.org.