

President's Letter

Rick Bauer—Yorktown, Virginia



While writing this message, I went back to my previous messages where I told you of things that were in the works. I'm happy to report that many of the things we have been working on to improve the society have reached fruition or are very close. In June I joined several other society members in Robbinsville, NC where we recognized the city as an Azalea City. For the last 10 years, society members Jim Brant and George McLellan have led an effort to restore the native azaleas on Hooper Bald. As a result of many hours of work by members of the ASA, the American Rhododendron Society and other groups, the Bald is at the point that the folks in Robbinsville and Graham County, North Carolina made it the centerpiece of their Graham County Native Azalea Festival. We're hoping to continue work with Graham County and Robbinsville in the future to make this an ongoing event.

I also reported about the success of the Little Rock convention and the Azaleas 101 workshop. Part of the fees for the workshop paid for a membership in the ASA. Since that time, the Arkansas members have been working to establish a chapter. I'm happy to report that we just approved the by-laws for the Arkansas Chapter. I'm excited about the energy and enthusiasm displayed by the organizers. With over 75 ASA members in Arkansas, they are starting out with the makings of a strong chapter. We see a lot of potential in the Arkansas Chapter and wish them the best.

Robert Thau, president of the Texas Chapter, has been promoting azaleas in Jasper, Texas. In working with the Master Gardeners, the Chamber of Commerce, city manager and other local entities, Robert was instrumental in gaining Azalea City status for Jasper earlier this year. State-funded beautification efforts with azaleas are now also underway. Enough new members have signed up in the Jasper area to start a new chapter. I hope to report on the formation of the Texas Forest Country Chapter in my next message.

We appreciate all the work done by society volunteers, especially those in leadership programs at the chapter level. We have recently completed a manual with suggestions on running chapters and chapter programs. It contains "good ideas" provided by members who have successfully implemented them in their chapters previously and gained new members. We encourage you to check this document out, on our ASA website at: **About the Society>Chapters>Resources**. We also encourage members to submit other good ideas for incorporation in future updates. Hopefully it will also encourage other society members to step forward and take a leadership role in their chapters.

Coming up with good ideas for chapter programs is always a challenge. I have spoken in the past about "purpose." Like each of us, chapters need a purpose. Certainly, preserving and promoting azaleas is a reasonable basic purpose, but how do you build your program from this? The Legacy Project can provide a structure to chapter activities. Program events which could easily be derived from sponsoring Legacy Hybrids include propagation workshops, speakers on the hybrids and hybridizers, articles for publication, raising plants for sale to the public or for introduction to public gardens (i.e., establishing "Legacy Gardens") and documenting and maintaining hybrid data on our website. We currently have 15 hybrid groups in the project and encourage more folks to sign on to sponsoring additional groups. If you'd like more information on the project, it is on our website under Legacy Project. You can also contact me directly if you have any questions at president@azaleas.org.

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

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Terms expire 2019 **Terms expire 2020**

Jim Campbell

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Sally Perkins

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Chapter presidents
serve as ex-officio directors.

Chapters

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(chartered May 1980)
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(chartered May 1980)
Lars Larson, *Pres.*

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

Tri-State
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Beverly Knight, *Pres.*

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Robert Thau, *Pres.*

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

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

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(chartered May 2005)
Amanda Wilkins, *Pres.*

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

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

Arkansas
(chartered 2018)
Larry Palmer, *Pres.*

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.