

Vol. 41 • No. 4 • Winter 2019

The Azalean

Journal of the Azalea Society of America



President's Letter

Rick Bauer—Yorktown, Virginia

As I write this letter, my sprinklers are working full time outside trying to keep my azaleas from wilting in the unusual heat and dry weather we have been experiencing on the East Coast this fall. Nothing is more discouraging for a gardener than to see his or her hard work dry up and die. Fortunately, most of us realize that's part of the process and we continue on in our dance with Mother Nature.

By the time you read this message, most of our gardens will be mostly dormant for the winter. I say mostly, since many of us include plants which have winter interest, either through interesting foliage or early blooming (e.g., hellebores, witch hazel, camellias etc.). I would encourage you to explore some of these companion plants for inclusion among your collection of azaleas.

Winter is also a time for us to recoup from the previous year's efforts and plan for the next. I continue to bring up the Legacy Project in my messages, since I think it provides a purpose for our efforts. For example, the Northern Virginia Chapter has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Meadowlark Gardens and has planted and continues to maintain a Legacy Garden of Joe Klimavicz azaleas. Currently they are working to prepare beds for additional plantings and have planned another Legacy Garden with Bob Stewart azaleas. They are also working with the Norfolk Botanical Garden to expand their collections of McDonald and Glenn Dale azaleas. Finally, they have an ongoing propagation program and feature Legacy azaleas in their plant sales and auctions. The Texas Chapter is working with the Gayla Mize Garden of Stephen F. Austin University to expand their collection of Aromi azaleas. The Texas Forest Country Chapter is working closely with the city of Jasper, TX, on a beautification project which features azaleas, including Legacy varieties, as a prime focus. I know there are additional initiatives ongoing throughout the society and will report on them in future messages.

I also reported in the Fall issue on a program by the US Forest Service to remove azaleas from selected areas of our National Forests. The letters from our society, the American Rhododendron Society (ARS), and individual concerned citizens have been heard by the Forest Service and have resulted in a dialogue being opened with them. We will have more information at a future date, but in the meantime, I encourage you to continue to monitor the Potomac Valley Chapter of the ARS's website on the subject: www.arspvc.org/alert.html.

As we approach the new year, this is the time for us to be planning our programs for next year. Most of the activity within the society occurs at the chapter level. This is where the "rubber meets the road." There are so many ways we can increase our exposure to the general public. Developing good programs and activities are ways to attract and maintain members and grow the society. As I have mentioned previously, we have created a manual of good ideas for chapter success, and it is available on our website at "About the Society/Chapters/Resources." I encourage you to read this manual and consider implementing some of the recommendations. We are also open to other suggestions to improve the success of our chapters. They can be sent to me at president@azaleas.org.

I hope to see many of you at our 2020 National Convention in Houston. This is the first time we will be meeting in Houston, and I'm looking forward to seeing a new part of the country, new gardens, and meeting with old friends.



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 2020

Fred Anderson

Robert Thau

Andy Whipple

Terms expire 2021

Dale Berrong

Jim Campbell

John Simmons

Chapter presidents serve as ex-officio directors.

Chapters

Ben Morrison

(chartered May 1980)

Budne Reinke, *Pres.*

Northern Virginia

(chartered May 1980)

Lars Larson, *Pres.*

Louisiana

(chartered June 1981)

Allen Owings, *Pres.*

Tri-State

(chartered Oct. 1981)

Beverly Knight, *Pres.*

Texas

(chartered May 1989)

David Creech, *Pres.*

Vaseyi

(chartered June 2001)

J Jackson, *Pres.*

Lake Michigan

(chartered May 2003)

John Migas, *Pres.*

Alabama

(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)

Ronnie Palmer, *Pres.*

Texas Forest Country

(chartered 2018)

Robert Thau, *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.

The Azalean

Editor

Barbara Stump

Editorial Advisory Board

Charles Andrews III

Aaron Cook

William C. Miller III

Advertising

theazalean@gmail.com

<http://azaleas.org/adinfo.html>

Graphic Design

Pam Fitch

The Azalean (ISSN-1085-5343) is published quarterly (spring, summer, fall, and winter) by the Azalea Society of America, Inc., Leslie Nanney, Secretary, 8646 Tuttle Road, Springfield, VA 22152.

To order copies: Send a check payable to the ASA Treasurer, to 2963 Fort Lee St., Oak Hill, VA 20171 or order online at <https://www.azaleas.org/azalean-online>. Please include \$2 per copy for US delivery, \$4 per copy for Canada or Mexico, and \$7 per copy for overseas delivery.

Opinions and views expressed in *The Azalean* are those of the contributors or editor, not necessarily those of the Society, and are presented to foster a wider appreciation and knowledge of azaleas. Advertisements are presented as a service to readers and do not imply endorsement by the Azalea Society of America.

Copyright 2019 by the Azalea Society of America. Permission to reprint any portion of this volume must be granted in writing by the Society.

Address editorial and business correspondence to:

Editor, *The Azalean*

101 S. Sanders Street

Nacogdoches, TX 75964

E-mail: theazalean@gmail.com

Society Web-site: www.azaleas.org

Mail list: azaleas@yahoogroups.com

Printed By: **Complete Printing**
Carthage, Texas

In This Issue

VOLUME 41

NUMBER 4

WINTER 2019

Features

76 On the Worldwide Distribution of Azaleas

By George Klingaman—Fayetteville, Arkansas

83 “Born on the Bayou”—2020 National Convention: Houston, Texas

84 Online Convention Registration with the ASA Website

By Paul Beck—Oak Hill, Virginia

86 Lockerly Arboretum

By Jennifer Pollard—Milledgeville, Georgia

88 Lafayette, Louisiana, Azalea Trail Activities

By Denise Lanclos—Lafayette, Louisiana

Society News

74 President’s Letter

85 Renewal Time is Here!

By Paul Beck—Oak Hill, Virginia

89 Society Officer Candidates

91 Annual Index

92 Chapter News and New Members

On the Cover

Spring will already be in bloom by early March in Texas, just in time for the 2020 National Convention in Houston. Shown here are two Southern Indica type azaleas that will be blooming in home and public gardens. The lovely pink azalea in the front is ‘George Lindley Taber’ named posthumously in 1948 for the owner of the Glen Saint Mary Nurseries in Glen Saint Mary, Florida (near Jacksonville). ‘Red Formosa’ is in the background. Both grow to be large, reliable shrubs, perfect for anchoring large garden landscapes. Photo courtesy of Marcia Wood.



On the Worldwide Distribution of Azaleas

Gerald Klingaman—Fayetteville, Arkansas

Editor's Note: This paper was presented at the 2018 National ASA Convention in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

Any gardener who has been paying even a little attention to garden literature over the past two decades has seen the upheaval DNA testing has brought to the world of plant naming and classification. The same technology that allows crime scene investigators to identify a perp from an errant drop of blood or the folks at AncestryDNA® to trace your lineage back to the Old Country, has allowed plant taxonomists to assess the kinship of all living things. In some instances, this has led to major rewriting of the classification systems used by earlier generations of taxonomists who based their work primarily on recognizable features. But in the Rhododendron world, and our subset of it the azaleas, the changes have been more one of rearranging the furniture in the room, not knocking down walls and throwing everything in the dumpster.

If we are to assess the evolutionary history of azaleas, we must consider the over 1000 Rhododendron species that have been described and where and when they appeared on the world stage. The simplest and one of the most recent classification schemes was presented by Loretta Goetsch and her colleagues in 2005.¹ They divide the genus into five clades (a group of closely related plants that can trace their lineage back to a single ancestor) based on DNA analysis. The three clades concerning most gardeners are: A. Subgenus Rhododendron, B. Subgenus Hymenanthes, and C. Subgenus Azaleastrum.

The subgenus Rhododendron clade is characterized as small leafed, mostly evergreen species with scales on the underside of the leaves and consists of about 400 species plus the tropical Vireyas. These are the lepidote rhododendrons of classic taxonomic schemes.

The subgenus Hymenanthes clade includes 225 species including the large, smooth-leafed evergreen rhododendrons most gardeners know as such, and most deciduous azaleas. The deciduous azaleas of North America are placed in subsection *Pentanthera* of the subgenus Hymenanthes. The Asian deciduous *R. mole* is alone in its own subsection Hymenanthes. These two subgenera are present in both Asia and North America, thus indicating their more ancient lineage than that of subgenus Azaleastrum, which includes the evergreen azaleas which grow in eastern China, Japan, and adjacent areas in Korea. Some shoehorning was done to get everything to nest into this simplified scheme, so one deciduous North American species (*R. vaseyi*) is included in the Azaleastrum group, while the other deciduous azaleas of this country are in the Hymenanthes subgenus. To make these subsections useful in classification, most are subdivided into subcategories that group likes together, further sharpening the focus of the classification scheme.

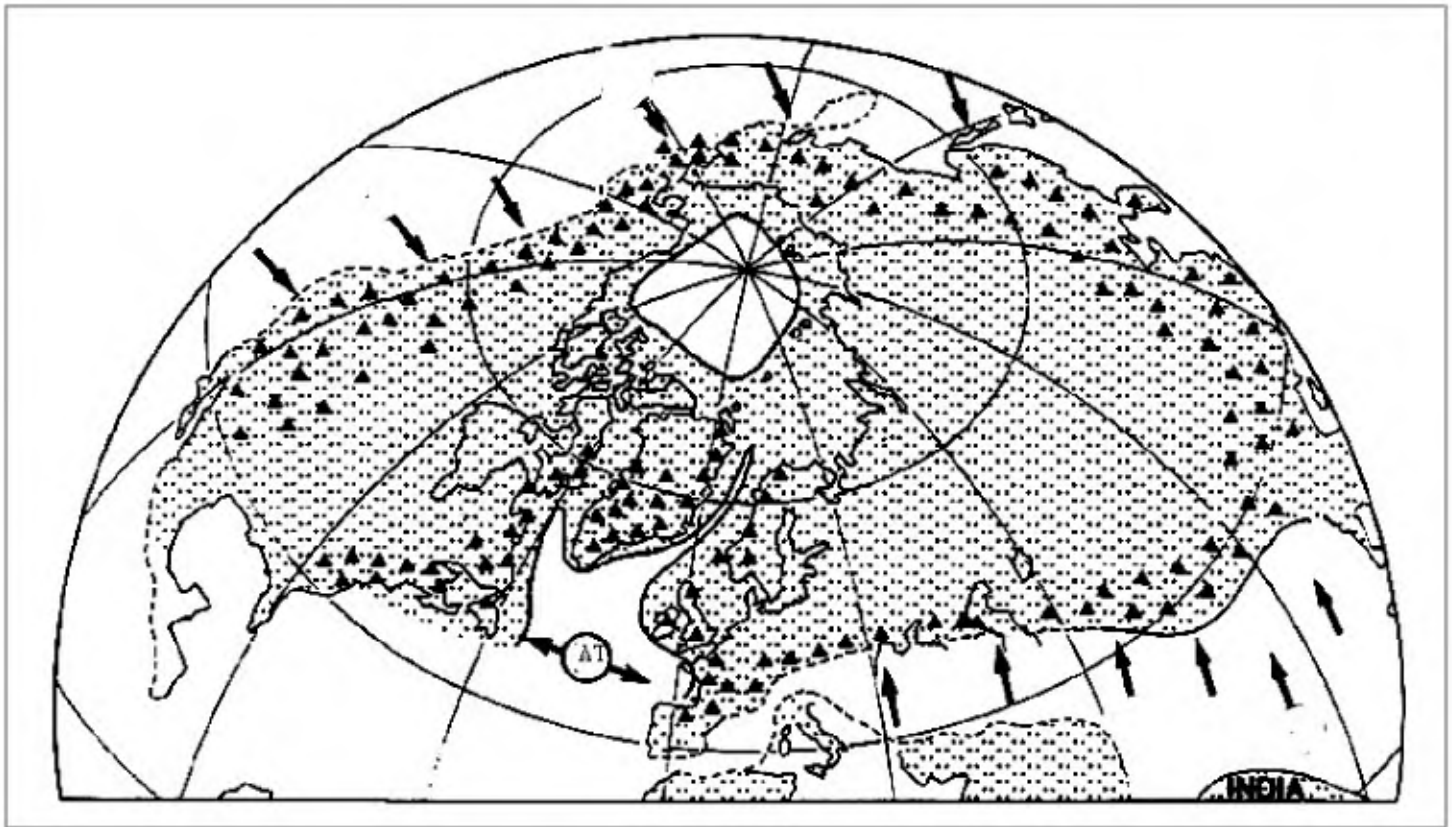
Gardeners primarily rely on visual reference when considering the plants we know as rhododendrons and

azaleas. Most gardeners divide them into azaleas, deciduous azaleas, and rhododendrons. The most observant amongst us might divide the rhododendrons into two groups: those with little hairy leaves, and the large, smooth leafed types. From the above paragraph it becomes apparent that the evergreen azaleas are nicely segregated out as a group, but that deciduous azaleas are included under the umbrella with the large leafed rhododendrons.

As humans it is hard to think on a geological time scale, but to understand the worldwide distribution of Rhododendrons and how azaleas fit into this puzzle we must give it a go. The first recognizable pollen associated with the *Ericaceae* (the Rhododendron family) was discovered in rock deposits dating back to the late Cretaceous, about 68 million years before present (mybp). As a point of reference, the Appalachians and Ouachita Mountains formed from 250 to 300 mybp, when Africa and South America (respectively) collided with the North American plate. Continental collisions are slow moving train wrecks, with the plates moving only as fast as your fingernails grow—or about an inch a year. About this time the first seed bearing plants appeared at the end of the Carboniferous period. Ginkgo appeared about 190 mybp, pines about 140 mybp, while the first modern flowering plants (the angiosperms, to which Rhododendron belong) appeared about 120 mybp with the evolution of this group expanding rapidly by 100 mybp. Dinosaurs went extinct about 65 mybp and the world made its transition towards modern flowering plants, gradually leaving the conifers behind.

Two papers, separated by 25 years, do a good job of explaining the worldwide distribution of Rhododendrons. The first, by Irving and Hebda in 1993 and presented to the Annual Meeting of the American Rhododendron Society in Vancouver, relies on the older, pre-DNA scheme of classification and fills in gaps in knowledge by a series of well-reasoned hypotheses.² They report that fossil evidence is scarce, but specimens have been found that date back to the early to mid-Eocene about 55 mybp. At this time a land bridge connected Alaska and adjacent areas of Northern Asia (Siberia), while the northeastern parts of North America were only beginning to pull away from Greenland and Europe. The climate was warmer and wetter during this period and a more or less contiguous mixed forest of hardwood deciduous trees covered the land. Rhododendrons, almost exclusively associated with cooler, mountainous terrain, probably established themselves in these geographic niches across the range during this period.

As shown in Figure 1, during the early Tertiary period (about 55 mybp) the supercontinent Laurasia was still marginally intact but beginning the process of separating into its contemporary components of North America, Europe, and Asia. The arrows show the direction of tectonic plate compressional forces. Notice that India has not yet encountered Asia at this time. Continental boundaries



▲ Figure 1

are often associated with mountainous terrain, so it is hypothesized that ancestral *Rhododendron* species spread through these moderate regions during this time. During the next 20 million years, the Atlantic Ocean continues to widen, separating North America, and India collides with Asia and begins the period of rapid speciation in the Himalayan region. [Adapted from Irving and Hebda, 1993.²]

Most of their paper goes into considerable detail expounding on the effect of the Indian collision with the Chinese plate that began about 30 mybp and forced the Himalayan Mountains to rise. The authors explore the mountain building events that are still ongoing with the rapid speciation of rhododendrons—especially the *Vireyas*—that continues to the present time. They theorize that episodes of warming and cooling, on about a 50,000-year cycle, fueled the rate of *Rhododendron* speciation in the Himalayan region and adjacent areas of the Malayan archipelago. Warmer periods would allow *Rhododendron* species to ascend into new mountainous terrain, only to be chased back down when the climate cooled again. This retreat to warmer climes resulted in comingling of once-separated species, providing abundant opportunity for cross-species fertilization and the appearance of new species. Because the Himalayas are often separated by tropical valleys, selection pressures occurred in isolation on each mountain range, leading to the large number of species now recognized.

In 2018, Nawal and his colleagues in China use mega data analysis to model *Rhododendron* distribution and speciation patterns during the past 65 million years. Their data set establishes a predictive value of 63.5 mybp as the point when *Rhododendrons* separated from their nearest relative

in the ericaceous family.³ Crunching the numbers and looking backwards at the mutation rate of the DNA samples, they conclude the origin of the genus *Rhododendron* was somewhere in Northeast Asia, not in Southern Asia and the Malayan Archipelago, the current hotspot of biological activity.

About 45 mybp species begin to radiate out from Northeast Asia to Europe and North America, primarily via means of mountain ranges where they spread in the cooler, more northerly latitudes of the cool temperate forest. During this period new species development is progressing at a slow to moderate rate until the period from 30 to 25 mybp. Speciation, almost all of which is centered in Southern Asia and adjacent parts of the Malayan Archipelago, takes a rapid uptick in rate during this period, which coincides with the uplift of the Himalayan Mountains. The authors conclude that even as *Rhododendrons* progress into the tropical climes, mountains and cooler niches continue to be an important feature associated with species spread. I would guess that it is during this age that the first evergreen azaleas arose in the far southeast part of Asia, far removed from any connection with North America.

Nawal reports that the rate of new species formation in North America was slow after Asia, North America, and Europe split apart in the Eocene (55–34 mybp) and is a strong indicator of the relative climatic stability during this period. Because the major North American mountain ranges run north and south, even glacial epochs such as began 5 mybp and concluded about 15,000 years ago, did not cause undue extinction pressure on our native flora. As glaciers spread south across the continent, species migrated south

during cold periods. When warmer periods were at hand, species followed the retreating ice north.³

During the past 20 million years, the eastern parts of North America have been dominated by deciduous hardwood forests, a habitat not unlike that which has prevailed during most of the time Rhododendrons have inhabited North America. Of the 27 species of Rhododendrons described as native to North America (including the five species transferred from other genera in the 2005 reclassification scheme), only five of these are found in the western states. While the east has remained environmentally stable with plentiful rainfall during the past 20 million years, the west has undergone a steady march towards desertification. During that time span the western part of North America has gone from a mixed hardwood forest in the north and a broadleaf evergreen woodland in the south to mostly desert and semi-desert scrub across much of the region. Coniferous forests only persist in northern latitudes and higher elevations. Though no fossil evidence is available to support this statement, it seems likely that western parts of North America have lost species during the period of desert expansion while the eastern areas have remained stable.

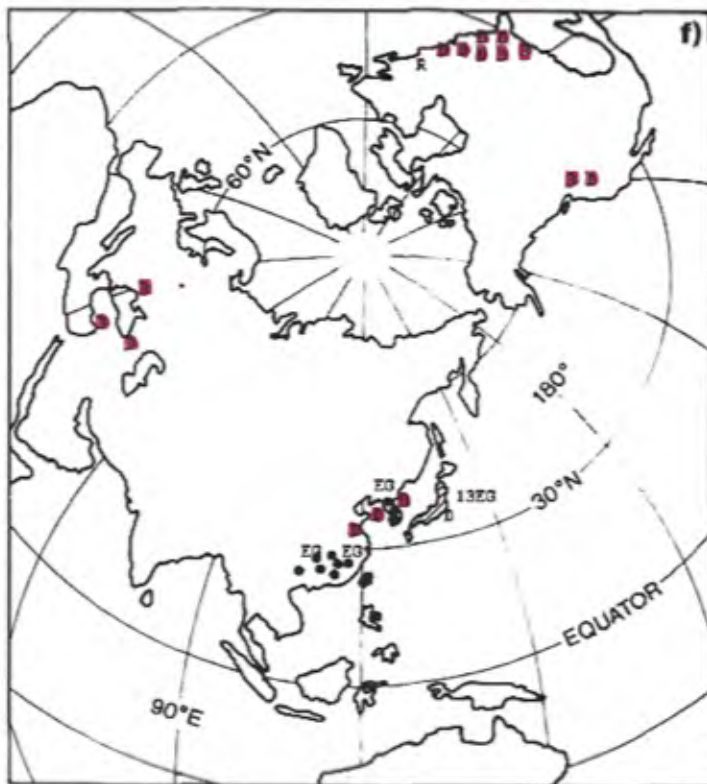
Figure 2 shows the generalized distribution of deciduous (D) and evergreen (EG and •) azalea species at the current time. Notice that the evergreen species are limited to East Asia, while the deciduous species are found in four regions: Southeast Europe, East Asia, Northwestern North America, and Eastern North America. (Modified from Irving and Hebda, 1993²)

As mentioned above, *R. vaseyi* (Pinkshell Azalea) from the mountains of North and South Carolina is classified as belonging to the subgenus *Azaleastrum*. This deciduous species, along with *R. pentaphyllum* from Japan, is joined into a subsection that separates them from the eighty-plus evergreen azaleas that make up the majority of species in this subgenus. Apparently, these two deciduous azaleas are closely related, perhaps making up a long-separated disjunct (found in two widely separated locations) population. Because evergreen azaleas are confined to eastern parts of Asia, it seems likely the evergreen species evolved sometime after the middle tertiary time (say 35 - 25 mybp) after the continents separated.

The classic disjunct pattern of *R. vaseyi* and *R. pentaphyllum* closely resembles that highlighted in the 1850s by Harvard botanist Asa Gray who noted the similarity in flora between the southeastern United States and southeastern Asia. To date, over 80 species have been recognized, including many species with only two recognized species—one in Asia and one in the southeastern states—including sweetgums, tulip poplar, sassafras, pachysandra, and many others. Whether *R. pentaphyllum* is an ancestral progenitor of the evergreen azaleas classified in the subgenus *Azaleastrum*, a biological dead end, or an artifact of the classification scheme is beyond my ability to ascertain.

Development of Modern Azalea Groups

While geologic and environmental forces initially established the limits of rhododendron distribution, it was humankind that shaped the contemporary dispersal of these



▲ Figure 2

plants across the urban landscape. The selection of “new and improved” rhododendrons and azaleas are of recent vintage—playing out over the past 500 or so years. To even summarize modern development of garden hybrids is not possible here, but it might be interesting to look at a few of the deciduous and evergreen azaleas available in the nursery trade today and trace a bit of their lineage.

Before azaleas could be hybridized, they first had to be assembled into collections. As plants were introduced from the United States, south-central Europe, China, and later Japan into European (and later, American) collections, they arrived bearing the name in vogue at the time. Most of the deciduous species then recognized from the eastern states—primarily from Virginia to Georgia—had been collected by the early years of the 19th century and sent to wealthy collectors who in turn shared them with gardening friends and nurserymen throughout much of northern Europe. The deciduous Chinese azalea—now called *R. molle* but known at various times as *R. sinense* or *R. japonicum*—arrived in Europe during the first two decades of the 19th century. The yellow flowered deciduous azalea from the Caucasus-Black Sea region of Europe (known today as *R. luteum*, but then as either a form of *R. flavum* or *R. ponticum*) closely resembled the deciduous American species and was introduced into England by 1792. (See Table 1)

The first controlled breeding efforts appear to have been made in the 1820s in Ghent, Belgium, by a baker named P. Mortier who crossed the American Flame and Pinxterbloom azaleas. About the same time J. R. Gowen, an estate gardener in England, crossed the yellow European azalea *R. luteum* with the American Flame azalea (*R. calendulaceum*) and Swamp azalea (*R. viscosum*). Gowen and others also began

using the Chinese azalea (*R. molle*) with several American species. M. L. Verschaffelt, a nurseryman in Ghent, and Anthony Waterer, an English nurseryman, carried on extensive crossing programs and introduced hundreds of selections over the next several decades that were collectively known as the Ghent Hybrids.

The Mollis Azaleas began development in the 1860s after the gunboat diplomacy of Commodore Perry forced Japan to open to western trading in 1854. Peter von Siebold returned to Japan, after being exiled 30 years earlier by Japanese officialdom, and collected seeds of deciduous Japanese azaleas, and distributed them to Louis van Houtte in Ghent who incorporated them into the established breeding programs of the area.

In the 1860s the father and son nurseryman team in England—Anthony Waterer Senior (1822–1896) and Junior (1848–1921)—began a serious breeding program looking for late blooming, winter hardy types with good garden characteristics. The main genetic infusion to the hybrid stream by the Waterers was using the western American *R. occidentale*. These Knap Hill Azaleas relied on the

genetic pool that preceded it but went forward with ruthless determination to save only the best of each new cross. Later in his life, Junior became a bit reclusive and overly protective of his plants, but fortunately in 1920 Rothschild managed to acquire a nucleus of Knap Hill Azaleas. Over the next two decades over a million rhododendron plants were grown at the Exbury estate in England, primarily from crossing and re-crossing the best of the best to achieve the array of orange, orange-red, yellow, pink, and white azaleas we see offered under the name “Exbury” today. The name Exbury has become a generic name for deciduous azaleas amongst nurserymen even though many other breeders have since added their touches to the plants being offered.

Table 1 shows the development of modern deciduous hybrid azaleas began about 200 years ago when collectors used the species available to them to make the first crosses. Over time new species were added to the gene flow, incorporating new traits. Though most of the initial hybrids were selected in regions with benign, maritime climates, the most exciting advances have come about by selecting in diverse climatological regions.

▼ Table 1—Development of Hybrid Deciduous Azaleas

Species Assembled in European Gardens - 1730 onward

<i>R. arborescens</i>	Sweet Azalea	US	<1818
<i>R. calendulaceum</i>	Flame Azalea	US	1806
<i>R. luteum</i>	Yellow Pontic A.	SE Europe	1792
<i>R. periclymenoides</i>	Pinxterbloom A.	US	1730
<i>R. viscosum</i>	Swamp Azalea	US	1734

Ghent Hybrids began about 1820 from above species

<i>R. molle</i>	Mollis Azalea	China	1820s
<i>R. molle ssp. japonicum</i>	Japanese Azalea	Japan	1861

Mollis Hybrids used east Asian species and began by van Houtte in 1860s

<i>R. occidentale</i>	Western Azalea	W US	1850
-----------------------	----------------	------	------

Knap Hill Hybrids began about 1870 by Anthony Waterer Sr. who added Western Azalea

Exbury Azaleas, Rothschild - beginning about 1920 recrossed the best Knap Hill hybrids

Ilam Azaleas (1930s) developed in New Zealand from Exbury hybrids

Northern Lights: (1950s) Minnesota program using Knapp Hill and Exbury with US species

<i>R. austrinum</i>	Florida Azalea	SE US	
---------------------	----------------	-------	--

Aromi Azaleas: (1970s) Crossed Exbury hybrids with *R. austrinum* to achieve heat tolerance in Mobile, AL



Photo G. Klingaman

▲ Photo 1—Gable’s ‘Rosebud’ has always been a personal favorite and illustrates how Gable’s inclusion of hardy forms, including *R. yedoense* var. *poukhanense*, *R. kaempferi*, and ‘Hexe,’ which has some hardiness through *R. obtusum* var. *amoenum* and sizzle through the more tender *R. simsii* and *R. indicum*, came together to create a cold hardy, evergreen beauty. Upon closer reading, I find the plant I have long known as ‘Rosebud’ may in fact be Gable’s ‘Lorna’, both sibs (fraternal seedlings) that appeared in his catalog just after WWII.

► Photo 2—Buddy Lee, the father of the repeat blooming azaleas, is one of the long list of azalea breeders who have added new and useful traits to the genetic pool that makes up modern azaleas.



Photo G. Klingaman

The scaffolding built by these early breeders has been added to and improved by many American breeders, each with their own breeding goals. A few of these include the Girard deciduous hybrids using Knap Hill Hybrids as basis but selecting for mildew resistance; the Northern Lights Series using Knap Hill and Exbury Hybrids with various native species to achieve bud hardiness in Minnesota; Aromi Hybrids developed in Mobile, AL using *R. austrinum* to incorporate heat tolerance into the Exbury types, and any number of other breeders who have added in small or large measure to the deciduous azaleas we now grow in our gardens.

Evergreen Azaleas

The evergreen azaleas in our gardens are a meld of Eastern and Western cultures. Two of our most popular azalea groups—the Kurume and Satsuki—were dropped into our gardens fully formed after centuries of breeding and selection in Japan. The Western additions—starting with the Belgian-Indian Hybrids of the middle years of the 19th century—were developed as flowering pot plants for wealthy estate gardens and the then-emerging middle class that developed as the industrial revolution caught hold. By the 1840s these Belgian-Indian Hybrids had crossed the Atlantic and found a home in South Carolina in Drake’s Magnolia Gardens. A generation later a Belgian immigrant, P.J. Berckman, began improving on these early hybrids and

produced many still popular Southern Indicas at his Fruitland Nursery in Augusta, GA.

While evergreen azaleas are all native to Asia, modern garden selections are a blending of Eastern and Western aesthetics. Of the over 80 recognized species, fewer than ten have been used to develop our modern hybrids. (See Photos 1 & 2)

Table 2 shows a condensed chronology of the development of the modern azaleas we grow today. I credit most of the progress to hybridizers working at nurseries or B. Y. Morrison’s large government (USDA) supported program at Glenn Dale, MD. But after WWII, hobby breeders began adding their own touches to the flow of new introductions. Buddy Lee’s introduction of the repeat-blooming azaleas less than three decades ago has led to at least a dozen new, competing fall blooming series that are profoundly reshaping the image of our beloved plants. Just as breeders such as Gable, Girard, and Morrison reworked old southern favorites for northern gardens, this same opportunity exists for the repeat bloomers.

Future Possibilities

The opportunity for developing new, more exciting and interesting azaleas is far from over. By perusing Tables 1 and 2, it is apparent how few species have been used to develop the garden forms of our deciduous and evergreen hybrids. About eight species have been used in the deciduous line;

▼ Table 2—Development of Hybrid Evergreen Azaleas—A Chronology

<i>R. kaempferi</i>	Kaempfer Azalea	Japan	1690
<i>R. kiusianum</i>		Japan	1918
<i>R. sataense</i>		Japan	
<i>R. "hybrid swarms"</i>		Japan	1915

Kurume Azaleas: Mentioned in *Kadan ko moku* in 1681; introduced here 1915

<i>R. indicum</i>	Indian Azalea	China / Jap	1680
<i>R. eriocarpum (tamurae)</i>	Dwarf Indian A.	Japan	
<i>R. "hybrid swarms"</i>		Japan	1938

Satsuki Azaleas: some perhaps date to 1500 in Japanese gardens; U.S. in 1938

<i>R. simsii</i>	Sims Azalea	China	1806
<i>R. simsii</i> (Fortune's collection)	"Indica Azaleas"	China	1851
<i>R. ripense</i> 'Mucronatum'	"Indica Alba"	China	1819
<i>R. indicum</i> 'Variegatum'		China	1833
<i>R. 'Phoeniceum'</i>		China	1824
<i>R. indicum</i> - various colors	Indian Azaleas	China	1830s

Belgian Indian Hybrids: Developed for forcing; introduced to Magnolia Gardens 1848

Southern Indian Hybrids (GA): started 1870s by P.J. Berckman's Fruitland Nursery

Rutherford Hybrids (NJ): started in 1920s using Belgian Indian hybrids; later added Kurumes

<i>R. kaempferi</i>	Kaempfer Azalea	Japan	1892
<i>R. yedoensis</i> var. <i>poukhanense</i>	Korean Azalea	Korea	1905

Gable Hybrids (PA): start 1920s Joe Gable used above with Kurumes and other hardy forms

Glenn Dale Hybrids (MD): starting in 1935, B. Y. Morrison used most of what came before

Robin Hill Hybrids (NJ): start 1937, Robert Gartrell used Satsukis but selected for hardiness

Girard Hybrids (OH): starting late 1940s used Gables and backcrossed to his own seedlings

<i>R. oldhamii</i> 'Forth of July'	Oldham Azalea	Taiwan	1918
------------------------------------	---------------	--------	------

Encore Azaleas (LA): starting about 1980, Buddy Lee added summer and fall flowering genes



Photo G. Klingaman

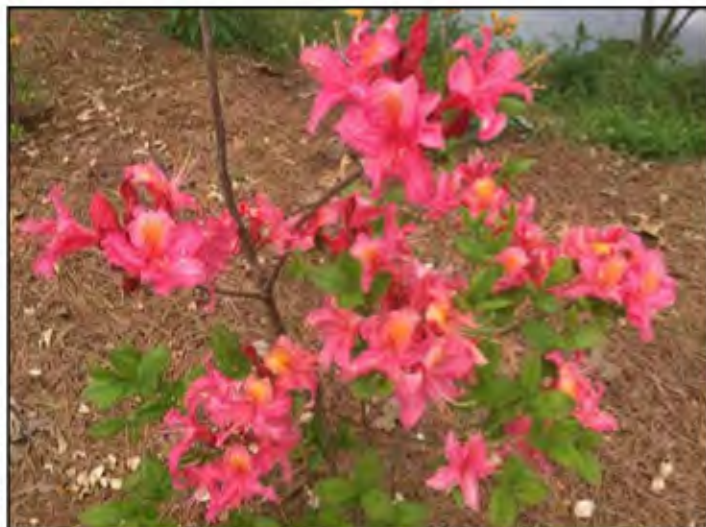


Photo G. Klingaman

▲ Photo 3—The Western Azalea (*R. occidentale*) is probably a relic of a once more-numerous group of rhododendrons that occupied space in western North America. The hard-to-grow and somewhat gangly plant seemingly had little to offer breeders, but Anthony Waterer, Sr. used it successfully to develop the Knap Hill Hybrids.

▲ Photo 4—'Jacob Allen' is one of Eugene Aromi's hybrids that leaned heavily on southern native deciduous azaleas, especially the Florida Azalea (*R. austrinum*), for adaptability to the hot and humid South.

fewer than ten in the evergreen. Over 30 species of wild deciduous azaleas and over 80 evergreen species have been described. The merits of introducing a new species into a breeding line may not be apparent at first glance. Anthony Waterer's use of *R. occidentale*, even though it had been spurned by other breeders of his day, led to the development of most of the deciduous azaleas we grow today. Most azalea experts apparently did not recognize or had overlooked the merits of *R. oldhamii* before Buddy Lee picked it up about 1980 and started swapping pollen. Other possibilities remain to be discovered, and it will be interesting to see what comes next. (See Photos 3 & 4)

References

- 1 Goetsch, Loretta A. et al. 2005. "The Molecular Systematics of *Rhododendron* (Ericaceae): "A Phylogeny based upon RPB2 Gene Sequences." *Systematic Botany*. 30(3): 616-626.
- 2 Irving, E. and R. Hebda. 1993. "Concerning the Origin and Distribution of Rhododendrons."

Journal American Rhododendron Society. 47(3) (Virginia Tech online library).

- 3 Nawal Shrestha et al. 2018. "Global Patterns of *Rhododendron* Diversity: The Role of Evolutionary Time and Diversification Rates." *Global Ecology and Biogeography*. 27(8): 913-924.

Further Reading

- Cash, R. Christina. 1986. "Exbury Azaleas—From History to Your Garden." *Journal American Rhododendron Society*. 40(1) (Virginia Tech online library)
- Voss, D. H. 2000. "How Azaleas Came to Our Gardens: A Snapshot." *The Azalean*. 22(3): 56-62.

Gerald Klingaman is Emeritus Professor of Horticulture, University of Arkansas, and former Director of Operations Botanical Garden of the Ozarks, Fayetteville.



AZALEA HILL GARDENS & NURSERY

EVERGREEN AZALEAS

We grow Glenn Dale, Back Acres, Robin Hill, Satsuki, Huang, Holly Springs and others

Request list: email ronnie.palmer88@yahoo.com
or text 870-489-0884

1106 S. Evans Road
Pine Bluff, Arkansas 71602
Phone (870) 247-1574

Visit www.azaleahillgardens-arkansas.com



“Born on the Bayou” 2020 National Convention: Houston, Texas March 12-14, 2020

The members of the River Oaks Garden Club, hosts of the oldest Azalea Trail in the US, are helping Bart Brechter, Curator of Bayou Bend Gardens, head of Gardens and Landscape Operations at Bayou Bend, and Texas Chapter members get the gardens in the River Oaks District of Houston ready for lots of ASA azalea-enthusiasts. There are two private home gardens that will be on the tour as well, which have been described as “phenomenal” and not to be missed.

There is still time to register online at the ASA website, or using the registration form printed on the outside wrapper of this issue. (See also Paul Beck’s article on page 84 in this issue and the convention preview article in the Fall 2019 issue.)

The Itinerary below indicates the schedule of events. Board members will need to be onsite at the convention hotel

for the board meeting at 11:00 am Thursday March 12. Note that the plant sale will be open from 11:00 am to 5 pm that day, closing in time for the evening speaker. There are many other times to visit the plant sale as well. All convention lectures will be held at the convention hotel:

Houston Marriott West Loop
1750 West Loop South

\$119.00/night—rate subject to sales and local taxes
(currently 17%)

800-228-9290 / 713-960-0111

Be sure to book your hotel rooms early. These hotel numbers will transfer you to Reservations; mention you are with the Azalea Society of American Convention 2020 and ask for their special rate.

2020 Convention Itinerary and Events

Thursday, March 12, 2020 (Plant Sale Times: 11am-5pm)

11 am – 1 pm	Board Meeting
1 pm – 5 pm	Registration
5 pm	Welcoming Remarks
5:15 pm – 6:00 pm	Lecture: Terry Smith (History of River Oaks Garden Club Azalea Trail)

Dinner on your own

Friday, March 13, 2020 (Plant Sale Times: 7am – 8am; 5:30pm – 8:00pm)

8:30 am	Buses Leave
9:00 am – 12:30 pm	Tour Azalea Trail Home Gardens
12:30 pm – 1:30 pm	Lunch at the River Oaks Garden Club Forum of Civics
1:30 pm	Buses Leave
1:40 pm – 2:40 pm	Tour Flores Garden
2:40 pm – 3:40 pm	Tour Zilka Garden
3:40 pm	Load buses; return to hotel
4:00 – 4:45 pm	Lecture: Bart Brechter (History of Bayou Bend)

Dinner on your own

Saturday, March 14, 2020 (Plant Sale Times: 7-8am; 1-2pm; 4-6pm)

8:30 am	Buses leave
9:00 am – 12:00 pm	Tour Bayou Bend and Rienzi
12:00 pm	Load buses back to hotel
12:30 pm – 1:30 pm	Lunch
2:00 pm – 2:45 pm	Lecture: Lisa Hassel (In-depth Look at Historic Azaleas)
3:00 pm – 3:45 pm	Lecture: Bradley Bailey (The Azalea Influence in Asian Art)
6:00 pm	Banquet and Closing Remarks

Online Convention Registration with the ASA Website

By Paul Beck, Web Developer & ASA Treasurer

I have recently completed a flexible online convention registration system for the ASA website. This new feature has been designed to be adaptable to each convention's requirements. A website administrator can configure each convention's registration differently, from the simplest type with only a registration fee to the more complex with multiple options from which to choose. The system will allow all society members to view the convention attendees at any time, as well as providing custom reports for the convention planners.

The convention registration system requires that you are a member and logged into the website. For those who are not a member, and want to use the online registration, you will first need to join the Society. Joining via PayPal™ has been upgraded to provide immediate email feedback and automatically enter the new member information in the database.

Locating the Online Registration Page

While convention registration is active, typically starting in December of each year, there will be a link on the ASA website home page to take you directly to the registration page:

Preliminary 2020 Convention Info is posted here.
Click [here](#) to register online for the 2020 Convention.

You can also get to the convention registration page from the page which lists all conventions, located from the **About the Society** → **Conventions** menu selection. At the top of the summary for the next convention will be a button to the **Register Online**, as shown below.

Next Convention

Register Online

[2020 Convention](#) ← Click for more details.

Contact: [Bart Brechter](#)

Sponsored by: Texas Chapter

March 12-14, 2020 at: [Houston Marriott West Loop Houston, TX](#)

Late registration fee applies after: December 1st, 2019

[Registration Form](#)

Registrar: [Sherrie Randall](#)

[Attendees](#)

Validating Your Registration (and Membership) Data

When the online registration page appears, please read the detailed instructions at the top of the page. These should explain the registration process sufficiently. The system will use your first and last name of your login account to locate your membership record. If a match is found, you will be pre-selected as Registrant. If your login name does not match your membership record, you can pick your name from the **Registrant** selection list, which will include all persons on the membership record. You may register for the convention any person on your membership.

If all the information shown is correct, click the "Yes" button. Note that items which have several options, such as meal choices, must be selected at this time. When you are finished, check the "I'm not a robot" box and then click **Register**.

Is the following information correct? Yes No

If anything on the page needs to be changed, or you need to add something to the **Special Needs** category, click the "No" radio button. The displayed information will be presented in an edit form.

If you have marked some of your membership information for hiding from the ASA membership, it will be displayed in **red**. If you wish to change that status, there is a checkbox with which you can change that; this also updates your data hiding on our membership database.

Correct the necessary information, add any special needs, and they select from the Events/Options list as necessary. Note that items which have several options, such as meal choices, must be selected at this time. When you are finished, check the "I'm not a robot" box and then click **Save & Register**. Note that your permanent membership record is updated with any changes made in address, phone, visibility, etc. The "Special Needs" category is only used for the convention planners, and is not stored with your membership record.

Payment Options

After you verify or change your information, and press "Register", you will then be presented with your payment options. Select the appropriate payment option, and note the instructions following the button. If you select "**Pay by Check**", you will receive an email within a few seconds. Print this email and send it with your check to the address indicated in the email.

If you selected "**Pay by Credit/PayPal™**", you will be taken to the PayPal website. If you have a PayPal account,

Is the following information correct? Yes No

Pay by Check

You will be sent an email in a few minute

Pay by Credit/PayPal™

You will be transferred to PayPa number. Keep this email as your receipt.

Normal Registration \$275.00 USD ▾

you can simply login and approve payment. If you do not have a PayPal account, you can simply enter the credit card information in the "PayPal Guest Checkout" section. After your payment is submitted and validated by PayPal, you will be sent an email from the ASA website, confirming your registration and payment. This should only take 10-15 seconds.

Correcting or Updating Your Registration

The email sent to you by the ASA website will have a link to take you to your registration record, where you can make any necessary changes. Your existing registration information will be displayed, with the option of changing anything. If you wish to cancel the registration completely, contact the registrar directly. The amount of your refund will be up to the convention registrar, based on established and published criteria. In some cases, optional events may have had to be prepaid and a late cancellation may result in a forfeiture of some part of your registration costs.



Join The American Boxwood Society!

- Keep current with the latest boxwood news and research
- Receive a subscription to *The Boxwood Bulletin*
- Attend our Annual Symposium and International Garden Tours

BOXWOODSOCIETY.ORG

Renewal Time is Here!

By Paul Beck, Treasurer

That time of year, when your annual dues need to be paid, is here. Check the expiration date on the mailing label on this issue of *The Azalean*. If it says '2019' you need to pay your dues for 2020. Dues are still



\$30 per year. Paper mailing of reminders went out in mid-November, and an email reminder shortly thereafter. If you use email, and were not notified last year about your renewal via email, please send me your email address at treasurer@azaleas.org.

In attempt to improve renewal percentages, this year's follow-up reminders will again be handled by the local chapters instead of by me. Hopefully the more local approach will be more fruitful.

Renewal is best accomplished by using the **Join Us, Renew** or **Donate** link on the ASA website. If you choose not to renew electronically, you may use the renewal form on the wrapper of this issue of *The Azalean*. This application form is also available on the ASA website.

This year I am again encouraging the use of our subscription service, via the PayPal™ credit card payment service. This will allow you to register your credit card with PayPal, and have your annual membership fees deducted automatically. Click on the "Yearly Automatic Subscription" accordion near the bottom of the **Join Us** page.

Finally, as a service to our members who do not like to use PayPal, I will continue to take your payment over the phone. Call me at 703-860-5676. If you have not called me before, our telephone SPAM blocker will catch you first. Press "0" to get through the blocker, and we will answer if we are here. **DO NOT** leave your credit card number on our voice mail.

Mike and Deb White
whiteaz@verizon.net

White's Nursery, LLC
Specializing In Azaleas and Rhododendrons
www.whites-nursery.com

22531 Wildcat Road
Germantown, MD 20876
301 788 3293
301 471 5958

Lockerly Arboretum

By Jennifer Pollard—Milledgeville, Georgia

If you were to look at the history of Lockerly Arboretum, you will see a pattern of people. People with passion and vision.

It started with our founder, E.J. Grassmann. A civil engineer by training, he was a self-taught botanist and ornithologist. He had passion for the natural world and vision to create a horticultural laboratory in a community that he had loved and wanted to give back to.

Other passionate and visionary people have come to Lockerly over the years including Bo Edwards, Harriett Whipple, Sherrill Jones, Bill Maligns, and Jim Garner to name just a few. All of them have loved Lockerly and been passionate about caring for Lockerly and advancing our mission.

The latest person to bring their passion and vision to Lockerly is Ernest Koone. Ernest first came to Lockerly in 2018 to give a talk on native azaleas on Georgia Arbor Day. A simple conversation began that day and an idea began to take form. Ernest's passion for azaleas led to a vision for Lockerly where he could showcase the 13 azalea species that are native to Georgia, allowing them to return to their place of prominence and respect in Georgia's landscape. To date he has donated over 50 azaleas, ensuring the legacy of azaleas in Georgia. In addition to Georgia natives, the azaleas contributed include a number of Earl Sommerville's varieties.

It is unfortunate that over the past 50 or more years, we have lost track of collecting and showcasing these 13 species in public gardens across the state. It is unclear to us why this has happened. Perhaps it is loss of habitat or changes to their environment. Perhaps it is as simple as the fact that,

like anything, flowers, trees, and shrubs come in and out of fashion like shoes, art, and cars.

On 15 February 2019, we dedicated the Legacy Azalea Garden, recognizing Ernest's contribution. The long range plan is to continue to collect, not only Georgia natives, but also deciduous varieties derived from Georgia natives. This includes discovered varieties which had hybridized naturally in the wild or which were derived by hybridizers working with Georgia natives. [Photos 1-3]

The Azalea Society of America (ASA) is keenly interested in the preservation of azalea varieties which haven't necessarily entered into the commercial market and are at risk of being lost. They instituted the Legacy Project to foster the preservation of these varieties. Our current plans, in addition to the Georgia natives, are to expand our collection of the Sommerville, Strickland, and Varnadoe azaleas and to be recognized by the ASA as Legacy Gardens for these hybrid varieties.

Our horticultural legacy lies in our ability to recognize, preserve, and promote our native plants. As a nonprofit arboretum that is free and open to the public, Lockerly views it as our responsibility to showcase Georgia's treasures for the education and enjoyment of all.

Located in Milledgeville, Georgia, Lockerly Arboretum is a 50-year-old, 50-acre nonprofit arboretum, on the geologically unique Fall Line.

Lockerly Arboretum Foundation is the fulfillment of Mr. E.J. Grassmann's vision for an arboretum that would contribute to the natural beauty, cultural atmosphere, and environmental education of his community. Mr. Grassmann was the owner of American Industrial Clay Company, and

▼ Photo 1—First Azalea Legacy Garden planters (left to right): Ernest Koone, Azalea Society of America; Michael Bamford, American Rhododendron Society; Jim Pruckler, American Camellia Society.



Photo Jennifer Pollard

▼ Photo 2—First plantings at the new Legacy Azalea Garden at Lockerly Arboretum, which will preserve native azaleas and their hybrids for future generations. Plants set out with plenty of room to thrive.



Photo Rick Bauer

he founded Lockerly as a 501(c)3 organization in 1966. Lockerly has been serving the Milledgeville and Middle Georgia community as a public garden and educational resource ever since. Over the past 50 years, with the help of supporters and countless volunteers, Lockerly has:

- Become a Level II Accredited Arboretum through the ArbNet Accreditation Program;
- Become one of 19 American Conifer Society Reference Gardens in the Southeast;
- Created a collection of plants from around the world including Blue China Fir (*Cunninghamia lanceolata*), Variegated Canadian Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), Tall Stewartia (*Stewartia lanceolata*), Chinese Pistache (*Pistacia chinensis*), and Lacebark Elm (*Ulmus parvifolia*).
- Preserved Rose Hill, a National Register, 1852 Greek Revival home.

The Board and Staff of Lockerly are thrilled to add the Legacy Azalea Garden to this list of accomplishments! Our volunteer corps, the Dirt Diggers, are equally excited to add this collection and will have an integral role in the planting and care for the collection. It is our hope that the establishment of this garden will inspire other public gardens, arboreta, and homeowners to also create Legacy Gardens.

Lockerly specializes in three areas of programming, education, horticulture, and historic preservation.

Education

Serving approximately 5,000 children and adults each year, Lockerly's education programs are tailored for every age and embrace hands-on activities. Programs for students are in compliance with the Georgia Performance Standards as well as requirements for Eagle Scout badges and Master Gardener certifications. Participants in our programs come from area schools as well as the Boys and Girls Club; the Life Enrichment Center, a program for adults with disabilities; and home school groups. We also own a beautiful 200-acre tract in Putnam County known as the Oliver N. Worley Outdoor Education Center. It features locations to study water ecology, life sciences, ecology, and forestry as well as indoor classroom and lab space.

Horticulture

E.J. Grassmann envisioned a diverse collection of plants and trees in the Arboretum and our plantings are made with that vision in mind. Today, Lockerly boasts 50 acres of gardens, walking trails, and a pond. Our plantings feature flowering shrubs such as camellias and azalea, and a variety of trees including oaks and magnolias as well as perennials and annuals. A 1-mile nature trail is home to many mature hardwoods, including a Tall Stewartia, a small leaf Viburnum (*Viburnum obovatum*), and a Cedar Elm (*Ulmus crassifolia*), all Georgia State Champion Trees, as well as ferns, and wildflowers.

Historic Preservation

Lockerly Arboretum's beautiful Greek Revival home, Rose Hill, was built by Judge Daniel Tucker in 1852, when Milledgeville was the state capital of Georgia. [Photo 4] This magnificent treasure provides a window into 19th century life and serves as a museum, event venue, and classroom facility. Rose Hill was placed in the National Register of Historic Places in April 2017. Find out more at: www.lockerly.org

Jennifer Pollard is a native of South Georgia and a 1995 graduate of Georgia College with a BA in History. In her 20-year career she has worked in fundraising and nonprofit management for Macon Heritage Foundation (Georgia); Orchard House, Home of the Alcotts (Massachusetts); and Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (Maryland). In addition, she was a 1998 Elizabeth Perkins Fellow with the Old York Historical Society (Maine). Mrs. Pollard is a professionally recognized CFRE (Certified Fund Raising Executive), a credential she has held since 2008. She became Executive Director of Lockerly Arboretum in January 2017.



▲ Photo 3—Legacy Azalea Garden signage recognizes Ernest Koone's gift.

▼ Photo 4—Historic Greek Revival home, Rose Hill, dating to 1852, is now a museum at the Lockerly Arboretum, with classrooms and event spaces.



Lafayette, Louisiana, Azalea Trail Activities

By Denise Richard Lanclos—Lafayette, Louisiana

Scenic Lafayette-Azalea Trail Chair, Mrs. Denise Richard Lanclos, and the Oil Center Renaissance Association held a groundbreaking ceremony August 9, 2019 for the Coolidge Boulevard Revitalization Project. These boulevards are in the Oil Center Cultural District of Lafayette's Azalea Trail. [See Photos 1 and 2]

This project is being funded by local supporters and two grant sources: Lafayette Visitors Enterprise Fund and Atchafalaya National Heritage Area. New plantings of 'George Taber', 'G. G. Gerbing' Formosa Azaleas and several more Crape Myrtles and 'Shi Shi Gashira' camellias will adorn these boulevards. A new irrigation system is being installed as well. This beautification project will greatly enhance this historic district that is vibrant with shops, restaurants, art galleries, hotels, and medical offices.

All Seasons Home, Garden & Landscaping Showplace, owned by Peter Mayeux, will be responsible for the face lift of the median strips lining Coolidge Boulevard in Lafayette's iconic Oil Center. Work began on the beautification project in the early fall with the installation of irrigation systems

in each median, re-laying existing pavers for stability, and planting azaleas, crape myrtle trees, Indian hawthorns, camellias, and a vitex tree. The greenspace spans roughly a half mile along the center of Coolidge Boulevard. Azaleas have historical value to the Oil Center, dating back to the 1940s when "the Azalea Trail" was a popular tourist attraction along Lafayette's core areas. Azaleas still planted there will remain, and newer specimens will be planted to enhance the scene bringing Coolidge back to the days when it was a tourist destination.

Next March 7, 2020 Lafayette will celebrate over 80 years of this floral splendor with trolley rides and a reception at Vermilionville Living History Museum and Folk Life Park. View the entire schedule of events for 2020 at www.azaleas.org/azaleacities/Lafayette.com and at <https://sceniclafayette.com>.

Also, follow Scenic Lafayette at www.facebook.com/sceniclafayette.travel.site and visit our website www.azaleatrail.org to see the beauty of Lafayette's azalea trail year round.

▼ Photo 1— Proud supporters at the groundbreaking for Coolidge Boulevard Revitalization Project (l to r): Ben Berthelot, President and CEO, Lafayette Convention & Visitors Commission; Susan Fisher, Azalea Trail Committee member; Denise Lanclos, Azalea Trail Chairperson; Chad Nepveux, LCG (Lafayette Consolidated Government) Streets Superintendent; Kirk A. Taylor, Oil Center Association Board President; Peter Mayeux, All Seasons Nursery & Landscaping owner; Cindy Wiley, Scenic Lafayette Secretary, Azalea Trail Committee member, and master gardener; Corey Jack, One Acadiana Lafayette Chamber Affairs Manager; David Begnaud, Scenic Lafayette Treasurer; local Parish law enforcement.

Denise Lanclos is Lafayette Azalea Trail Chairperson, an accountant and notary public, and Louisiana Chapter member.

▼ Photo 2—Colorful sign showing the many supporters of the Coolidge project, including the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area, Scenic Lafayette, All Seasons Nursery, the Oil Center Association, the Lafayette Azalea Trail, and the City of Lafayette.



Society Officer Candidates

Paul Beck—Treasurer

Paul has been a member of Northern Virginia Chapter since 1983. Paul has been very active in that chapter since 2010, as treasurer and as webmaster and developer of the chapter's website, and Treasurer of the ASA since 2014. He played a major role in digitizing past issues of *The Azalean*. He developed the ASA online membership database, the searchable azalea information repository, the online repository for *The Azalean*, all of which he migrated to the new ASA website. He has automated the chapter plant sales and annual auctions with a barcoding sales and inventory control system. In addition, Paul automated the 2016 Williamsburg joint ASA-ARS convention plant sale and automated the 2018 convention plant sale. He retired from the US Air Force in 1984 after 20 years of service and then retired again in 2012 from his second career in the software development industry. Paul works actively in the garden with Carolyn, his wife of 56 years, and they have two children and three grandchildren. He enjoys building and flying remotely controlled model airplanes. Paul holds a PhD in Operations Research and Statistics.

Donna Palmer—Secretary

Donna Palmer is a retired elementary and middle school teacher. She has been a member of the ASA for over 40

years and is an active member of the Arkansas Chapter of ASA. She and her husband, Ronnie, started Azalea Hill Garden & Nursery, close to Pine Bluff, Arkansas, around 1972. It has been their goal to provide a good selection of azaleas and give customers information about selection and planting in their locations.

Directors for 2020-2022

Fred Anderson—Director

Director Fred Anderson joined the ASA two weeks before the National Convention in Nacogdoches, TX, in 2015, which he attended, and has been to every ASA convention since. He was a member at large for quite a while until he joined the Vaseyi Chapter in NC. Being in a prime azalea area, Fred has made attempts to start a new chapter called the Smoky Mountains Chapter by manning and self-funding a membership booth at garden events. Fred is a Tennessee Master Gardener and has started developing a unique azalea collection. He is the founder of Anderson Estate, which he is developing as a private collection of his favorite plants. He also has a vision of planting azaleas and dogwoods all along his street. Fred is an entrepreneur and has started several businesses from scratch. He is currently retired, but still owns BrakeQuip LLC. His wife Sandra



LAFAYETTE'S HISTORIC
AZALEA TRAIL
Celebrating over 80 years!
WWW.AZALEATRIL.ORG

VERMILIONVILLE
AZALEA RECEPTION
SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 2020
11AM - 3PM

TROLLEY RIDES
SATURDAY,
MARCH 7 & 14, 2020
9AM - NOON



totally supports Fred in all his endeavors and next year they will celebrate 47 years of marriage. They have lived in Knoxville, TN, for the past 17 years. Fred and Sandra have two children and four grandchildren that all live in Australia. Apart from being a gardener “out of control,” he is an animal lover, a street-rodder, enjoys nature, and socializing with people. Fred is also President of the East Tennessee Hosta Society and has a large collection of hostas that share the part shade environment like azaleas. Fred enjoys travelling to conventions and meetings around the world and would be honored to continue as a director of the Azalea Society of America.

Robert Thau—Director

Robert Thau is the current President of the Texas Forest Country Chapter of the ASA and former President and Vice President of the Texas Chapter of the ASA. He is currently holding the position of ASA Membership Chairman and is active in the Legacy Project, promoting the Bowie Mill and Harris hybrid azaleas. He has been actively growing plants since the early 80s and learned how to propagate when he was co-owner of a retail nursery in Louisiana, specializing in azaleas and camellias, while being a member of the Louisiana Nursery and Landscape Association. He moved to Texas in 1989 and a few years later joined the Texas Nursery and Landscape Association while deciding to start a wholesale nursery growing tropical bougainvillea. He retired in 2014 and decided to get back to his love of azaleas and built a garden named Nature’s Way Gardens. He gives tours to the public, and gives azalea-related talks and workshops to garden clubs to inform people about the many cultivars available and promote membership in the ASA.

Andy Whipple—Director

Andy Whipple has been a great fan of our native deciduous azaleas since attending the joint ASA/ARS 2002 convention in Atlanta. An avid gardener since childhood, he and his wife You-Ying moved to Black Mountain, North Carolina, upon retirement in 2015 and joined the Vaseyi Chapter. Andy was a professor of biology at Taylor University for 31 years, teaching several courses including Cellular and Molecular Biology, Microbiology and Immunology, and the Biology Senior Capstone course (an intense course combining

biology, the scientific method, the history and philosophy of science, and the interaction of science and Christian faith). Having discovered the unwillingness of many deciduous azaleas to be propagated by the usual means, and under the tutelage of Earl Sommerville, Andy became somewhat proficient in the micropropagation of deciduous azaleas. He used this propagation process to teach his students the scientific method as well as to introduce them to these wonderful plants. He continues the micropropagation of deciduous azaleas in a tissue culture lab in his basement in the beautiful mountains of western North Carolina.

Deadlines for input for *The Azalean* in 2020



Spring 2020 Issue—February 1

Summer 2020 Issue—March 15

Fall 2020 Issue—July 1

Winter 2020 Issue—October 1



Rhododendron occidentale

American Rhododendron Society

Join Today & Enjoy these Member Benefits:
*Quarterly Journal, Annual Conferences,
 Garden and Nursery Visits, Book Discounts,
 Seed Exchange, Plant Auctions and Sales,
 Local and National Flower Shows and More!*

**Visit Us on the Web at
www.rhododendron.org**

W.W. Nurseries

188 Valley Green Dr. • Indiana, PA 15701-9001



Rhododendrons & Azaleas—
 Over 500 varieties
 Can't visit? We do mail order.
 Liners, 1, 2 and 3 gallon
 Other nursery stock available.

Email us for our list:
wwwnurseries188@yahoo.com

Custom Propagation—our cuttings or yours.

Phone: 724-349-5653 | Website: www.rhodiesrus.com

Annual Index

The Azalean 2019—Volume 41

Title Index

"2019 Convention Report"—28
"2020 Convention Preview, March 12-14, Houston, TX"—
58, 83
"Advertising Manager for *The Azalean*"—Paul Beck, 71
"ASA Distinguished Service Award to Ernest Koone"—43
"ASA Financial Statement, December 31, 2018"—
Paul Beck, 44
"ASA Seed Exchange"—71
"Annual Index—*The Azalean* 2019"—91
"Azalea Gardens in Finland"—Richard Bauer, 52
"Azalea Tasks for Spring"—Charlie Andrews, 23
"Barbara Bullock Retires"—William C. Miller III, 67
"The Beginning of Jasper, Texas, Beautification Projects"—
Robert Thau, 36
Book Review (*Essential Native Trees and Shrubs for the
Eastern US* by J. A. Dove and N. V. Woolridge)—
William C. Miller III, 18
"Brookside Gardens Celebrates Its 50th Anniversary"—
William C. Miller III, 66
"Changes in Membership Dues Structure"—Paul Beck, 70
Chapter News and New Members—21, 45, 68, 92
For the Record—9, 42, 66
"Frieda's Red to 'Benjamin' to 'Freida's Benjamin'—
William C. Miller III, 12
"In Memory—Jane Parrish Kinzie 1944-2018"—
William C. Miller III, 66
"In Memory—William F. Bode 1923-2019"—
Barbara Stump, 41
"Jim Brant Honored for His Role in the Hooper Bald
Restoration Project"—Carolyn Beck, 10
"Lafayette, Louisiana, Azalea Trail Activities"—
Denise Lanclos, 88
"Lockerly Arboretum"—Jennifer Pollard, 86
"Navigating *The Azalean* Online"—Paul Beck, 16
"New Website Feature—Chapter Calendars"—
Paul Beck, 43
"Officer Candidates for 2020"—89
On the Cover—3, 27, 51, 75
"On the Worldwide Distribution of Azaleas"—
Gerald Klingaman, 76
"Plumleaf Azalea—*Rhododendron prunifolium*"—
Ken Gohring, 4
President's Letter—2, 26, 50, 74
"Pruning Azaleas"—Charlie Andrews, 37
"Recognizing Generous ASA Members"—Paul Beck, 9
"Renewal Time is Here!"—Paul Beck, 85
"Thoughts on the Power of One Dedicated Person"—
Barbara Stump, 41

"Where do our Azaleas Come From?"—Part I—
Barry Sperling, 35

"Where do our Azaleas Come From?— Part II—Becks'
Materials and Methods for Azalea Propagation"—62

Author Index

Andrews, Charles—23, 37, 69
Bauer, Rick—2, 26, 50, 52, 74
Beck, Carolyn—10, 62
Beck, Paul —9, 16, 43, 60, 84, 85
Gohring, Ken—4
Klingaman, Gerald—76
Lanclos, Denise—88
Miller, William C. III—12, 18, 64, 66, 67
Pollard, Jennifer—86
Sperling, Barry—35
Stump, Barbara—28, 41
Thau, Robert—36

Subject Index

Society News

2018 Financial Statement—44
2019 Convention—35, 65
2020 Convention—58, 84
ASA Distinguished Service Award—43
ASA Membership Renewal Reminder—60
Changes in Membership Dues Structure—70
Chapter News and New Members—11, 37, 58, 92
On the Cover—3, 27, 51, 75
President's Letters—2, 26, 50, 74

ASA Website

Chapter Calendars—43
Online Azalean—16

Azalea Care and Culture

"ASA Seed Exchange" —71
"Azalea Tasks for Spring"—23
Azalea Propagation Methods/Materials—35, 62
"Pruning Azaleas"—37

Azalea Cities

Lafayette, Louisiana—88

Azalea History

"Worldwide Distribution of Azaleas"—76

Azalea Hybrids/Hybridizers

2019 ASA Convention—28
'Freida's Benjamin'—12
"Lockerly Arboretum"—86

European Azaleas/Rhododendrons

"Azalea Gardens in Finland"—52

Native/Deciduous Azaleas

"Plumleaf Azalea—*R. prunifolium*"—4

Chapter News and New Members

Arkansas Chapter

Ronnie Palmer—President

The chapter's quarterly meeting, held October 8, 2019 was called to order by Ronnie Palmer at approximately 1:30 p.m. There were 16 members present at the meeting and 1 guest, Alle Theil.

Minutes from the previous meeting were read by Donna Palmer and accepted as read with one correction. Bob Benbow gave the Treasurer's report, which was approved and received for the record.

Old business: the minutes mentioned that there was a discussion of local dues, and that while there was discussion there had not been any motion before the membership. After a brief discussion, Janet Rensing made a motion, "That we do not have any local dues at this time, and the only dues would be on the National level paid annually." The motion was seconded and carried by vote. None opposed.

New Business: Election of Officers:

The following officers were nominated in their respective positions held in 2019, Ronnie Palmer President; Steve Brizzi Vice President; and Bob Benbow Treasurer. Janet Rensing was nominated for Secretary and agreed to take the position. Ronnie expressed that next year we would follow a more defined policy for elections wherein there would be a nominating committee for future elections.

Janet Rensing informed the group that Lonoke County Master Gardeners would be hosting an Education Expo on April 18, 2020 and has invited the Arkansas Chapter to attend and sell plants. Ronnie talked to us about the prospect of our group purchasing azaleas from Gary Howell Nursery near Mobile, Alabama, and then re-selling them at the Expo. Bob Benbow made a motion that we set a limit of \$400 to purchase the azaleas. The motion was seconded and carried. None opposed. Ronnie and Bob will get together to make the plant selections. Ronnie will be traveling to Gary Howell's to purchase the plants later.

The next meeting will be held on February 11, 2020.

Upcoming events:

- Plant Sale at "From the Ground Up Education Expo" April 18, 2020; volunteers will be needed to help sell plants.
- The cutting party will be held at Azalea Hill Nursery, June 20, 2020, at 9:00 am. Ronnie asked all of us to bring cuttings if we had them for sharing.
- The fall meeting will be held on October 20, 2020.

Phyllis Kirtley suggested that we purchase the necessary equipment to have available for presentation of slide shows, and/or other video presentations. Steve Brizzi said that he would investigate purchasing a projector and the necessary cables and let us know the cost of the equipment. The equipment used at the past meetings was provided by Debbie Atchison and she doesn't mind bringing the equipment in

the future. The business meeting was adjourned at 2:10.

The meeting was followed by a presentation by Steve Brizzi, highlighting a fall blooming azalea found in a landscape in Northwest Arkansas. Steve directed us to the National ASA Azalea data base where we attempted to determine what variety of azalea it was. Ronnie also assisted in showing us several areas on the website that are very useful. Steve showed us his propagation skills from the cuttings taken in 2018. He indicated that most of his cuttings became viable plants, even the ones that the deer munched on. One interesting note is that when propagating azaleas, cuttings and layering seemed to be the best method. You can obtain seeds from the ASA, but Donna and Ronnie both pointed out that may be a much more difficult method.

A brief discussion followed on hybridizing, a lot of science behind it, and patience needed.

Additionally, Steve told us about the Legacy Project founded by the ASA. The Legacy Project is a means of increasing knowledge about azalea hybridizers and their hybrids. It also encourages the propagation and introduction of these hybrids to a wider population. Steve indicated that he would contact the Ozark Botanical Garden to determine if the garden would be interested in establishing a Legacy

▼ Photo 1—Possible azaleaodendron seen in a residential Arkansas landscape.



Photo Steve Brizzi

Garden there.

Photo 1 is the picture that Steve shared with all of us. Ronnie spoke to Earl Sommerville and he thinks it is an "azaleadendron." He is checking with his rhododendron buddies about the identification; we hope to be able to provide everyone an update in the future. That makes this mystery even more interesting.

Special Note: Phyllis Kirtley informed us that our member Charlotte Roush passed away on September 27, 2019 at the age of 72. She is survived by her husband Gary Roush.

Ben Morrison Chapter

Diane Reinke—Secretary

Members of the Ben Morrison Chapter and the Potomac Valley Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society (ARS) gathered on October 23 at historic London Town and Gardens in Edgewater, Maryland, overlooking the South River, to dedicate a memorial bench in honor of Henry Gray Carter, who passed away in 2018 at age 97. Gray was a member of three ARS chapters and the Ben Morrison Chapter of the ASA. Gray grew many plants, most of which were shared with fellow gardeners in the Mid-Atlantic region. (Photos 2 and 3)

Leading off the list of speakers at the dedication, Joe Miller gave a brief history of the memorial bench project. Welcoming remarks were then given by Meenal Harankhedkar, Director of Horticulture at London Town. Lois Duffy provided biographical remarks about Gray and

▼ Photo 2—Gray Carter shown in Ginter Botanical Garden next to deciduous hybrid 'Aromi Sunny-Side-Up'.



Photo Don Hyatt

his contributions to the Ben Morrison Chapter and the ARS Potomac Valley and Mason Dixon Chapters. Don Hyatt and Carol Segree spoke about the plants donated to London Town in memory of Gray by the Northern Virginia Chapter of ASA and the Potomac Valley and Mason Dixon ARS Chapters. Don Hyatt then led a champagne toast to Gray. Attendees toured the London Town gardens and enjoyed a light lunch in the gazebo there. (Photo 4)

The Ben Morrison Chapter is also saddened by the passing of Dave Holm in October 2019. Dave was active in chapter activities for several years until he relocated to New York. Dave chaired the plant sale at the 2004 ASA National Convention held in Bowie, Maryland. Dave and his wife Eileen traveled in 2005 to Gregory Bald and Roan Mountain with Don Hyatt, Bob and Rosa McWhorter, and other azalea enthusiasts. The chapter held a potting party at Dave's home where chapter members repotted azalea cuttings that he had rooted and cared for in his greenhouse. The plants were later



Photo Don Hyatt

▲ Photo 3—Bench dedicated by Ben Morrison Chapter and placed this spring.

▼ Photo 4—ARS and ASA people turned out to toast Gray at the bench dedication. Seated (l to r): Carol Segree, Phyllis Rittman, Don Hyatt, Joe Miller. Standing (l to r): Harold Belcher, Bill and Gabrielle Scott, Richard Mohr, Rosa and Bob McWhorter, Diane Reinke, Donn and Louise Tuebner, Budne Reinke, Lois Duffy, Linda and Ray Smith, Mike Duffy, Steve Morrison, Bee Hobbs, Richard Bradshaw



Photo Don Hyatt

given to members, and some may have been sold at the plant sale.

The Ben Morrison Chapter hopes to end the year's activities with a holiday party.

Central Carolinas Chapter

Kevin McCorkle—President

For our early October meeting at University of North Carolina Charlotte Botanical Gardens McMillan Greenhouse, noted educator Dr. Charles Horn presented "Wild Azaleas of the Western Carolinas". Professor of Biology at Newberry College, Dr. Horn has worked over a decade to refine the identification, distribution, and ecology of the *Rhododendron* species native to the western Carolinas. Dr. Horn has done extensive research on the ecology of the South Carolina endemic May White Azalea (*Rhododendron eastmanii*), including documentation of known distribution, ecology, and flowering times. (Photo 5). During his presentation, Dr. Horn shared his experiences with the wild azaleas, including some challenges in native species identification in the western Carolinas. (Photo 6)

Our annual end of year meeting in early November at McMillan Greenhouse was a members only event that

included a buffet lunch of locally smoked NC pulled pork barbeque and sides. Dr. Larry Mellichamp moderated a group discussion based on his ever growing and sometimes controversial list of "Garden Maxims." Included in the discussion were the pros and cons of the use of peat in planting mixes, the observed benefits of gypsum and Epsom salts as planting mix amendments, and other words of gardening wisdom. The meeting concluded with our traditional silent auction of special plants, including many Strickland hybrids, several Perkins hybrid seedlings, a Roseshell Azalea (*Rhododendron prinophyllum*) from Arkansas, and some hard to find hybrid evergreen azaleas. The auction was made more entertaining by Dr. Mellichamp's contribution of 15 to 20 choice non-rhododendron companion plants including Mountain Silky Camellia (*Stewartia ovata*), Golden Larch (*Pseudolarix amabilis*), the rarely offered NC native Shale Barrens Pussy Toes (*Antennaria virginica*), and a nice specimen of Alexandrian/Poet's Laurel (*Danae racemosa*).

The chapter welcomes new member Lynn Small of Sophia, North Carolina.

Louisiana Chapter

Robert Lee—Member

Dr. Allen Owings was awarded the Fellows Award from the International Plant Propagators Society-Southern Region at their annual conference held this year in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. (Photo 7) The IPPS website had this to say about Allen's work over the years: "Dr. Allen Owings, while working for the LSU Extension Service, served the ornamental horticulture industry with research, outreach, and teaching. But Dr. Owings' generosity of spirit and selflessness lead him to work with numerous horticulture related groups and give hours of support to the industry above and beyond the call of duty. His outgoing personality and willingness to work has made him friends too numerous to ever count."

The chapter welcomes new members Chen Aoshuang of Baton Rouge, and Denise Lanclous of Lafayette.

Northern Virginia Chapter

Barry Sperling—Corresponding Secretary

An active fall has continued with the annual auction and plant sale in September, a lecture by the well-known speaker Don Hyatt on "Things I've Tried That Died," continuing work upgrading the conditions surrounding the Klimavicz Display Garden at Meadowlark Gardens in Vienna, Virginia, and will finish with the annual Holiday Social and business meeting, hosted this year by Jean and Lars Larson.

As always, Carolyn Beck was our volunteer coordinator for the auction/sale and Paul Beck supplied the computer support for all sales that were barcoded, scanned, and registered on a database, as well as allowing credit cards for purchases. Many who hauled tables and pots around, as well as cleaning up afterwards, included Carol Allen, Rick and Susan Bauer, Paul Davis, Pati Gabaldoni, Ralph Habegger, Don Hyatt, Lars Larson, Diane Marcus, David and Patsy Meadows, Dave and Leslie Nanney, Dan Neckel, Barry Sperling, Robert Thau (from Texas!) and Andrea Scurlock.



Photo Charles Horn

▲ Photo 5—*Rhododendron eastmanii* or May White azalea, a long-time focus of Dr. Charles Horn's research.

▼ Photo 6— The rare *Rhododendron vaseyi*, also known as the Pinkshell azalea, one of the first species azaleas to bloom in the spring.



Photo Charles Horn



Photo Buddy Lee

▲ Photo 7—Bobby Green (left) presented the 2019 IPPS-Southern Region Fellows Award to Allen Owings.



Photo Barry Sperring

▲ Photo 8—Members assisting with delivery of auction plants (l to r): Paul Beck (at computer), Dave Nanney, Rick Bauer, Paul Davis.

Mike and Debbie White, of White's Nursery donated some plants for the live auction, too. (Photo 8)

Work on making the Klimavicz Display Garden a showpiece this year included the volunteer efforts of Carolyn and Paul Beck, Joanne and Dan Neckel, David Meadows, Dave Nanney, Rick and Susan Bauer, Lars Larson, Joe Gutierrez, Mike White, Richard Mohr, Dick Cecka, Fred Newlan, Don Hyatt, and Anne Marie and Marianna McKinnon.

Of special note, Elizabeth and Roy Cosby recently donated 135 azaleas to the club.

Also, our club donated 51 Klimavicz and 39 McDonald cultivars to the Jenkins Arboretum in Devon, PA.

We expect the activities to continue past the Holiday Social in December and through 2020. Join us!

The chapter welcomes new member Jimmy Yang of Warrenton, VA.

Reverend John Drayton Chapter

The chapter welcomes new member Tim Charpia of Summerville, SC.

Texas Chapter

Caryl Hall—Secretary

The Texas Chapter met at the Pineywoods Native Plant Center on the SFASU campus in Nacogdoches, Texas, October 30, 2019.

The sticking party last spring has resulted in several hundred plants that will be sold at future plant sales to raise money for horticulture scholarships. This year's scholarship winners were very appreciative of the money and sent great thank you notes. The 2020 March ASA convention was discussed as well as future trips to various gardens and nurseries. The next chapter plant sale will be held in conjunction with the Tyler Azalea Trail in Spring 2020, soon after the 2020 convention in Houston.

Next spring there will be a joint meeting with the Texas Forest Country and Louisiana Chapters in Jasper, Texas. Current officers were re-elected for a second term in 2020. With sadness we report that we lost member Cecil Settle of Pearland, TX, in September.

The chapter welcomes the Nacogdoches Convention and Visitor's Bureau and Gary Brock of Houston as new members of the Texas Chapter.

The Texas Forest Country Chapter

Robert Thau—President

The chapter held its fall meeting on October 14; our first order of business was the election of officers for 2020. Our chapter voted to have our current officers serve another term. Another topic we discussed was the preparation for our upcoming fall festival. We had a booth at the event, with azaleas not common in this area for sale to the public. The festival went well, with the chapter signing up two new members.

The beautification project of the Sandy Creek Park is well on its way; most of the structures are erected and one of the parking lots is in progress. It's getting that time of the year to winterize our gardens and wait for spring to arrive.

The chapter welcomes new members Loren and Lisa Hassinger and Steve and Colleen Garcia, all of Jasper, TX.

Vaseyi Chapter

The chapter welcomes new member Rob Kuetemeyer of Asheville, SC.

New At-large Members

The ASA welcomes new At-large members Booker Moritz, Verona, VA and Jim Sproul, Bakersfield, CA.



Magnolia opens at night for the first time in its storied history as Chinese lanterns debut in a North American public garden. Stroll through custom-designed installations fusing ancient Chinese culture with images that represent the flora and fauna of America's oldest garden.

查尔斯顿

LIGHTS OF MAGNOLIA

REFLECTIONS OF A CULTURAL EXCHANGE

NOVEMBER 2019
- MARCH 2020

ZigongLanternGroup.com

Magnolia 
Plantation & Gardens

3550 Ashley River Road
Charleston, SC 29414

Learn more at
MagnoliaPlantation.com

