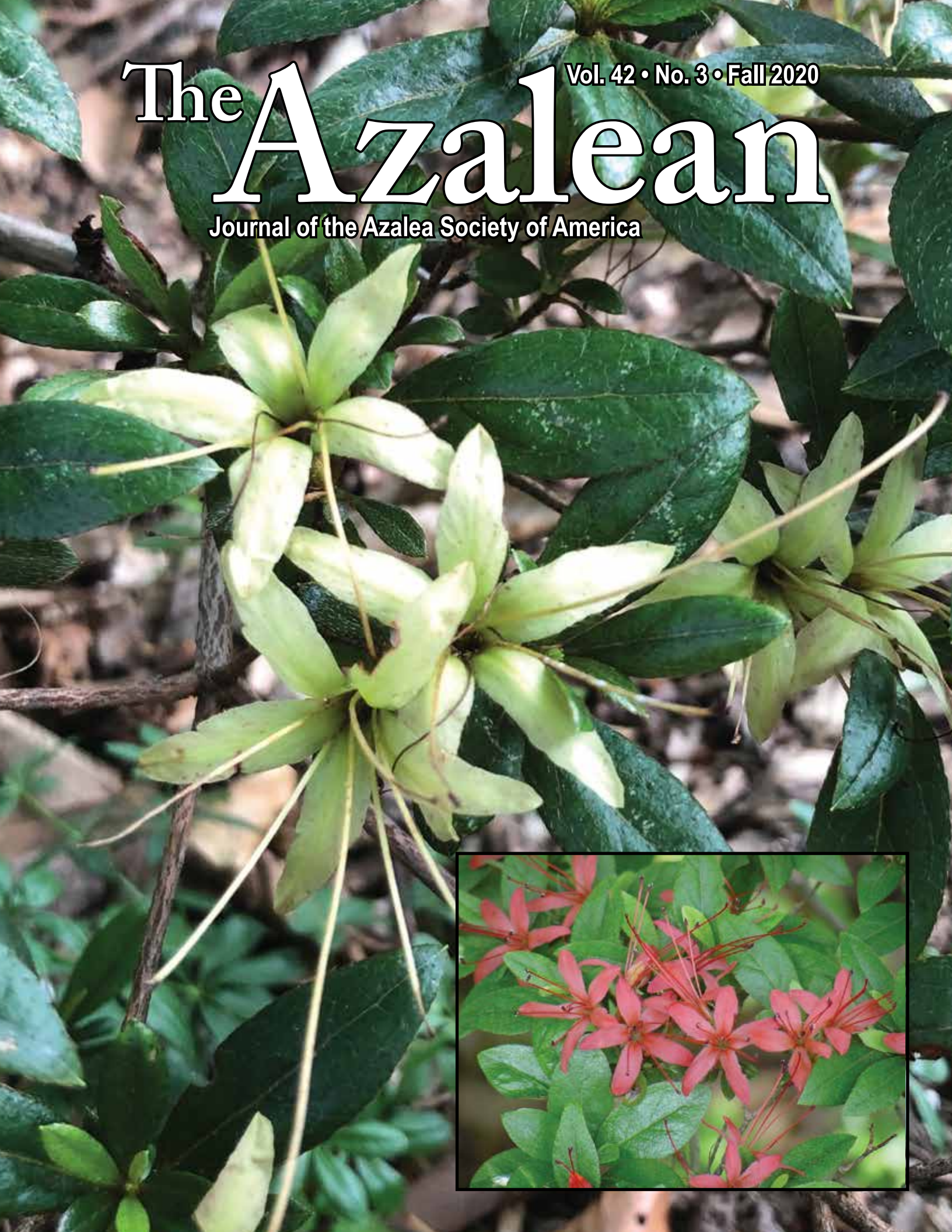


The **Azalean**

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President's Letter

Rick Bauer—Yorktown, Virginia

This has been a very unusual year for all of us. Normal activities have been disrupted and we have had to learn how to operate under a new set of rules. Some call this the “new normal.” I’m hoping that this is not a permanent situation; however, I suspect that going forward, we will have to behave differently than in the past.

The COVID-19 situation, and the requirements to maintain “social distancing” have resulted in many activities being canceled or done remotely via applications such as Zoom. The first major impact was in March when we canceled our annual convention in Houston, Texas. At that time, we were operating out of what we thought was an abundance of caution. It turns out our actions were more than prudent. Those who have failed to take the situation seriously are unfortunately finding out how serious the impact is.

While we all hope there will be a vaccine soon, we have to plan to operate under the existing situation for the foreseeable future. In that regard, the folks from the Central Carolinas Chapter are relooking at the way we operate our conventions in preparation for the Charlotte convention in 2021. We are still planning on a convention; however, there will likely be major changes to facilitate social distancing. More information will be available in the Winter 2020 issue.

Earlier this year I sent out a notice about a draft US Forest Service management plan for the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests which was out for public comment. Don Hyatt did an excellent analysis of the plan, which is posted as “Essay on the Appalachians” at <http://www.arspvc.org/newsletter.html>. I forwarded this analysis with a cover letter to the US Forest Service, expressing our concerns with the proposed plan. I know that others in our society (and other groups) also submitted comments. It is really heartening to see the members of the public involved in the development of policy. We will continue to monitor the situation and will keep you apprised of the outcome.

Work continues on developing Legacy Gardens. The Spring 2020 issue of *The Azalean* had an update on the efforts ongoing with the Legacy Project, including the development of Legacy Gardens. Since that article was written, Jenkins Arboretum has expressed an interest in developing a Holly Springs Legacy Garden. This effort is being supported by the Northern Virginia Chapter. I encourage other chapters to sponsor Legacy Gardens.

Finally, we have been updating some of our existing artifacts. We recently updated the society advertising trifold and are in the process of printing new ones. Thanks go to Charlie Andrews and Carol Segree in effecting this change. Thanks to Charlie and to Allen Owings for their work on updating our letterhead logo (below). Our thanks also go to the Louisiana Chapter for funding this update.



The Azalea Society of America, organized December 9, 1977 and incorporated in the District of Columbia, is an educational and scientific non-profit association devoted to the culture, propagation, and appreciation of azaleas which are in the subgenera *Tsutsusi* and *Pentanthera* of the genus *Rhododendron* in the Heath family (*Ericaceae*).

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In This Issue

VOLUME 42

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FALL 2020

Features

52 Today, My Favorite Linwood Hardy Azalea Is...

By William C. Miller III—Bethesda, Maryland

57 Response to Will Ferrell's Questions for Azalea

*Mavens to Address in *The Azalean**

By Dr. Ajit Thakur—Springfield, Virginia

62 Gardening During COVID-19

By Richard Bauer—Yorktown, Virginia

66 Advice from An Azalea Widow

By Janet B. Miller—Bethesda, Maryland

67 New Azaleas for the Trade

Society News

50 President's Letter

68 Help the ASA by Donating via Amazon Smile

Paul Beck, Treasurer

69 Chapter News and New Members

On the Cover

'Chojuho', the small star-shaped Satsuki Hybrid with narrow petals which begins blooming in May as a red flower (see the insert), persists into the fall, and gradually undergoes a change in color through orangey red to brownish orange to greenish-yellow. Most ASA members were first introduced to 'Chojuho' when it appeared on the cover of *The Azalean* 23(2): Summer 2001, which was a special Satsuki issue. Since 'Chojuho' doesn't resemble what most people think of as a typical azalea flower, it remains a collector's curiosity. It dates back to the Taisho Era (1912-1926) in Japan, but nothing is known about its lineage. Morphologically, it looks remarkably similar to 'Melba's Dream', which blooms earlier and whose greenish-yellow flowers also persist. (See related article on page 57. Text and photos by William C. Miller III.)



Today, My Favorite Linwood Hardy Azalea Is....

William C. Miller III—Bethesda, Maryland

This is the second in a series of “favorite azalea” articles. In the lead article, the Glenn Dale ‘Ambrosia’ was featured as my favorite Glenn Dale Hybrid.¹ Picking one azalea from 454 Glenn Dale hybrids was a difficult task. One would think that selecting a favorite from a comparatively small hybrid group would be easier, but that isn’t necessarily so. After considerable thought, I am pleased to report that today my favorite Linwood Hardy azalea is ‘Opal’.



Photo Charles E. Fischer

▲ Figure 1—Mr. Charles William Fischer, Sr. (left) and Dr. Charles W. Fischer, Jr., at a formal event at the flower shop in Atlantic City (since closed) in the 1970s. They are grandfather and father respectively of Mr. Charles Eugene Fischer, President of Fischer Flowers, who is the fifth generation Fischer to head the flower shop that bears their name.

▼ Figure 2—Aerial view of the Fischer Greenhouses at the Oak Avenue location in Linwood, New Jersey, circa 1920s or 1930s. With an estimated 20,000 sq. ft. of growing area under glass, Fischer developed a reputation for azaleas and African violets.



Photo Charles E. Fischer

The Beginning

In 1951, Dr. Charles W. Fischer, Jr. of Fischer Greenhouses, a producer of florist azaleas in Linwood, New Jersey (established in 1876), initiated a project to develop hardy, greenhouse forcing azaleas that could be grown in the field [See Fig. 1].² The cost of maintaining tender plant material in greenhouses over the winter was becoming too expensive. Initial results, however, were disappointing [See Fig. 2]. Three quarters of the seedlings under evaluation were winter killed and the remainder did not meet Fischer standards. In the meantime, in 1953, G(eorge) Albert Reid joined Fischer and took over the project [See Fig. 3]. By 1957, a number of promising candidates had been identified, and by 1959, many double, semi-double, and hose-in-hose forms had been selected. When Reid retired in 1967, Fischer kept those Linwood varieties that best suited the commercial community’s requirements. At this point, Reid took a slightly different tack. Now, Reid’s goal was to produce large flowering, fast growing, long blooming, compact plants that were easily forced, “hardy,” and suitable for use in the landscape. [See Fig. 4]

As a group, the “Linwood Hardies”(as Fischer called them) are described by Galle as “... a heterogeneous conglomeration of azalea crosses including back and sibling crosses” involving Kurume, Kaempferi, and tender forcing varieties.³ The records are incomplete and many of the plants were distributed under number for testing. Many of them were eventually named for family and friends. As far as I know, they all have been registered with the Royal Horticultural Society, or at least they appear in the International Rhododendron Register and Checklist (IRRC).⁴ Galle lists 49 Linwood Hardies, which includes the S series (See Table 1).

Azalean Articles and the ASA Mail List

The first article in *The Azalean* about the Linwood Hardy Hybrids appeared in the January 1980 issue and was written by Frank B. White, Jr., one of the ASA’s founding fathers.⁵ White recommended the Linwoods because they were all double or hose-in-hose, had vivid and pure colors, and flowered in early or mid-season. He liked their growth habit and their good winter foliage color, and, last but not least, he had them for sale at Azalea Acres Farm, his nursery in Lanham, Maryland. Frank White was a first class marketer/promoter, and I cannot think of anyone who has had a greater impact on the popularity of azaleas in the Washington DC metropolitan area. A sequel to White’s article appeared in the following issue of *The Azalean*. It summarized George Harding’s experiences with the Linwood Hardy Hybrids.⁶ George had them planted on his wind-swept “hill,” a ¾-acre test plot adjacent to his home in Germantown, Maryland, where they were fully exposed to the elements. If a plant performed, i.e., survived and bloomed on his hill, that plant

Table 1. List of named and unnamed S series Linwood Hardies with brief Galle descriptions in series number order.

S #	Cultivar Name	Galle Description³	IRRC Page#⁴
S1	‘John Brockett’	vivid purplish red 61D, double	682
S2	‘Evelyn Hart’	pale purplish pink 68B, double, hose-in-hose	426
S3	‘Dimsdale’	deep purplish pink 68A, hose-in-hose, frilled	347
S8			
S10			
S13	‘Doctor Thomas McMillan’	deep purplish pink 68A, double hose-in-hose,	357
S15			
S26	‘Theodore S. Stecki’	vivid purplish red 61D, double, hose-in-hose	1357
S43	‘Thomas Rose’	moderate red 47C, double, hose-in-hose, ruffled	1361
S44			
S50			
S51			
S52			
S53			
S54	‘Lotta Burke’	deep pink 52C, hose-in-hose, frilled	815
S55	‘Edward W. Collins’	deep pink 52C, double hose-in-hose, ruffled	392
S56	‘Lorna Carter’	strong purplish red 54B, hose-in-hose	814
S57	‘Doctor James Hitchner’	pale purplish pink 68B, hose-in-hose, ruffled	355
S58			
S59			
SX2	‘Walter Kern’	deep purplish pink 68A, double, hose-in-hose	1432
SX8	‘George School’	vivid purplish red 55A, hose-in-hose, ruffled	500
SX10			



Photo Dr. Franklin West

▲ Figure 3— G(eorge) Albert Reid, the developer of the Linwood Hardies (1909-1986).

▼ Figure 4—Al Reid in his garden at Linwood, New Jersey, with his original plant of 'Opal', October 1974.



Photo Dr. Franklin West

was both heat and cold hardy. More recently, there was an article by Carolyn Beck about Ted Stecki and 'Theodore S. Stecki', the S series Linwood Hardy Azalea that Reid introduced in 1982 to honor his friend.⁷

The Linwood Hardies have been the topic of discussion on the ASA Internet mail list over the years. However, there is no indication that the earlier postings from the original entity were forwarded to the successor system, which is azaleas@yahoogroups.com. Fortunately, my physical files contained a hard copy of a posting from former ASA member John R. Mackenroth whose father was employed at Fischer from 1966 through 1980. That e-mail is presented here in its original form [See Fig. 5]. Understand that it is presented as posted, and no effort has been made to correct for the rules regarding the enclosure of cultivar names in single quotes or his liberal use of double quotes. The Mackenroth posting is valuable because it provides insight into the origins of 'Linwood Pink', 'Linwood Pink #1', 'Linwood Pink #2',

Subject: [AZ] More on re-use of plan
Date: Sat, 2 Nov 2002 18:19:14 UT
From: John R Mackenroth <jrm1213
Reply-To: azaleas@azaleas.org
To: azaleas@azaleas.org

In the mid 1960's Fischer Green
 four varieties of "Linwood Hardy
 patented as Linwood Pink.

By 1972 "C-28" was found to be
 production. In it's place seedling
 "C-28" is registered as "Linwood
 "Linwood Pink # 2".

When Al Reid decided to name so
 Linwood Pink". It is now known as

Also in the 1960's Fischer sold
 "Linwood White". The selections so
 and "H-11".

My father, Azaleas grower for
 that it would be better to grow on
 White" and continued the propagat.
 "H-5" and "H-11" which were event
 "Garden State White" respectively
 "Improved Linwood White" and later

While traveling on the Eastern
 1970's I stopped at a small nurser.
 have been Daly's Nursery, I don't
 white azalea which looked to be L.
 believed that the variety original

Another variety I have never se
 sold until around 1968 as "Garden

My father says that it was uncor
 production. That was before the
 regulator and chemical pinching as

One last note : Fischer sold Af
 number of different varieties as

▲ Figure 5— Original e-mail posted November 2, 2002, by John R. Mackenroth whose father was emp

'Improved Linwood Pink', 'Linwood Pink Giant', 'Linwood White', 'Garden State White', 'Improved Linwood White', and 'Linwood Luster'. Mr. Mackenroth states that four Linwood Hardies were patented: 'Linwood Pink No 1', 'Doctor Curtis Alderfer', 'Nellie', and 'Doctor Thomas McMillan III'.

'Opal', an Excellent Mid-Atlantic Performer

While I'm fond of bi-colors like 'Janet Rhea' (N-4+, a sport of N-4 and a sister of N-3)³, my favorite Linwood Hardy is 'Opal' (L-1) [See Fig. 6,7]. The formula for 'Opal' is (A-3) X (K-28). A-3 is an un-named Fischer seedling and K-28, according to Galle, is "...a hardy 'Macrantha' from Bobbink and Atkins."⁽³⁾ According to the IRRC, K-28 is identified as 'Mrs L.C. Fischer' (parentage unknown) which was introduced by Bobbink and Atkins around 1940.⁴ While 'Opal' is an OK pink double, the thing I like most about it is that it is an extremely reliable fall bloomer. If you discount

... names and how it was done in Linwood.

...@juno.com>

...houses in Linwood, New Jersey patented
"Azaleas". The selection "C-28" was

...not hardy enough and was dropped from
...ng "K-2" was sold as Linwood Pink. Now
...Pink #1" and "K-2" is registered as

...ome varieties he dubbed "K-11" "Improved
...s "Linwood Pink Giant".

...d three varieties under the name of
...old as "Linwood White" were "H-5", "H-9"

...Fischer from 1967 through 1980, decided
...ne variety under the name of "Linwood
...ion of "H-9". Al Reid continued to grow
...ually registered as "Linwood White" and
... "H-4" was initially offered by Al as
...r registered as "Linwood Lustre".

...Shore (of the Chesapeake) in the late
...ry owned by a man named Daly. It may
...remember. He was growing a double
...inwood "H-9" as "Daly Double". He
...ted in Linwood.

...een is seedling "C-37" which Fischer
...State Crimson".

...ntrollable so he removed it from
...use of Cycocel and Off-Shoot as growth
...gent.

...rican Violets world wide and offered a
..."Edna Fischer" over the years.

2002, on the ASA mail-list by former ASA member
...loyed by Fischer from 1966 through 1980.

the Encore® Hybrids, and the newer multiseason bloomers coming down the pike, there are only a handful of cultivars that reliably bloom in the fall in the Washington metropolitan area. The majority of those are selections of *Rhododendron kaempferi* like 'Dorsett', 'October' (aka 'Indian Summer'), 'Two-Season Red', and 'Armstrong's Fall', and their colors are variations of the same orangey-red hue. If conditions are optimal, 'Koromo-shikibu' and a number of Glenn Dale Hybrids will throw a flower here and there... but nothing like the mass of color that is 'Opal'. It is so floriferous in the fall that it is hard to believe that there will be any buds left to bloom in the coming spring.

The Hybridizing Continued

In retirement, Reid continued hybridizing and established his own nursery operation. One of his interests was to develop additional fall bloomers like 'Opal'. In 1973, Reid crossed 'Opal' X 'Nellie'. This was designated the "S" series



Photo William C. Miller III

▲ Figure 6—'Opal' blooming in the author's garden on May 6, 2013.

▼ Figure 7—'Opal' blooming in the author's garden on October 23, 2016.



Image scanned by William C. Miller III

Photo William C. Miller III

(See Table 1). Unfortunately, no fall bloomers emerged, but in the opinion of Ted Stecki, some of them turned out to be real "eye catchers."⁸ Twenty-three seedlings resulted from the S series. As before, they were doubles, hose-in-hose, and double hose-in-hose flowers. Depending on whose descriptions you use, the colors were light pink, dark pink, various shades of salmon, moderate red, vivid purplish red, and strong purplish red. Reid also performed crosses that led to the T series and the V series, but no information about these two groups has been found.

Due to poor health, Reid discontinued his nursery operation in 1983. In the early 80s however, Ted Stecki, his friend and fellow nurseryman (at Hillhouse Nursery), volunteered to help Reid sell the new S series plants, and after Reid's death in 1986 from emphysema, Stecki set about making all of the Linwoods available through Hillhouse Nursery [See Fig. 8]. That was the last that I heard about the Linwood Hardies commercially.



Photo: Sue Lapolla, Ted Stecki's daughter.

▲ Figure 8— Theodore S. Stecki (1936-2016).

The Future for the Linwood Hardies

With the passing of Ted Stecki on November 26, 2016, after a lengthy and debilitating illness, it is not clear that any individual has come forward to maintain the availability of the Linwood Hardies. Further, my impression is that the S series was in the process of being distributed when Al Reid died. Twelve of the 23 S series azaleas were named by Reid, and there is no evidence that Ted Stecki named any of the S series or evaluated and named any of the T or V series plants.

I suspect the Linwood Hardies are not widely available in the market today. However, an Internet search reveals that 'Opal' is, in various sizes, available from White's Nursery (Deb and Mike White) in Germantown, Maryland. They don't ship, but they have a nice webpage at <http://www.whites-nursery.com/index.html> from which a list of their inventory can be generated.

'Opal' and the Linwood Hardies may yet survive as a result of the Azalea Society's Legacy program where an effort is being made to "Help ensure the continuation of knowledge of azalea hybridizers and their plants and maintain true specimens of their cultivars."⁹ Without that focus, the Linwood Hardy Hybrids will join the many thousands of azaleas that are listed in the IRRC... but are not available anywhere.

While one might argue that 'Opal' is just another pink double, I submit that its tendency to reliably bloom in May and October in the mid-Atlantic region is an extraordinary quality that warrants its selection as my favorite Linwood Hardy Azalea.

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Note: A-3, K-28, L-1, N-3, N-4, and N-4+ are working names or breeder's names that were used to identify/manage plants prior to introduction and the formal (cultivar) naming process.

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William C. Miller III is a recipient of the Brookside Gardens Chapter's Frederic P. Lee Commendation (1988) and is twice the recipient of the ASA's Distinguished Service Award (1995 and 2002). He was chairman of the ASA's Glenn Dale Preservation Project, and a co-chairman of Dick West's Ten Oaks Glenn Dale Project. He is past president of the Brookside Gardens Chapter, a former vice president of the ASA, a past member of the ASA board of directors, past co-chairman of the ASA's membership committee, past chairman of the ASA's public information committee, the longest serving member of the ASA's Editorial Advisory Board, and a frequent contributor to *The Azalean*.

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Response to “Questions for Azalea Mavens to Address in *The Azalean*”

Ajit K. Thakur, Ph.D.—Springfield, Virginia

In the Spring 2016 issue of *The Azalean*¹, Mr. Will Ferrell raised six azalea-related questions. I am by no means a guru of all azaleas (species and hybrids, evergreen and deciduous) but would like to share my research, communications, observations, and experience to address some of the questions that he raised.

Question 1: Can This Journal Print More Information about the Satsuki?

There have been several articles in *The Azalean* on the Satsuki^{2,3,4,5} and many books (Lee⁶, Galle⁷). Unfortunately, most of the publications in Japan, e.g. *Satsuki Dai Jiten*⁸ (*Satsuki Large Dictionary*) have very few English descriptions. I have touched on some of the issues regarding the Satsuki in my earlier articles. I will briefly describe some facts. The word Satsuki means the Chinese Fifth Lunar Month that covers late May to late June in our case. The group Satsuki consists of two species—Satsuki (*Rhododendron indicum*) and Maruba Satsuki or the Round Leaf Satsuki (*R. tamurae*, previously *R. eriocarpum*) and their within- and between-group hybrids. Both species are endemic in southern Japan, specifically, southern Honshu, Shikoku, and mostly the Yakushima region of Kyushu. In the lower reaches of the hilly regions of the Yakushima prefecture (particularly Tanegashima, Tokara, etc.), we find mostly *R. tamurae*. The species *R. indicum* (with many forms) are hardier than *R. tamurae*. Many of the original large flowered Satsuki are natural hybrids of the two species that originated in the regions where the two meet. Because of over-harvesting and human encroachment, many of them have disappeared.

In the 1692 woodblock print work *Kinshu Makura* (in English, *A Brocade Pillow*⁹), the author Ito Ihei described many different forms and color patterns of the two species and their natural hybrids. Many of the species and hybrid Satsuki exhibit sporting due to mutation and other such phenomena; examples: ‘Kokinsai’ (Ko means small in Japanese; it is a sport of ‘Kinsai’, aka ‘Polypetalum’ a strap-petal form of *R. indicum*); ‘Otakumi’. In Japan, they are called *Shide* Satsuki, the word *shide* means streamers-like irregular, jagged, strap-petal flowers. They are borderline hardy north of Montgomery County, Maryland. A special note: ‘Kinsai’ was originally introduced as *R. laciniatum* in the US. Various forms of *R. tamurae* are less hardy but can be grown with some winter protection in Zone 7. Incidentally, the popular white compact Satsuki ‘Gunpo’ (sold in the US as ‘Gumpo’) is not a form of *R. tamurae*. It is an old Satsuki selection. The extremely large (sometimes over 5" diameter) flowered plants, such as ‘Meiko’ and ‘Daisetsuzan’, are quite possibly crosses between *R. indicum* and *R. tamurae* and are hardy to Zone 7 with some winter protection. The contorted-leaf Satsuki azaleas such as ‘Rinpu’, ‘Oimatsu’,

and ‘Secchu-no-matsu’ are borderline hardy in Zone 7. They would sometimes lose the contorted-leaf nature to become solid-leaf forms and eventually die. The plant ‘Shiriyuno-homare’, which also exhibits some contorted leaves, is hardy to Zone 7 and is a robust grower (5' in 20 years). Additionally, this plant has lavender-colored strap-petal flowers. Somatic mutation and chemical exposure caused many Satsuki Hybrids to form variegated leaf cultivars (for example, ‘Keigetsu’, ‘Shira-fuji’, ‘Murasaki-fuji’). They are borderline hardy in Zone 7. The other phenomenon with these plants, also in Girard’s Variegated Sword, ‘Girard’s Variegated Gem’, ‘Girard’s Variegated Hot Shot’, etc., is that they start showing solid green-leafed branches. If these are not cut off, the variegated branches may start dying off and one will eventually end up with the original cultivars without any variegation. There are several forms of the Satsuki species that are hardy to the warmer parts of Zone 6. Examples are ‘Beni-kirin’ (‘Beni-kirishima’ in the US; may grow up to 15' or more in height in the shade and is double orange-red), ‘Warai-jishi’ (‘Macranthum Double Pink’ in the US), ‘Hakatashiro’ (‘Macranthum Album’ in the US). Most of the *R. indicum* selections were originally introduced in the West as *Macrantha* or *Lateritia* and are often sold by that designation. For those who want to go after the illusive yellow evergreen azalea, the mystery may lie in a particular Satsuki called ‘Chojuhu’ [eternal youth in Japanese]. ‘Chojuhu’ is a strap-petal azalea that starts blooming in May and the flowers last until winter, changing its color from light orange-red with yellow tinge in the center and eventually becoming deeper red with a distinct yellow center. This flavonoid (yellow pigment) introduced into a pure white Satsuki like ‘Gunpo’ or ‘Daisetsuzan’ bears the possibility of a yellow evergreen azalea. For many other interesting aspects of Satsuki azaleas, both species and hybrids, see my articles published earlier in *The Azalean*.^{2,3,4,5}

Question 2: How Cold-Hardy are Flower Buds of Azaleas?

‘George Lindley Taber’ is a Southern Indian Hybrid originally introduced by Dr. H. H. Hume in the Glen Saint Mary area of Florida. It is hardy in Zone 7 with winter protection. It was originally meant for Zones 8 and 9. The evergreen azalea ‘Appleblossom’ is a Kurume Hybrid. Its Japanese name is ‘Ho-o’ and was introduced by the Domoto brothers, (California nurserymen of Japanese parentage), under the English name. It is both plant- and bud-hardy to Zone 7. There is also a deciduous Mollis Hybrid by that name.

‘Sekidera’ belongs to the *Mucronatum* Group. Originally, *R. mucronatum* was thought to be a species. None of the members of this group has ever been found in the wild and,

as a consequence, it lost its species designation and is noted as *R. × mucronatum*. There are various other members of this group that used to be widely distributed by southern nurserymen, such as ‘Mucronatum Album’ (‘Ledifolia Alba’ or ‘Indicum Album’), ‘Lilacina’, etc. Most of them are hardy to Zone 7 (and of course in Zones 8 and 9).

The Mucronatum Group played a very important role (along with the Satsuki species and hybrids and *R. kaempferi* and its hybrids) in the development of Ben Morrison’s Glenn Dale and Robert Gartrell’s Robin Hill Hybrids. The Mucronatum Group consists of both natural hybrids and human crosses of *R. ripense* (Kishi-tsutsuji), riverbank azalea, and its close relative *R. stenopetalum*, previously *R. macrosepalum* (Mochi-tsutsuji), big sepal azalea. They are both fragrant and the fragrance is inherited by the entire hybrid group. The popular cultivar ‘Delaware Valley White’ was not introduced from Japan, and its origin is cloudy. Some claimed it is the same Mucronatum Hybrid ‘Indicum Album’. Comparison between the two plants fails to show identity or similarity. I believe this cultivar, which is hardier than the other members of the Mucronatum Group, is quite likely a “Found in my Backyard” natural cross in the East Coast between ‘Indicum Album’ or some other plant of the Mucronatum Group and a midseason-blooming Kurume Hybrid. ‘Delaware Valley White’ is generally hardy to warmer parts of Zone 6, provided a microclimate. The plant erroneously called ‘Koromo-shikibu’ is actually ‘Hana-guruma’ [flower cart] and is a selection of *R. stenopetalum* f. *linearifolium*. (See Thakur, with the picture from my garden on the front cover⁴).

There are several strap-petal forms of *R. stenopetalum*—‘Koromo-kagae’, ‘Saigyō’, ‘Shide-guruma’, ‘Kin-no-zai’ ‘Shiro Hana-guruma’, and ‘Seigai’. In my recollection, only ‘Koromo-shikibu’ (to be correct, ‘Hana-guruma’) and ‘Seigai’ (both petals and leaves are extremely narrow) are the only two of these plants that were introduced in the US. There is a pure white strap-petal form of *R. stenopetalum* f. *linearifolium* (‘Shiro Hana-guruma’ in Japanese) available in Japan. (My picture from Japan is included in this discussion, See Photo 1). In my experience ‘Seigai’ is short lived in Zone 7, where it blooms sporadically in the spring and fall. R. K. Beattie introduced a plant named ‘Koromo-shikibu’, listed under PI 77142, No. 600 as a Kurume Hybrid with white flowers with corolla tipped purple, different from ‘Hana-guruma’. *Kinshu Makura* shows many plants of this form belonging to the *R. stenopetalum*, *R. indicum*, and *R. kaempferi* species. The English translation of *Kinshu Makura* (*A Brocade Pillow*) has many comments about many of these plants by Dr. John Creech.⁹ *R. stenopetalum* is a semi-deciduous (or semi-evergreen, depends on how one likes it) in the colder parts of Zone 7. ‘Lady Locks’, grown from seed of an *R. stenopetalum* by Dr. Tsuneshige Rokujo of the Tokyo University and introduced in the US by his friend Polly Hill of Martha’s Vineyard under the North Tisbury Group designation is the common species in the US gardens. I have the same plant along with the species obtained from the West Coast, and they are virtually identical. In general, most of these species and their hybrids are hardy in Zones 7-9.

None of my *R. stenopetalum* (the species type and the selection ‘Lady Locks’) and ‘Hana-guruma’ (‘Koromo-shikibu’, misnomer) ever failed to bloom in the last 40 years. They are extremely vigorous (4' x 8' in 40 years). They demand space and depending upon the winter condition they are more semi-deciduous than semi-evergreen. Their leaves are rough and sticky and trap mites and other bugs, and their flowers are very fragrant. ‘Seigai’ is an exception as mentioned earlier in terms of both hardiness and floriferousness. ‘Hana-guruma’ is probably the most floriferous of them all. Many people seem to have no problem with it in south-central New Jersey, Zone 6, most years. As an additional note, I acquired three strap-petaled white ‘Koromo-shikibu’ from three different sources on the East Coast. After the first year, they all reverted back to solid white flowered ‘Ledifolium Album’. Some gardeners may have different experiences with this plant.

Question 3: What is the Experience of Members Spraying for Petal Blight (*Ovulinia azaleae*)?

When Bayleton[®] (triadimefon, a triazole fungicide, developed by Bayer AG) first came out in 1973, we were all excited about its promise and spent a lot of money to buy and use it. The Azalea Society of America bought some in the wholesale market and members bought it from the society at a slightly reduced price. It was very expensive for hobbyists like me and still is (e.g., a discount price on the Internet is about \$190 US for four 5.5 oz. packets). I sprayed my mid-season-blooming Satsuki Hybrids, Glenn Dales, Robin Hills, Ring Hybrids, Back Acres, Harris Hybrids, etc. with it. Alas, I still had petal blight on my plants. According to my late friend Malcolm Clark of North Carolina, my timing was not precisely right. In my understanding, the spraying must be repeated. All of the fungicides are not necessarily safe, particularly if one has children and pets around. I have since stopped using any of these chemicals. The Glenn Dale, Robin Hill, Ring, Back Acres, Harris, and other hybrids and some of the mid-season blooming Satsuki Hybrids are petal blight prone, as one or more of the parents tend to suffer from petal blight. From what I have seen and from the description by the manufacturer, spraying does not damage the plants.

There is an old article on the topic by two scientists from Rutgers University Plant Pathology Department¹⁰ who published their research findings on the petal blight topic and showed comparative effectiveness of various fungicides both individually as well as in combination. They defined two indices: the Ovulinia Index ($0\% \leq I_o \leq 100\%$) and the Sclerotia Index ($0 \leq I_s \leq 3$; 0 = None, 1 = Few, 2 = Moderate, and 3 = Abundant, with fractional numbers being possible). The results of their investigation showed Benlate[®] 50W (DuPont) 8 oz/100 gallons achieving an $I_o = 63\%$ 2 and $I_s = 0.3$; and Daconil[®] 2787 (Diamond Shamrock) 2 lb/gallon achieving an $I_o = 43\%$ and $I_s = 2.6$. They concluded that a combination of the above two would provide maximum control of petal blight cycle when applied repeatedly before flowering. At the time they performed their investigation, Bayleton[®] was not yet available. Unfortunately, because of a large toxicological profile, DuPont has voluntarily withdrawn Benlate[®] from the US market and stopped



Photo Dr. Ajit Thakur

▲ Photo 1—‘Shiro Hana-guruma’ is an example of a strap-petal azalea. It is possibly derived from *R. stenopetalum*. Photo taken in Japan.

manufacturing it in 2001. Peterson and Davis published an updated version of their investigation¹¹ in 1977 that includes Bayleton® and many other fungicides for ovulinia control. Unfortunately, they did not show any of the two indices for any of the fungicides investigated in this latter publication.

Both the Lee and Galle books contain extensive discussions of azalea petal blight and other azalea-rhododendron diseases. Garden hygiene may be the most important preventive measure one can take, although it is cumbersome and time consuming. Basically, one has to remove all the ovulinia-affected flowers both from the plants and the surrounding soil, fumigate or remove the surrounding mulch, put new mulch on every year, and prune and trim the plants to provide better aeration and sunlight. Mr. Ferrell’s conjecture about the life cycle of *Ovulinia azaleae* is correct.¹ This fungus overwinters as sclerotia spores and produces new ovulinia infections next year; thereby the cycle continues. ‘August-to-Frost’ likely is a Mucronatum Hybrid that blooms late (August until frost). Because of this late-blooming nature,

it is resistant to the petal blight infection, as are many of the late-blooming Satsuki and other groups containing one or more late-season-blooming Satsuki species and hybrids as parents. The species (evergreen and deciduous) azaleas seem to be resistant to this nasty infestation. A note of caution is in order here: many of the fungicides used in the past and present have large toxicological profiles and many have been either taken off the market or are no longer produced in the US. (DuPont’s Benlate®, also sold as Benomyl and a dozen other names, is a classic example). There is a compendium published by the American Phytopathological Society¹² that addresses many of these issues with more recent information.

Question 4: How Should Mature Deciduous Azaleas Be Pruned?

Different people have different experience and rules-of-thumb when it comes to pruning azaleas, rhododendrons, camellias, etc. I will discuss my personal experience. I had a complete collection of species deciduous azaleas from

Japan, China, Korea, Europe, and both the east and west coasts of the US. Most of them, except for some from the US East Coast—such as *R. periclymenoides* (previously *R. nudiflorum*, pinxterbloom azalea), *R. atlanticum* (coastal azalea) and most forms of *R. viscosum* (swamp azalea) grow naturally as medium-to-large (10'-20') multi-trunked shrubs or trees. Most deciduous azalea lovers generally grow them in moderate to large woodland settings where they probably belong. Most people hardly ever prune these plants, only removing dead branches so that they exhibit their natural characteristics. Furniss¹³ (1980) published an excellent article with tips about when (if any) and how to prune azaleas, rhododendrons, and camellias. The article in 2019 by Charles Andrews III concentrated on deciduous azaleas.^{14, 15}

I will share my personal experience and lessons learned from it. I had three *R. molle* subsp. *japonicum* (the typical orange form, the red form—Renge-tsutsuji, and the yellow form—Kirenge-tsutsuji); one *R. molle* subsp. *molle* (Chinese sheep azalea), and one beautiful yellow tubular flowered *R. luteum* (syn. *R. flavum*), the Pontic azalea). I grew them over 30 years ago from seeds I received from my friend and plant explorer from Japan, Hideo Suzuki. When they became about 12' tall, I decided to prune the yellow and red *R. molle* subsp. *japonicum*, the *R. molle* subsp. *molle*, and *R. luteum* following the “rule of thumb” one-third from the top. This was done in the wintertime. Alas. It has been five years now, and I still have the dead plants sticking out from the ground. I will dig them out after this spring. Typically, when these plants and many others are matured, they start losing branches from the lower trunk and the only leaves then are at the top, looking more like small trees, which is what they are.

Since I pruned them from the top, there were no leaf nodes on these plants after that, and I believe I killed them because of that. On the contrary, there are many Japanese deciduous species (e.g. *R. reticulatum* (Koba-no-mitsubatsutsuji) or rose azalea, *R. weyrichii* (Tsukushi-tutsuji) and North American species (*R. flammeum*, previously *R. speciosum*; Oconee azalea; *R. serrulatum*, now recognized as a late-blooming form of *R. viscosum*; hammocksweet azalea) that have branches along the stems with leaf buds, and seem to respond well after pruning, although they may not flower the following year, depending upon what time of

the year the pruning is done. The hybrid deciduous azaleas belonging to the Knap Hill Group and their descendants Exbury, Ilam, Girard, etc. are mostly bought from nurseries where they have already been shaped by pruning. They do not seem to grow as tall as their species parents, and I would not try to prune them except for removing dead or damaged branches. I have similar experience with the University of Minnesota's Northern Lights Hybrids. In my experience and understanding from friends, azaleas and rhododendrons that are large may not respond well to heavy pruning. Camellias and kalmias seem to do better in that respect.

Question 5: Which Cultivars Hygienically Shed Spent Flowers?

The so-called “Sepal Hypothesis” (fused sepals in hose-in-hose (h/h) and semi-double and double flowers persist when they are spent) to explain why some azaleas have their spent flowers stick on the leaves and other parts of the plant is based on limited small sample observations at best.

The Domoto Brothers introduced a plant named ‘Snow’. It is a small white h/h with a yellow blotch, flowering early-mid season (5'-6' at maturity). ‘Snow’ has been used by many hybridizers in the US, most notably Yerkes and Pryor (in the Yerkes-Pryor and Beltsville Dwarf Hybrids, for example). Whether ‘Snow’ is a Kurume Hybrid is highly questionable. It is true that the Domoto Brothers, R. K. Beattie, and Earnest Wilson (of “Wilson 50” fame) introduced plants from the Kurume area of the Fukuoka prefecture of Japan. Many of these were actually not Kurume Hybrids. There were many that were species evergreens including *R. indicum*, Mucronatum Hybrids, and others. ‘Snow’ was one of them. There is an Amoenum Hybrid (the so-called *R. × obtusum* or Kirishima-tsutsuji) with white h/h flowers with yellow blotches called ‘Shiro Kocho-no-mai’ (shiro [white] and ‘Kocho-no-mai’ [dance of the butterflies]) that shows similarity with the Domoto Brothers’ ‘Snow’.

Unfortunately, the Domoto Brothers, Beattie, and many others renamed many of the early Japanese azalea introductions in the West with English names. The most authentic Kurume Hybrids introduced in the US were by J. L. Creech, F. G. Meyer, and S. G. March under the group USDA Introduction. These were selected cultivars with their correct Japanese names and descriptions from the Kurume Branch, Vegetable and Ornamental Research Station, Kurume.



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The Amoenum Group belongs to the so-called *x obtusum* Group, which was originally thought to be a species but has never been found in the wild. Many of the Japanese azalea experts (such as Hideo Suzuki, Dr. Satoshi Yamaguchi, Dr. John Creech of the USDA) opined that the obtusum azalea introduced in England was possibly a natural hybrid of *R. sataense*, *R. kiusianum*, and a low form of *R. kaempferi*. The genetic profile is an important factor behind the stickiness of dead flowers because many of the plants derived from the ones having this stickiness ('Snow' is a prime example) seem to transmit this property to future generations. There are various other h/h, semi-double, and double-flowering azaleas that exhibit such stickiness. Among the doubles are Thompson's 'Rosea' (a Thompson Hybrid with Belgian Indian Hybrid 'Ruffled Giant' × Gable's 'Rosebud') and 'Anna Kehr' (Kehr Hybrid) that also may show stickiness. Both are fully double (>25 petals) with their sepals fused to become petals. On the other hand, there are two excellent h/h Satsuki, one being a deep reddish-orange selection of *R. indicum* 'Okina-nishiki' [old man's brocade] and the other an old deep yellowish-pink Satsuki Hybrid 'Wakaebisu' [young goddess]. (There is also a pretty Kurume Hybrid with the same name but single red flowers with lighter throat). All of these cleanly drop their spent flowers. There are two double *R. indicum* selections-'Warai-jishi' ([laughing lion], 'Macrantha Double Pink') and 'Komane' or 'Komanyo Satsuki' ('Rosiflorum', 'Balsaminiflorum', etc.) that cleanly drop their spent flowers. The latter is the most double (>40 petals) of all Ericaceae family members. The flowers do not have any pistils and stamens and the plant is sterile.

If one examines the modern list of available Satsuki azaleas, one finds very few that are h/h, semi-double, and fully double because the Japanese gardeners do not like plants whose flowers may have a tendency of not letting go after they are spent. As a result, over the last 300 years or so, hybridizers and collectors did not appreciate these plants except for a handful I just mentioned. In order to make things worse, even the plants that traditionally do not have their spent flowers stick on the plants, may do so if there is ovulinia infection. In summary, it is difficult to cite a single factor; rather, it is a combination of factors that can be attributed to the spent flower stickiness problem. I do not go out and shake my 'Snow', 'Anna Kehr', and few others that may have this tendency.

Question 6. Where is the Bulk of the Azalea Root System?

I will try to make some points that specifically apply to deciduous azaleas. Azaleas are like humans. They, like their friends and relatives, congregate with each other. They accomplish this by forming colonies.

The native North American species deciduous azaleas form colonies by producing new plants from seeds, by using their stoloniferous (underground stem) nature, or a combination of both. For example, *R. calendulaceum* (flame azalea), *R. prunifolium* (plumleaf azalea), *R. cumberlandense* (previously *R. bakeri*, Cumberland azalea), and several others, form their colonies by spreading seeds (and occasionally rooting broken branches).

On the other hand, many others do so by using their stoloniferous property and also by spreading their seeds. Prime examples are *R. atlanticum*, *R. canescens* (Piedmont azalea), *R. canadense* (rhodora), and *R. occidentale* (western azalea). In their natural environments, some of them are growing on rocky terrain and hills. Their roots cannot go down deep but spread instead. Because of that, it is difficult to dig them up for transplanting (I am not recommending even trying to dig them up from the wild; it is a crime in many states and the survival probability is very small). Deciduous azaleas, particularly hybrids such as the Ghent, Knap Hill, Exbury, Ilam, Northern Lights, and others, from nurseries may have different types of root systems because they are "trained" by the growers in either pots or burlaps. Unless these "trained" deciduous azaleas are fully matured, it should not be difficult to move them. Finally, one probably should not cultivate too closely around these plants. One might damage their roots in the process.

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Author's Note: The two articles from the Journal of American Rhododendron Society cited here—References 10 & 13—and many others of interest for the azalea lovers—can be downloaded from the Virginia Tech Digital Library by typing: <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JARS/index.html#qbars> and following the hyperlinks for the volume number and the title. The articles in the Depository do not show any page numbers.

Dr. Ajit K. Thakur is a retired Ph.D. statistician. He has over 100 articles and books in the fields of statistics and biological fields. He has published in *The Azalean* in the 80s on Satsuki and species azaleas. He has visited many azalea locations in Japan in search of them. He is a member of the Northern Virginia Chapter of the ASA and can be contacted at: aythakur1@gmail.com

Gardening During COVID-19

Richard Bauer—Yorktown, Virginia

Like many society members, my wife Susan and I are Lavid gardeners. We are also avid travelers. Since we don't always have time for both, our traveling frequently interferes with our gardening. The outbreak of COVID-19 totally changed that dynamic. Suddenly we were under a forced "staycation" and had more than enough time to deal with long deferred projects, including maintenance of our garden. Our efforts were focused on four main areas:

1. Removal of unwanted plants (e.g., weeds, vines, volunteers etc.) and mulching
2. Planting and transplanting plants
3. Inventorying and mapping the garden
4. Fertilizing

Removal of Unwanted Plants and Mulching

Any gardener knows this is a constant battle. You pull up weeds one day and new ones spring up the next. The first step in this battle is pulling up the weeds. This is followed by laying down a weed block barrier (e.g., weed block paper, cardboard, or newspaper) and covering with mulch. Fortunately, our local landfill provides mulch at \$5 a cubic yard; otherwise, we would have gone broke using bagged mulch. The photos show the before and after shots of the Klimavicz Azalea portion of our garden. (See Photos 1 & 2)

We found that through benign neglect, vines (honeysuckle and others) had grown through our large azalea bushes. For the most part these were easily removed by pulling them out...preferably by the roots. Unfortunately, some broke off, leaving the roots intact and in other cases we had to cut them at ground level. I suspect we will see them again, but at least they are gone for the time being.

We also found many volunteer plants growing up within our bushes. Some, like magnolias or Japanese maples we tried to dig up and pot to plant elsewhere or give away at chapter plant exchanges. Others, like oak trees, or offspring of the Bradford pear, we cut down or pulled out.

Planting and Transplanting

I had gotten into azalea propagation several years ago and had a large collection of azaleas in our nursery. We needed to clear out space for future propagation efforts as well chapter plant sale plants. My efforts in propagation had focused mainly on Legacy hybrids by Northern Virginia Chapter members Sandra McDonald, Bob Stewart, Pete Vines (Holly Springs) and Joe Klimavicz. Other varieties I had in smaller numbers were Marshy Point, Schroeder, and Harris. I had already started Legacy gardens for our chapter hybridizers (many of my Holly Springs varieties were compliments of



Photo Richard Bauer

▲ Photo 1— Klimavicz Azalea Bed before weeding.



Photo Richard Bauer

▲ Photo 3— Azalea Propagation Nursery

▼ Photo 2—Klimavicz Azalea Bed after weeding and mulching.



Photo Richard Bauer

Ronnie Palmer). I inventoried those I had planted (covered later) and added varieties which were missing from the garden from my nursery as well as adding duplicates of some of the existing varieties. (See Photo 3.)

I also started a new Legacy garden for Marshy Point azaleas. While I had a few varieties already, I was inspired to start a personal Marshy Point Legacy garden by Don Hyatt’s article in the Spring 2020 issue of *The Azalean*. Finally, I planted the few Schroeder varieties I had propagated.

We also discovered that many of the small plants we had planted years ago are much larger and needed to be transplanted. We found smaller azaleas under larger azaleas, hydrangeas, magnolias etc. We either marked them for moving in the fall, or if smaller, dug them out, potted them, and placed them in the nursery for transplanting in the fall. I prefer planting in the fall unless I’m prepared to take personal care of the plant during the summer.

Inventoried the Garden

I am embarrassed to say that when we first started planting our garden in 1996, I didn’t always pay a lot of attention to maintaining labels on the plants. When I did start labeling

them, I used plastic labels and believed the marker makers when they said they were “permanent.” As a result, I have a large collection of the “Lost Label” hybrids. Fortunately, I later switched to metal labels which could be “etched” with a ball point pen and most of them were still intact. Where they had degraded over time, I replaced them with new labels.

I was also embarrassed when people asked me how many azaleas I had planted in my garden and I didn’t know. This started my efforts to inventory the garden. Knowing what you have is one thing. Another important factor is knowing where you have it. In the past, I’ve seen other gardeners who have drawn schematics of their garden with separate beds marked with small numbered circles indicating individual plants. The detailed inventories are linked to these marked locations on their schematics. Others are much more sophisticated, using GPS devices to accurately pinpoint each plant.

I opted for an approach in between. I looked up my property online and got an aerial view which I pasted on a PowerPoint slide and rotated so the property line aligned with one of the sides of the slide. I then overlaid a grid like they use on maps (i.e., those large sheets of paper we used to use to navigate with before GPS). (See Map, p. 64.) The vertical bars were given letter designations and the horizontal bars were given numbers. Now I could inventory and identify the plants by grid. I identified the proper grid by the location with respect to fixed elements such as the house, garage, driveway etc. Each plant had a record giving the grid number (e.g., B3), a plant number (e.g., B3.01.01), the type of plant (e.g., Azalea), the hybrid group as appropriate, and the variety name. I added additional information if available, such as date and place of acquisition and if purchased, price paid. [See accompanying sidebar for how we did this using GoogleMaps pages 65, 71.]

Fertilizing

I’ve found folks come down on both sides of the question as to whether planted azaleas need to be fertilized. In the past I followed the group which said that fertilizing was not



▲ Map 1—Map created for the Bauers' garden plant inventory.

▼ Photo 4—One of Susan Bauer's decorated bowling ball creations.



Photo Richard Bauer

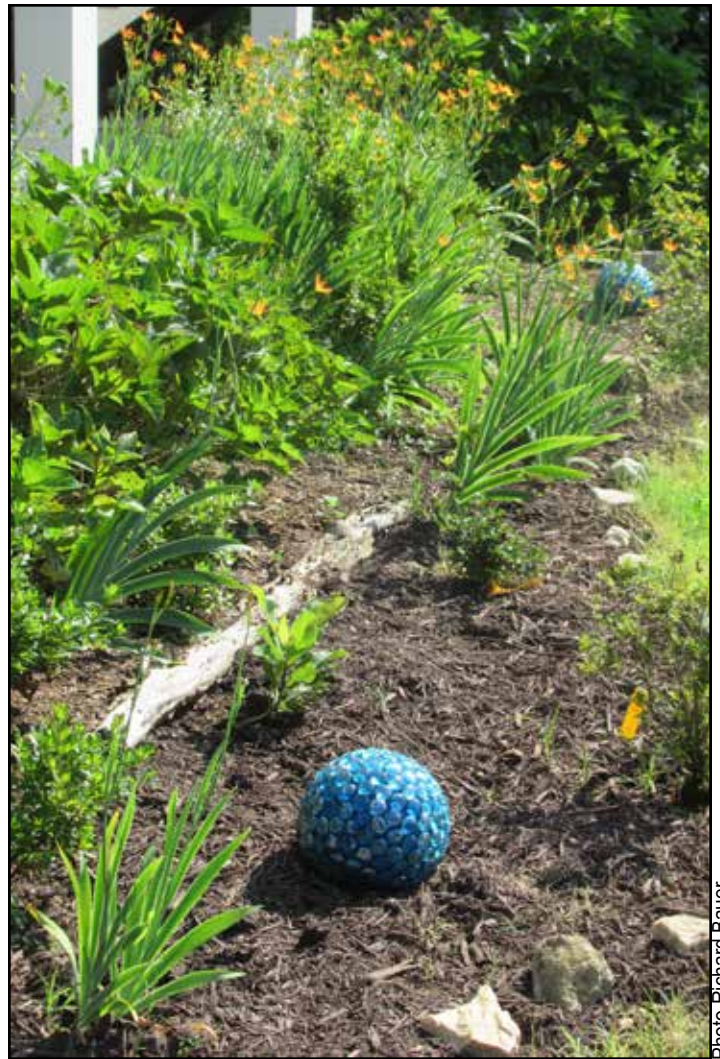


Photo Richard Bauer

▲ Photo 5—Susan's decorative yard art in situ.

necessary, and my plants did okay. This year I thought I'd see what impact fertilizing would have.

I had been using Holly-tone in my nursery and expanded my use of this fertilizer in my garden. When I found that COSTCO had Holly-tone on sale this spring, I stocked up. I started my first application in the beginning of April. I followed up with another application in late May. The effect is noticeable. My azaleas seem to be putting out more new growth than in the past and the foliage is much healthier looking.

Yard Art

One final thing we've done in the garden is to add yard art. We have found inexpensive yard art at yard sales and in thrift stores. My wife Susan has also gotten into making yard art out of bowling balls (which she also procures from yard sales and thrift stores). She paints the balls and then glues on glass tiles in various designs and places them out in the garden. It is an inexpensive and attractive way to acquire yard art. (See Photos 4 & 5.)

Photo Richard Bauer



Photo Richard Bauer

▲ Photo 6— View toward Chisman Creek through the Bauers’ “Serenity Garden.”

We consider ourselves fortunate that we got involved in gardening and especially in azaleas. It has enabled us to maintain our sanity during this period of COVID-19. While azaleas constitute the largest number of plants in our garden, we also plant other varieties of bushes such as rose, oleander, gardenia, hydrangea, viburnum, lantana, and reblooming azaleas such as Encore® and Bloom-a-thon® to provide color after the regular azalea blooming season. We complement these bushes with flowers such as gladiolus, echinacea, black-eyed Susan, Mexican petunia, and day lilies. (See Photo 6.)

While we enjoy our garden throughout the blooming season, I must admit that our favorite time is when our azaleas are in bloom. My next step will be to prolong the azalea blooming season by planting more later blooming varieties such as Satsuki. We also are adding more of the reblooming varieties as well as fall bloomers such as ‘Humdinger’ and ‘Two Timer’ (Marshy Point), ‘August to Frost’, and ‘Opal’, among others.

Like many gardens, ours is a work in progress. We enjoy adding to it each season and watching it mature.

Rick Bauer and his wife Susan have been members of Northern Virginia Chapter since 2002. Rick served as the chapter vice president of the Northern Virginia Chapter for four years and chapter president for five years. He also served as an ASA director for two years. He was co-chair of the 2016 ASA/ARS Convention in Williamsburg, VA. He has been president of the national ASA for four years. He also was a member of the team which digitized *The Azalean*. Rick was part of the team which started the “Legacy Project” within the Northern Virginia Chapter. This project is designed to help ensure the continuation of knowledge of azalea hybridizers and their plants and maintain true specimens of their cultivars. He retired from the US Army in 1994 after 20 years of active service and retired in 2011 from Science Applications International Corporation, where he helped develop software applications for Army customers.

Creating a Yard Map

NOTE: This technique is not recommended for heavily wooded yards.

There are probably many ways to create your yard map. My approach requires Internet access as well as the Microsoft PowerPoint application. Underlined words below indicated menu selections.

Steps:

1. Open a new presentation in PowerPoint. The default orientation is Landscape. If you want the orientation to be Portrait, do the following:
 - a. On the toolbar, click on Design
 - b. On the Customize block, click Slide Size
 - c. Select Customize Slide Size
 - d. Under Orientation, click on Portrait for the slide
2. Open up your browser (e.g, Chrome, Internet Explorer, Firefox etc.)
3. Type in: google.com/maps
4. Enter your address in the top left of the screen at Search Google Maps. A map of the area around the address will appear.
5. Click the “Satellite” icon at the bottom left of the screen. This will change the map to a satellite photo.
6. Zoom in or out (+ or – icons on the map). Ensure that the entire area you want to include is showing on the map, without too much area outside of the desired portion, however leave some excess area since you may need to crop this off as you orient the picture on your PowerPoint slide.
7. Copy the image on your screen (i.e., do a screen grab). This may vary on different computers, on mine it’s done by hitting the **Fn** and the **Print Screen** keys simultaneously. **Win+Shift+S** is another method which allows you to select the portion of the screen image you want to put on your clipboard (again, select excess area as you may need to crop it after orienting your picture).
8. Switch to your PowerPoint presentation. Paste the screen grab as a Picture on your slide.
9. Orient the picture on the slide (rotate, shift, zoom in or out) as necessary. My recommendation is that you orient a property line along the vertical

Continued on Page 71

Advice from An Azalea Widow

Janet B. Miller—Bethesda, Maryland

Author's note: While going through old files during my COVID-19 self-quarantine, I came across this piece. It is as I wrote it, some 30 years ago, with just a few notes added for clarity. Many things have changed since then.

I've been considering putting this to paper for many years, for I am sure that the experiences of an "azalea widow" may be of some help to newcomers to the Society.

For a long time, I had thought that it all started when we bought our first house. My husband's training was in biology, and we both found some satisfaction in digging in the dirt. The Azalea Society of America was just getting started then, and joining in just seemed natural. But, as I look back on it now, I realize that his increased interest in azalea-related activities coincided with the birth of our first child. It was a good excuse to get out of the house.

A best-in-show award at the first Brookside Gardens Chapter flower show probably sealed my fate.¹ For a novice grower with absolutely no flower show experience, winning that recognition from a panel of azalea experts was quite a high. Forget that cutting that single spray took nearly the entire plant (See Photo).—It was worth it! Many shows and awards later, his enthusiasm has never dimmed; he loves the competition and winning.

No matter how it starts, though, working with azaleas can become addictive. The field is so broad and challenging, one can never learn it all. The people are wonderful, and they are a joy to be around. The annual meetings are held in so many interesting locations and provide opportunities to see places and private gardens that one might never otherwise get to see.

But, beware – there is a definite downside. So, here are my recommendations for keeping your sanity.

1. Don't buy or propagate azaleas (unless you know specifically what you're going to do with them). Although beautiful in the spring, our yard would never make the cover of *Better Homes and Gardens*. It's the pots. My husband explains that rather than plant something he's not sure he'll like, he prefers to leave it potted. Hours are spent up-potting, watering, and moving the literally thousands of potted azaleas in our backyard. (The kids vow they will never become gardeners – they've been pressed into service to move azalea pots too many times.)
2. Always ask the questions. (Don't let anyone know you have any answers). We have had to get an answering machine and call waiting for our phone (only partly because of the kids). We get calls, lots of calls. Although the US National Arboretum has been known to give it out, I honestly don't know where some of the people get our phone number. His parents would be proud.—My husband's good



Photo William C. Miller III

▲ The Millers' winning entry at the first Brookside Gardens Chapter flower show, May 1980.

upbringing shows through here; he is helpful and polite to everyone. As a matter of fact, he loves to talk to anyone, at length, about azaleas. Just ask him. He gives talks to garden clubs; he'll field questions at membership tables; he'll even make house calls.

3. Don't volunteer (unless you are prepared to keep the job for an indefinite period of time). Like any organization run by volunteers, the Azalea Society is only too happy to take advantage of anyone's willingness to help. Since there are more than enough jobs to go around, my husband does several.² He IS the Society's Glenn Dale preservation project,³ going out on each scheduled

workday, no matter what the weather. (His conscience won't let him quit, even though almost everyone else apparently has.) He spends a major part of every weekend responding to the Society's mail, which he routinely retrieves from the Society's two post office boxes, one of which is so far out of the way that it requires a major effort to get to. He's off to committee meetings constantly, it seems. (These, of course are in addition to all of the other kinds of meetings – national meetings, chapter meetings – you get the picture). He served several years as Brookside Gardens Chapter president, and for many years he devoted countless hours to proofing and editing the copy for *The Azalean*. (I think there is a special place in Heaven for people who work on the journal. Only a select few know what a monumental task it is.) And, it goes without saying that the first weekend in May is spent entirely at the annual flower show. A corollary rule is: don't volunteer if you already have a full-time job.

4. Select your spouse and family carefully. (This is especially important if you have ignored suggestions 1 through 3). You will need an understanding, supportive family that is capable of managing in your absence. An alternative would be to get them involved, too, but then you run the risk of getting absolutely nothing else accomplished.

EndNotes

1. The flower show, "Salute to Azaleas," was held on May 17 and 18, 1980, in the South Conservatory at Brookside Gardens in Wheaton, Maryland. There were 19 exhibitors. The Millers brought seven entries from their yard, of which 'Lady Cavendish' received top honors. The award for Best Azalea in the Show, as selected by the judges, was deemed "The Frank White Award" and consisted of a \$25 gift certificate to his nursery.
2. While accurate when the article was written, this list of jobs is now incomplete and out-of-date.
3. The ASA's first national project, the Glenn Dale Preservation Program, existed from 1982-1997. See the comprehensive summary and farewell article: Miller III, W.C.: "Glenn Dale Preservation Program 1998. *The Azalean*. March 1998. 20(1):15-16.

Janet B. Miller (the "Azalea Widow") lives in Bethesda, Maryland, with her husband, William C. Miller III. She spent her professional career—and now much of her retirement—working for the National Institute of Standards and Technology (formerly the National Bureau of Standards) in Gaithersburg, Maryland.

New Azaleas for the Trade

Buddy Lee and Allen Owings are shown with the two new Encore® azaleas for 2021. Descriptions for the trade are:

Autumn Majesty™—*Rhododendron* 'Robledzd' PPAF—glows with masses of petite, ruffled, semi-double dark purple blooms in spring, summer, and fall. Hardy to USDA Zone 6A, this season-extending repeat bloomer is sure to be a crowd pleaser. Growing in a rounded, compact habit—only 3' high by 3' wide—its evergreen foliage stays bright green in winter.

Autumn Starburst™—*Rhododendron* 'Robleze' PPAF—blooms in coral pink with bold white margins against dark green evergreen foliage. Flowering profusely in spring, summer, and fall, Autumn Starburst grows compact and mounding—only 3' high by 3' wide—and is hardy to USDA Zone 6A.

- ▼ Buddy Lee (L) and Allen Owings, Louisiana Chapter, are shown with the two new Encore® Azaleas for 2021. Buddy is holding 'Autumn Starburst'™. Allen is standing behind 'Autumn Majesty'™.



Photo: Jim Putnam

Help the ASA by Donating via Amazon Smile

Paul A. Beck, Treasurer—Oak Hill, Virginia

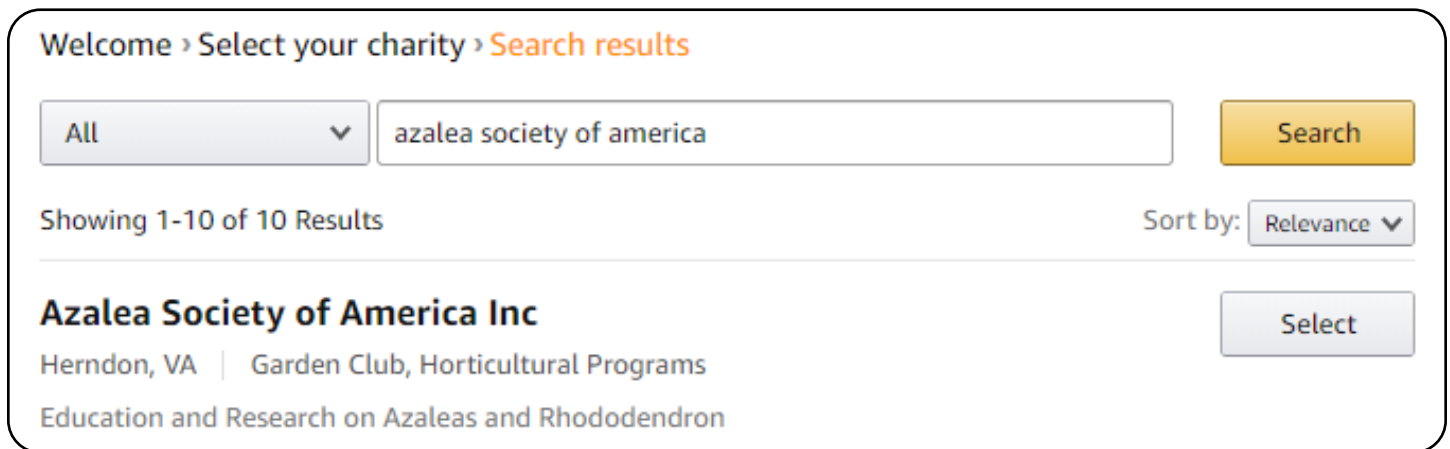
I'm guessing that many of you who purchase online are using Amazon. I know that it's my first place to check for something I want to buy. Amazon has a feature that supports non-profit organizations such as us. They will donate 0.5% of every purchase to the non-profit of your choice. This does not impact in any way what you pay for the merchandise. It comes out of Amazon's profit. The ARS has been doing this for some time, so if you are not already donating to the ARS, I would appreciate it if you would consider selecting the Azalea Society of America as your preferred charity on Amazon.

Setting up Amazon Smile is easy. Open your browser to smile.amazon.com. At the top of the page will be a "Get Started" button. Click that button. You will then be presented with a field to enter the charity name. Enter "Azalea Society of America" and click Search. At the top of the list should be our name, as shown below.

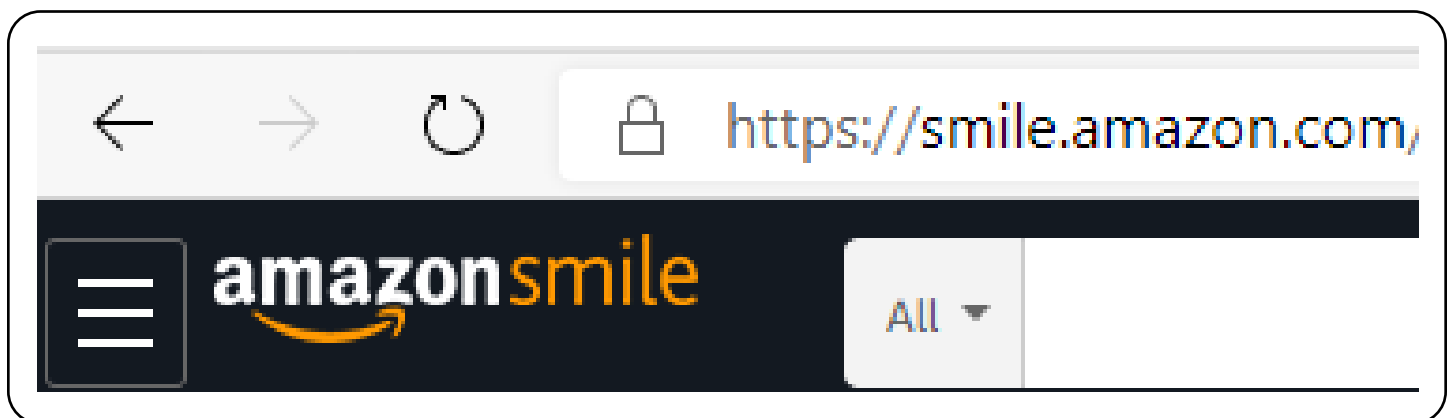
Click the Select button. You will be presented with a checkbox followed by the statement **"Yes, I understand that I must always start at smile.amazon.com to support Azalea Society of America Inc."** Next click **"Start Shopping"**. That's all there is to it. That statement after the checkbox is important. If you have a bookmark in your browser for Amazon, it needs to be changed from www.amazon.com to smile.amazon.com.

One final point. If you are searching for something to buy using Google or some other online search engine, and you click on the link of the object found, it will take you to the Amazon web page with the item. BEFORE you click to add it to your cart, go up to the address line on your browser and change the "www" to "smile". Be sure to not change anything else in the address. The top left of the page should show Amazon Smile, as shown below. If it does not, nothing will be credited to our account.

▼ Figure 1



▼ Figure 2



Sign Up Today: smile.amazon.com

Chapter News and New Members

Alabamense Chapter

John Torbert, President

The Alabamense Chapter elected new officers in August. John Torbert (President) and Vanessa Koelling (Vice-President) were newly elected. Treasurer Kira Bowen and Secretary Pam Thompson were elected to continue their positions. The chapter currently has about 37 active members. Beginning in September, the chapter will be putting out a quarterly newsletter. At our fall Zoom meeting (October 8), Patrick Thompson will give a presentation on “The Science of Seed Collection.”

The chapter welcomes new members Shane Harris, Dadeville, AL and James Lucas, Maylene, AL.

Arkansas Chapter

Ronnie Palmer—President

Frank Howard, one of our founding members passed away in May. The Chapter will name one of the Huang azaleas in Frank’s memory.

The annual cutting party that was to be done on June 20 was cancelled due to COVID-19.

Two Legacy Gardens are in the preliminary stages:

- One will be in the Cabot, Arkansas, area (Woodlawn Community Center). It will feature Glenn Dales and

other azalea groups to be determined. Janet Rensing is the coordinator for this.

- The second will be in Northwest Arkansas. The Carden-Harris azaleas will be featured. Steve Brizzi will be the coordinator.

The chapter welcomes new member Cathy Mayton, of Little Rock.

Ben Morrison Chapter

Diane Reinke—Secretary

The Ben Morrison Chapter has not been meeting during the pandemic. Instead we are tending our own gardens, and we look forward to the time when we can all get together again.

See below for two photos of azaleas from the Reinke garden.

Louisiana Chapter

Allen Owings—President

With the recent passing of Margie Jenkins requests for memorial contributions to the Margie Jenkins Azalea Garden at the LSU AgCenter’s Hammond Research Station were requested by the family. Likewise, contributions to the Margie Jenkins Horticulture Scholarship at the Louisiana Nursery and Landscape Foundation for Scholarship and Research (LNLFSR) were requested.

In 2006, The LSU AgCenter’s Hammond Research Station established the Margie Y. Jenkins Azalea Garden in recognition of one of Louisiana’s most widely known nursery owners and nationally known azalea lover, breeder, and azalea authority. The idea for the garden was to include a plant collection that would honor the enormous longtime horticultural contributions of “Ms. Margie”—owner of Jenkins Farm and Nursery in Amite, LA. Ms. Margie blazed trails by introducing unusual azalea varieties to the south central and Gulf Coast markets, as well as propagating and



Photo Ronnie Palmer

▲ Photo 1—Huang Hybrid Hu 1-2-41, which Ronnie Palmer is working to register, will be named ‘Frank Howard.’

▼ Photo 2—‘Cinderella’ azalea in Reinke garden.



Photo Diane Reinke

▼ Photo 3—‘Pink Pearl’ azalea in Reinke garden.



Photo Diane Reinke



Photo Allen Owings

▲ Photo 4— Margie Jenkins' last presentation to a horticulture audience was at the Louisiana Plant Materials Conference, Hammond, LA, in November 2019. The azalea is one of Miss Margie's favorites, 'Sekidera.'



Photo Barry Sperling

▲ Photo 5—'Amoenum' azalea, blooming in Barry Sperling's garden March 2020.

▼ Photo 6—'Fawn' azalea, Spring 2020.



Photo Barry Sperling

▼ Photo 6—'Fawn', 'Parade', and 'Lorna' azaleas (l to r).



Photo Barry Sperling

promoting the use of native plants in the landscape. Many of those plants form the foundation of this garden, along with favorite companion plants, many different series of re-blooming azaleas, hydrangeas, and different camellia species and beautyberries.

LNLFSR is the fund raising group for the Louisiana Nursery and Landscape Association with funding being provided for nursery and landscape related research and for providing scholarships to university students majoring in horticulture/plant sciences curricula.

We are pleased to announce that thus far \$11,000 has been received in support of Ms. Margie's Azalea Garden and over \$6,000 has been received for the scholarship fund. Additional donations are welcome. Contact information:

LNLFRS, P O Box 1447, Mandeville, LA 70470 Contact Cari Jane Murray at carijanelnla@gmail.com (check payable to LNLFRS with Margie Jenkins in memo line) or LSU AgCenter, Hammond Research Station, 21549 Old Covington Highway, Hammond, LA 70403 Jeb Fields at jsfields@agcenter.lsu.edu (check payable to LSU AgCenter with Margie Jenkins in memo line).

The chapter welcomes new members Lionel and Melanie Mathies of Springfield, LA.

Northern Virginia Chapter

Barry Sperling—Corresponding Secretary

Facing the same frustrating restrictions as the rest of the world, we've taken the time to enjoy our own gardens and taken pictures to share.

If everything goes well, the club will open its annual sale on Saturday, September 26 at the Kirkwood Presbyterian Church in Springfield, VA. This will be a great opportunity to get the best plants at good prices!

On Sunday, October 25th at the same church we are looking forward to a program with a speaker, and on Sunday, December 6th the club will have our annual Holiday Party and business meeting.

Let's hope we can all open things up and get back to normal!

The chapter welcomes new member Mike G. Jones, Sebastopol, CA.

Texas Forest Country Chapter

The chapter welcomes new member Claire Boutte, Jasper, TX.

Vaseyi Chapter

Aaron Cook—President

Even though we have not had the opportunity to meet in person the Vaseyi Chapter and its members have been busy. We are involved in several worthwhile projects.

Two that I would like to highlight are the donation of \$5000 towards refurbishing the greenhouse on the campus of Blue Ridge Community College. The money will be used to replace the control units for the heating and cooling, as well as the mist propagation system. Now that the mist propagation system is up and running, the chapter has started propagating plants. One of the first propagation projects is to propagate the Azalea “Mary Frances Hohman” to give one to Henry Hohman’s granddaughter Anne. Apparently, the plant was named for her mother. We also plan to have “Mary Frances Hohman” plants available for distribution to others who are interested. The source plant for the cuttings is in Audrey Stelloh’s garden here in Hendersonville, NC. As soon as it is feasible and safe to do so we will start planning events and meetings for the upcoming year. (See Photo 8.)

At-Large Members

The ASA also welcomes new at-large members Randy Dotemoto, Manhattan Beach, CA; Kenneth Everding, Weston, CT; Stacey Ruff and Victor Mellen, Dowell, MD; Jim Matthews, Hanover, PA; Debra Staples, San Marcos, CA; and Kirk Weiss, Center Moriches, NY.

▼ Photo 8—“Mary Frances Hohman” azalea shown blooming in the Audrey Stelloh Garden, Hendersonville, NC. Photo from the ASA website.



Creating a Yard Map

Continued from Page 65

or horizontal axis. Expand the picture so that all of the desired yard area is on the slide.

10. Once you have the screen grab oriented, you can continue on...however my preference is to Save As a .jpg since this will eliminate the undesired portions of the screen grab. If you go this route, repeat step 1 and then insert the saved .jpg, making any additional adjustments desired.
11. Insert a table on the slide by going to the toolbar and selecting Insert-> Table ->Insert Table. A screen will pop up letting you enter the number of columns or rows. On an 8 ½ x 11 orientation I would enter 9 columns and 11 rows, but you are free to add as many as desired (having exact square blocks is not necessary). Click OK.
12. Stretch the table to cover the entire slide (hiding the pasted on satellite view).
13. Right click on the table. Select Select Table. Select Format Shape. Under Fill, select No Fill. The fill should disappear, however the grid lines should remain.
14. Go to the top left block of the table. Left click on the block and move your mouse down the table and to the right, selecting all of the blocks on the table. Right click and specify the format for the text to go in all of the blocks. I recommend white or black (depending on the background), bold text with a font size of 40 or larger.
15. Go to left block on the top row and enter the letters A, B etc. from left to right. Go to the left most column and starting in the second block, start numbering 1, 2 etc. top to bottom. I treat the block with the letter A in it as row 0.
16. Save your final result. Save as a PowerPoint file if you might want to later edit. You might also want to save it as a .pdf or .jpg (this precludes inadvertently modifying the format while using).

Deadlines for *The Azalean*

Winter 2020—October 1, 2020

Spring 2021—January 1, 2021

Summer 2021—March 1, 2021

Fall 2021—July 1, 2022

Remember, you too can write for the *The Azalean*. Contact: theazalean@gmail.com.

“Come forth into the light of things,
let nature be your teacher.”

- *William Wordsworth*

Magnolia was the first garden in America to plant azaleas outside. Hundreds of thousands of blooming azaleas grace the paths and lake basins in late winter/early spring (dates vary each year). Check our website and Facebook page for updates on the peak azalea bloom.



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