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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

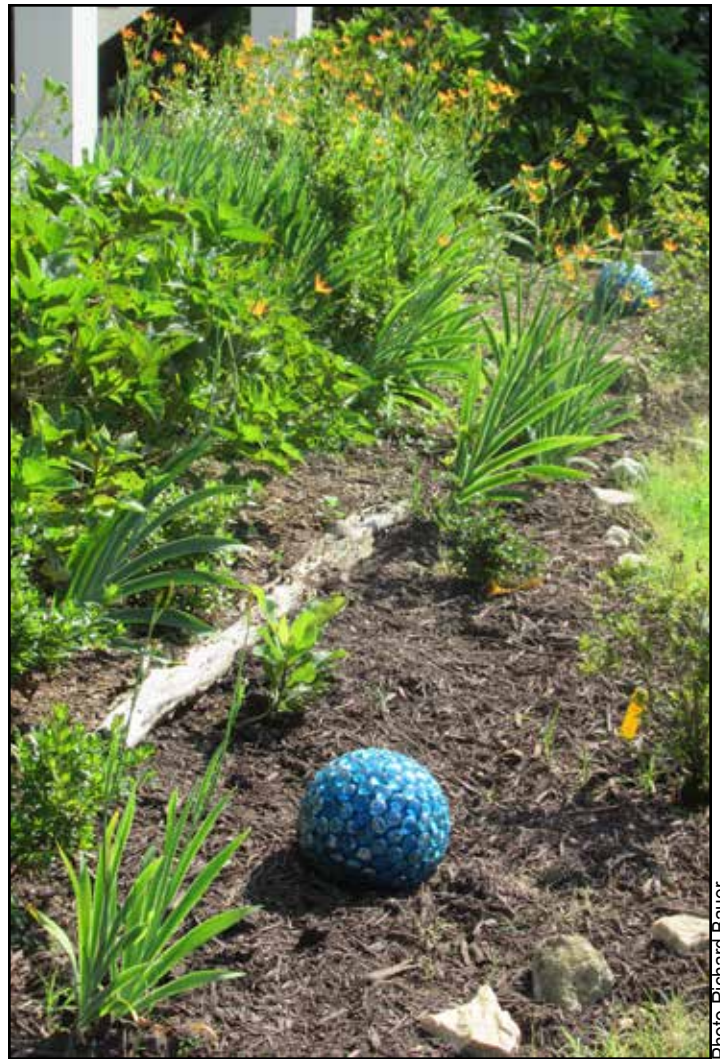


Photo Richard Bauer

▲ 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 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

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.