

President's Letter

Charlie Andrews—Cumming, Georgia

Providing Value to Our Members

In my first letter back last summer, I mentioned three areas I wanted us to work on. One was to give value to our members. I said we succeed by providing value. It is obvious that we can retain and gain members if our “product” is valuable. This is key to our success as a plant society. Why would someone join ASA? What do they want as members? Finding the answers to these questions and providing solutions leads to healthy, active chapters. If we ignore the needs of our members they will over time drop their membership.

Chapter Leaders, please review the *Chapter Ideas for Success*, available on our website (About the Society>Chapters>Resources>How to make a chapter successful). Sit down together and come up with additional ideas and let us know so we can share your good ideas with other chapters. Evaluate your current position and determine where you can provide more value to your members.

Providing value is not straightforward. Many chapters have members spread over wide distances. Not all members can attend local events. Event locations may need to be rotated. Tools such as newsletters, Zoom meetings/hybrid meetings, social media, websites are useful for non-local members. Members range from novice to expert. Novices may want to learn about plants, culture, and propagation. Experts may have a desire to delve into more advanced areas or share their knowledge and expertise with others. Interests vary. Some may be interested in gardening, some in field trips; some in educational meeting programs, some in community projects; some in evergreen azaleas, some in deciduous azaleas. You get the idea. You need to know your membership, and it may change.

Chapter Members can play an important role in this too. What do you want from being a member of ASA? Don't be bashful. Tell your chapter leaders what ideas you have to add to your chapter's activities. Let them know what you like about the chapter as well as what can be added and improved. I also want to know what you think. Copy me on your ideas and write to me about any ideas you may have.

At-large Members can rely on *The Azalean*, our website, and our annual conventions. I strongly recommend at-large members consider choosing a chapter even if it is not near to them. Chapters may have informative newsletters, Facebook pages, and websites, and can be a great source for additional information. In addition to one's regular chapter, a member can join additional chapters as an associate member for only \$5.00 each per year.

I want to hear from you. You can reach me at president@azaleas.org.

~ *Charlie*



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

President — Charles R. Andrews III
Vice President — Tom Johnson
Secretary — Donna Palmer
Treasurer — Paul Beck
Immediate Past President — Rick Bauer

Directors

Terms expire 2022	Terms expire 2023
Fred Anderson	Dale Berrong
Aaron Cook	Michael Bamford
Andy Whipple	Dr. John Simmons

Chapter presidents serve as ex-officio directors.

Chapters

Ben Morrison (chartered May 1980) Budne Reinke, Pres.	Northern Virginia (chartered May 1980) Barbara Kirkwood, Pres.
Louisiana (chartered June 1981) Allen Owings, Pres.	Tri-State (chartered October 1981) Beverly Knight, Pres.
Texas (chartered May 1989) David Creech, Pres.	Vaseyi (chartered June 2001) Aaron Cook, Pres.
Lake Michigan (chartered May 2003) John Migas, Pres.	Alabamense (chartered May 2005) John Torbert, Pres.
Rev. John Drayton (chartered May 2010) John Donato, Pres.	Central Carolinas (chartered Oct. 2013) Kevin McCorkle, Pres.
Arkansas (chartered 2018) Ronnie Palmer, Pres.	Texas Forest Country (chartered 2018) Betty Horne, Pres.

At-Large Contact

Rick Bauer

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 Donna Palmer, Secretary, 1106 S. Evans Road, White Hall, AR 71602-9430 or visit www.azaleas.org.