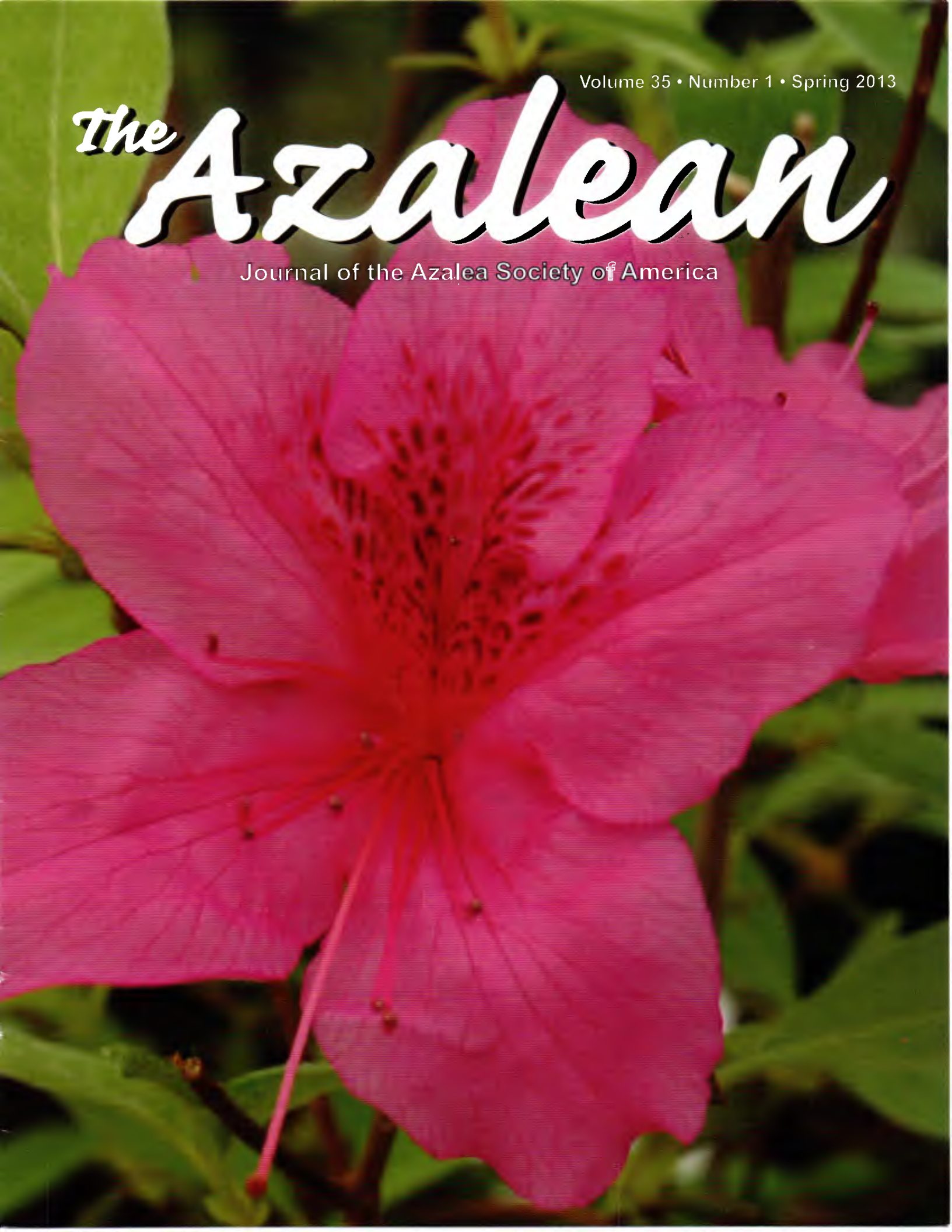


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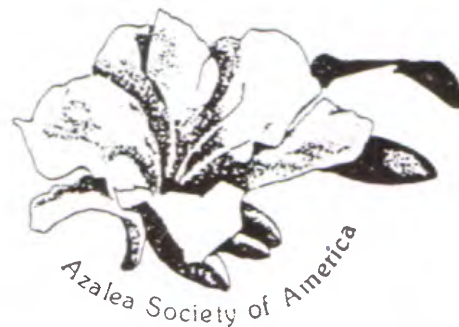
# *The* Azalean

Journal of the Azalea Society of America



# President's Letter

John Migas — Saugatuck, Michigan



Azalea Society members are just days away from heading out on the road to meet in Athens, Georgia for our annual convention. I know our members really look forward to this time of year. The convention is an opportunity to welcome another spring, meet up with friends from around the country, tour gardens, and last but not least, visit the plant sale.

The plant sale: what stories we can tell about the plant sale. Most of us in the group have more plants than we know what to do with, but as nature has it, we still buy plants. I still have plants, which I have not found a spot for, from last year's sale! This year will be no different for me; I'll bring home more plants to add to the my collection of unplanted specimens.

Here in Michigan the weather has been a bit cooler than normal and we are many weeks behind from last year's early warm up. This spring seems to be more of the normal trend. Hopefully when I return from Georgia, our spring flowers will have started to blossom. Last year just before I left for the national convention in Asheville, our blooms were in peak form in early April only to be nipped by Jack Frost later that month.

Our Society is in need of volunteers on all levels. Please get involved with chapter events, participate with activities, committees, functions and as officers. I'm asking each chapter president to assign someone to assist with the annual renewals. Once again, we are in need of articles for the journal. Please submit articles, chapter reports on events held, and visits to gardens. Any article will be most appreciated!

Our convention schedule for the next few years is set. We will visit South Carolina for 2014 and Texas for 2015. The Northern Virginia chapter is working out the arrangements for a visit to the Norfolk-Williamsburg area in 2016. Any chapter is welcome to host a future convention.

My term as President ends in Athens, Georgia. The past two years have been extremely exciting for me. Thank you to the membership and board members for supporting the ASA. I wish nothing but the best to J Jackson as President and Eve Harrison as Vice President, along with Leslie Nanney, Dan Krabill, the Directors, Board members, and Committee members.

John Migas

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

## Officers for 2012-2013

**President**—John Migas

**Vice President**—J Jackson

**Secretary**—Leslie Nanney

**Treasurer**—Dan Krabill

**Immediate Past President**—Aaron Cook

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**Terms expire 2013**      **Terms expire 2014**

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Miles Beach

Barbara Stump

Lindy Johnson

Rocky Voci

Larry Miller

Chapter presidents  
serve as ex-officio directors.

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(chartered May 1980)  
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Tom Johnson, *Pres.*

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Photo: John Migas

## On the Cover

Ernest Stanton hybrid 'Lake Michigan'. Please see the related story on page 4.

# Azaleas: Ernest Stanton Hybrids

Tadeusz Dauksza - Orland Park, Illinois

We in the United States not only have the East Coast, West Coast, Gulf Coast, but also what I, and some others, would call the “North Coast.” Our Canadian friends might call it the “South Coast.” I am speaking of the Great Lakes, which contain 21% of the world’s fresh surface water and could cover the 48 contiguous states to a uniform depth of 3 meters (10 ft). Their names are: Lake Erie, which comes from the Erie Tribe and is a shortened form of the Iroquoian word erielhonan (long tail); Lake Huron, which was named by French explorers for the inhabitants in the area, Wyandot or “Hurons;” Lake Michigan, which likely comes from the Ojibwe word mishigami (great water); Lake Ontario, which comes from a Wyandot (Huron) word ontario, lake of shining waters; and Lake Superior, which is an English translation of the French term Lac Superior (upper lake)—the Ojibwe people called it gitchigumi.

## Climate

The Great Lakes have a humid, continental climate influenced by air masses from other regions. These include arctic; dry, mild Pacific air masses; and warm, wet tropical systems from the Gulf of Mexico. The lakes themselves also have a moderating impact on the climate. They can also increase precipitation totals and produce lake-effect snowfall.

## Lake Effect

The most well-known winter weather of the Great Lakes is the lake effect. Late in winter, lakes often have no icepack in the middle. As a result the prevailing winds from the west pick up the slightly warmer air and moisture from the lake surface. As the slightly warmer, moist air passes over the colder land surface, the moisture often produces concentrated, heavy snow fall that sets up in bands or “streamers.” This is similar to the effect of warmer air dropping snow as it passes over mountain ranges. During freezing weather with high winds, the “snow belts” receive regular snow fall from this localized weather pattern. Snow belts are found in Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, and Ontario.



▲ The Great Lakes

The lakes also moderate seasonal temperatures to some degree by absorbing heat and cooling the air in summer, then slowly radiating that heat in autumn. They protect against frost during the transitional weather, but also keep summer temperatures cooler than farther inland. This effect, however, can be very localized and overridden by offshore wind patterns. The temperature buffering produces areas known as “fruit belts,” where fruit, typically grown much farther south, can be produced. Western Michigan, for example, has apple and cherry orchards, and vineyards adjacent to the lake shore. The Great Lakes have been observed to intensify storms, such as Hurricane Hazel in 1954, and the 2011 Goderich, Ontario tornado, which moved onshore as a waterspout. Tucked away in this north coast, on the Detroit River, is an island called Grosse Ile, “Big Island” in English. Visitors to the island are welcomed by gorgeous azaleas, rhododendrons, dogwoods, and other flowering trees and shrubs, all blooming at Westcroft Gardens, Michigan’s oldest farm still owned by the same family. The gardens cover 5½ acres on the island and are attributed to one Ernest Newman Stanton.

## Westcroft Gardens

The island of Grosse Ile, along with what is now Westcroft Gardens, was purchased July 6, 1776 by brothers William and Alexander Macomb from the Pottawatomie Indians. The Pottawatomie camped here

to hunt, fish, and gather wild fruit. Over the years, many Indian artifacts have been found in Westcroft.

In 1791 William purchased Alexander's share for £200 because Alexander had moved east, where he purchased 6,620 square miles of New York state. In 1811 the "treaty" between the Macomb brothers and the Pottawatomie Indians was finally ratified by President Madison, and William's three sons were recognized as the owners of Grosse Ile. A photocopy of the deed, or treaty as such land transactions with the Indians were called, is in the Westcroft office. The original is in the Burton Collection of the Detroit Library. David Macomb owned the central part of Grosse Ile, which included Westcroft, but he got into debt and sold it to his cousin John Anthony Rucker II. Rucker's wife did not want to live on "wild" Grosse Ile, thus J.A. Rucker's cousin, Robert Lee Stanton, purchased the farm and house in 1873. Robert Lee Stanton (the godson of Civil War General Robert E. Lee) farmed Westcroft as a diversified farm, but the main product was hay for the horses that pulled the Detroit trolleys. However, Henry Ford's automobile made hay for trolley horses obsolete. So it was up to Robert Lee Stanton's son, Ernest Newman Stanton, to take over Westcroft and remake it.

### Ernest Newman Stanton

Ernest Newman Stanton was born in May 1892 and passed away on September 18, 1984 on Grosse Ile. While studying horticulture at Cornell, Ernest volunteered for field service in the Great War. The American Field Service (AFS) was a volunteer ambulance corps serving with the French Army during World War I.

AFS ceased to exist as an independent entity and was absorbed by the U.S. military when the United States entered the war in 1917. While serving for eight months from 1915-1916, Ernest was gassed. Doctors told him that in order to recuperate and live a semi-normal life he needed to work outside. Ernest, however, continued to serve in the infantry and he ultimately obtained the rank of captain.

Upon returning from World War I, Ernest started to change Westcroft into a nursery, specializing in acid soil plants such as azaleas, rhododendrons, laurels, and dogwoods. As a result of this new endeavor, 5½ acres of previous hay fields became the Botanical Gardens.



Due to severe climate in Grosse Ile, Ernest was always interested in the production of better and more reliable azaleas. In the early 1930's he began hybridizing azaleas for cold hardiness. Utilizing his breeding stock of *Rhododendron yedoense*

Photo: Marshall Davies Lloyd - St. Margaret School

▲ Ernest Stanton in his early 20's var. *poukhanense* and *R. kaempferi*, Ernest soon produced hardy and persistent foliated hybrids, but history once again intervened. During World War II he was asked to produce food for the armed services. As a result Ernest Stanton and his family raised thousands of turkeys until VJ Day, after which Ernest said he never wanted to see or hear another live turkey on the farm again. After World War II Ernest turned his attention back to the hybrids that he had created, and the Great Lakes Azalea Series was born.

### Great Lakes Series

In the 1950 catalog of Westcroft Gardens the new *R. kaempferi* hybrids are listed as:

- 'Westcroft Cerise' - upright growing plant with single cherry colored flowers in mid season.
- 'Gloskey Pink' - medium rose pink, partly double flowers of good size produced on well formed bushy plants.
- 'Westcroft Myrtle Leafed' - Myrtle-like foliage that persists most of the winter. Light coral pink.

### ▼ *R. yedoense* var. *poukhanense* – Dauksza garden



Photo: Tad Dauksza

‘Westcroft Shell Pink’ - double shell pink flowers on glossy foliage.

‘Westcroft Spreading Red’ - similar to ‘Othello’ but with more lateral growth. Red flowers in mid-season.

‘Westcroft Cadmium Red’ - compact growth cadmium-red flowers cover the plant in May.

‘Coral Pink’, ‘Fedora’, ‘Othello’, and ‘Late Pink’ were also listed in the catalog.

In 1959 when the Great Lakes Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society (ARS) was organized, Ernest traveled to Brookville, Pennsylvania to attend and participate. He was one of the founding members along with professional nurserymen like Paul Bosley, Orlando Pride, Peter Girard Sr., David Leach, Bill Fetterhof, and Tony Shammarello. At the Second Annual Great Lakes Chapter’s azalea and rhododendron show in Cleveland, Ohio, Ernest won numerous awards for the new hybrid seedlings ‘Lake Erie’, ‘Lake Michigan’, and ‘Myrtleleaf’. During the 1950’s and 1960’s Ernest corresponded with numerous azalea aficionados like Drs. Henry T. Skinner and Francis deVos at the U.S. National Arboretum. In a letter addressed to Dr. deVos in 1964, Ernest stated that his first generation crosses were all light purple to orchid color.

In the early 1960s, after fifteen years of testing, Ernest introduced a number of new hardy, colorful hybrids. These included:

‘Lake Ontario’ - light orchid (light purplish pink)

▼ ‘Cadmium Red’ - Dauksza garden



Photo: Ted Dauksza

with orange foliage in fall.

‘Lake St. Clair’ - light rose-madder (light purple), upright habit, red fall color on leaves.

‘Spreading Red’ - vermilion, spreading plant, fall color orange-red.

‘Myrtleleaf’ - semi-double, bright coral pink, with myrtle-like foliage, fall leaf color is yellow. Originally called ‘Westcroft Myrtle Leafed’.

‘Lake Erie’ - medium rose, blotch spotted cadmium, compact growth.

‘Lake Michigan’ - rose-pink, upright growth habit, fall color orange-red on the leaves.

‘Lake Superior’ - deep rose-red, fall foliage wine-red.

‘Cherado’ - slightly double, soft coral pink, fall foliage red.

‘Shawnee’ - reddish orange, like salmon red, late blooming, not as hardy as others.

‘Upright Red’ - reddish-orange, early blooming.

‘Wyandotte’ - deep pink, large bloom.

‘Cherokee’ - camellia type, coral pink, compact, not to be confused with Joe Gable’s azalea of the same name.

‘Fuzzy Purple’ - light purple, large plant, leaves are fuzzy, hairy attracting white flies, cuttings no longer taken from plant.

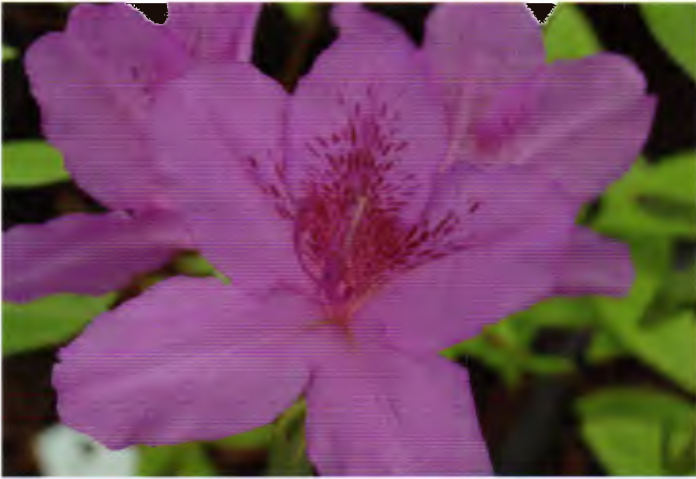
The legacy that Ernest created has continued since he passed away in 1984. His granddaughter, Denise de Beausset, picked up the torch in 1986 when she became the owner/manager of the property. Denise’s pride and joy is the four acres which comprise the Botanical Gardens.

*As the seventh generation of the family to maintain the farm, I feel that I have the responsibility of being the custodian of these remaining acres that have been in the family for 234 years. Denise de Beausset*

Denise and her family invite all to visit and enjoy this one of a kind garden filled with hybrid azaleas and rhododendrons that were created at Westcroft. The Botanical Gardens show true colors and vibrancy in late May and early June. However, there is something to see every month—migrating birds; the various blooms; or the changing colors of autumn. The gardens are open to the public every day of the year from dawn to dusk.

*Tadeusz Dauksza is a founding member of the Lake Michigan Chapter of the Azalea Society of America. He is presently the chapter membership renewal chair. He gardens in cold, blustery Northern Illinois.*

## ERNEST STANTON HYBRIDS



▲ 'Lake Ontario'



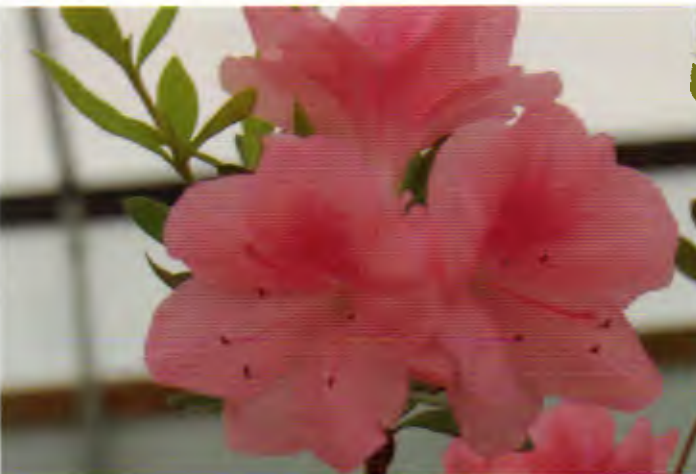
▲ 'Lake Michigan'



▲ 'Lake St.Clair'



▲ 'Lake Erie'



▲ 'Myrtleleaf'



▲ 'Lake Superior'

Photos: John Migas

# Society News

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## Thanks for 30 Years in the ASA! Tadeusz Dauksza

On behalf of the Azalea Society of America, I would like to express my gratitude to these loyal members who have contributed to the growth of the ASA and its progress over the last 30 years. It is my hope that they will continue to be active members for years to come.

Since the Society's inception in 1977 we have evolved into a nationally recognized advocate for the culture, propagation, and appreciation of azaleas. Without these dedicated, determined, and talented members, whose hard work is admired by all, none of this could have been possible.

The following list of 30-year members includes every person who joined the ASA on or before March 1983 and is still a member listed on our rosters. If you are a 30-year member and your name is not listed, my apologies.

Allan Anderson  
Freda I. Barry  
Neill & Margie Bassford  
Paul A. & Carolyn Beck  
William F. Bedwell  
Mr. & Mrs. Karel F. Bernady  
Brooklyn Botanic Garden  
Ms. Anne Brooks  
Larry & Flo Brown  
Hugh Caldwell  
A. M. Christopher  
William Clagett  
Dr. Joe H. Coleman, Jr  
Vee-Vee Coleman  
R. A. Comunale, MD  
Mrs. Lu Ann Crews  
Jane Deckert  
Mr. & Mrs. Donald L. Droneburg  
Dennis T. Dutton  
Dr. & Mrs. Charles H. Evans  
Allison A. Fuqua

Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth W. Gohring  
J. Raymond & Ann Goza  
Mr. & Mrs. C. A. Grandjean  
Dianne Gregg  
Mr. & Mrs. Warren Grooms  
Robin Hahn  
Donald W. Hyatt  
Mr. & Mrs. Philip E. Louer  
Lawrence & Milbrey Martin  
Sandra F. McDonald, PhD  
Mr. & Mrs. W. C. Miller III  
Dorothy W. Murphree  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Murray  
Mrs. Lawrence Nachman  
David & Leslie Nanney  
Jane Newman  
W. T. Norris, Jr, MD  
Julia & T. J. O'Malley  
Ronnie D. & Donna Palmer  
Dr. & Mrs. Robert H. Patterson  
Helen Ann Patton  
Joan G. Paull  
Deborah Sauer  
Tom & Fran Schuetz  
Senora Simpson  
Theodore S. Stecki  
Mich Steele  
Bob Stelloh  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Stewart  
Mr. Frederick L. Thane  
John T. Thornton  
Dr. Deborah Van Vechten  
Mr. & Mrs. Art Vance  
Donald H. Voss  
John K. Weagle  
Harry Weiskittel  
Silas Williams, Jr  
Adeline Wood



# In Memory

## In Memory: Roger Crowle Brown 1930 - 2013



It is with sadness that I report the passing of Roger Brown at his home in Fayetteville, PA, on January 15, 2013. A very important figure in the early days of the Azalea Society of America (ASA), he was born on January 6, 1930 in

Toronto, Ontario, Canada. A graduate of Central Technical School in Toronto, he served an apprenticeship (printing) at the Toronto Telegram where he was subsequently employed until 1966. He got a job with Judd & Detweiler, Inc. the famous Master Printers, in Washington, DC, and later joined the Washington Transit as an AA Mechanic.

Roger and his wife Marion made their home in New Carrollton, Maryland, about five minutes from Frank White's Azalea Acres Nursery in Lanham. Roger's interest in azaleas and his proximity to Frank White were largely responsible for the formation of the Ben Morrison Chapter in 1980. Roger served as chapter president from 1980 to 1984 and was an ex officio member of the ASA Board of Governors during that period. He was exceptionally good with his hands, and one of his passions was building model ships. His collection of highly detailed model ships was impressive and of museum quality. His fascination with azaleas led to his interest in asexual azalea propagation. He designed and constructed a "rooting chamber" to root cuttings in his basement. A hobbyist propagator, he was only interested in making enough money by the sale of plants to "keep him in pots and peat." He was always generous with the plants that he produced, and I managed to talk him into propagating several hundred small plants of 'Pocono Pink' for those who attended the 10th Annual ASA National Meeting in Bethesda, Maryland in 1988. I later learned that as a consequence of helping me, it

meant that he had to forgo producing plants for sale that year. Despite my protest, he declined any sort of compensation.

Roger's home in New Carrollton was also near the Plant Introduction Station at Glenn Dale, Maryland. Recognizing the historic importance of the USDA facility at Glenn Dale, Roger made arrangements to meet Dr. Howard Waterworth, the location leader at Glenn Dale. Over a three year period, Roger's efforts led to the creation of a national ASA activity that became known as the "Glenn Dale Preservation Program" (See *THE AZALEAN*, Vol 5, No. 3, September 1983, pp. 52-54). On June 17, 1982, authorization was granted by the USDA, under a revokable permit, for the ASA to commence restoration activities and to establish a germplasm resource area at the Glenn Dale station. Almost a year later, ASA members attending the 5th ASA National Meeting toured the historic Glenn Dale facility on April 30, 1983, and saw where the Glenn Dale azalea hybrids were developed. As a result of the cooperative effort at the Glenn Dale station, access to the historic files was granted and the analysis of original azalea working documents and files made possible the publication of "The Bell Book" and "The Glenn Dale Azaleas - Revised 1996," references for the study of the 454 Glenn Dale hybrid azaleas.

In 1998, Roger retired and they moved to Fayetteville, Pennsylvania, where he continued his interest in azaleas in a slightly more challenging climate. Knowing Roger, it proved to be only a minor adjustment. He could root a toothpick anywhere.

William C. Miller III  
Bethesda, Maryland

## In Memory: Alice Johnson Holland



It is my sad duty to report the passing of Alice Holland on January 16, 2013. One of the original founders of the Azalea Society of America (ASA), Alice served as Acting Secretary during the formative period of the ASA beginning in 1977. An active member in the Brookside

Gardens Chapter, she was elected to the position of National Secretary and served in that capacity for six years. In addition, she was a member of the Board of Governors from 1979 to 1986 and again from 1988 to 1990.

Alice earned a degree in Home Economics from the University of Maryland and was an avid birdwatcher and gardener. She had a special love for azaleas which she believes began in 1960 when they moved into their new house off Connecticut Avenue near Kensington, Maryland. In the concluding remarks of the article that she published in 1997 (see "How It All Began," *The Azalean*, Vol. 19, No. 4, December, 1997, pp. 64 - 65), she confessed that a source of considerable satisfaction was: "I'm the lady that started the Azalea Society of America."

William C. Miller III  
Bethesda, Maryland

### Correction

On page 73 and 74 of the Winter 2012 issue of *The Azalean* the images of Bob Hobbs appeared without photo credits. The photo on page 73 should have been credited to Barry Sperling. The photo on page 74 should have been credited to Harold Belcher.

Thank you to Barry Sperling for bringing this to our attention.

## How It All Began

Alice Holland - Silver Spring, Maryland

*Editor's Note: This piece originally appeared in the December, 1997 issue of The Azalean. It is reprinted in memory of Mrs. Alice Holland. Thank you to Audrey Stelloh for suggesting this article.*

I didn't fall in love until a few years after we moved to our new house in 1960. We occasionally would drive down Kensington Parkway in Kensington, Maryland, where in the spring there was a house whose whole grounds were one glorious azalea garden. We'd pull over to the side and just enjoy. At the time I didn't know that I'd ever have anything like that. I didn't know enough about gardening but I sure wanted to learn. I asked a neighbor whose passion happened to be roses if he knew of a good garden club that I might join. He recommended the Silver Spring Garden Club. I joined and met many wonderful people; among them were Paul and Rebecca Stadler of Stadler Nurseries, where I bought my first five azaleas. Paul would walk me all around his grounds to see the azaleas, which I think were his first love also. In later years the Stadlers sold their grounds to the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission to become a large part of Wheaton Regional Park, of which Brookside Gardens is a substantial portion.

Another kindred soul I met was Emile Deckert. In his postage-stamp sized back yard he was growing so many lovely azaleas. Emile started out as a hairdresser; I went to his home to have my hair done for years. When Brookside Gardens became an entity, Emile was responsible for the azalea gardens there. He made most of those old Glenn Dale azaleas from cuttings out of Stuart Armstrong's garden and set them out all over the hills under the pines with mulch around them; they dug no holes. When the Silver Spring Garden Club voted to give Barry Yinger \$1,000 toward his trip to Japan to bring back Satsukis, Emile grew those too, from cuttings, in a special garden below the Stadler house. We both used to bemoan the lack of information on azaleas, although Fred Lee's *Azalea Book* was our Bible. I occasionally attended an ARS meeting but gleaned very little on azaleas. One evening I was discussing this situation with my husband and he said, "So why don't you start an azalea club?" I told Emile what he'd said the

next time that I visited, and Emile said "Let's do it!" So we did. The following are the minutes of the first meeting:

*On Friday, December 9, 1977 at 8:00 PM a meeting was held at Brookside Gardens for the purpose of forming an azalea society. Present were: George Harding, Mike White, Bob Caviness, Frank White, Emile Deckert and Alice Holland. We decided that it was premature to elect any officers. Emile was asked to be acting president and Alice was asked to temporarily be secretary-treasurer. We explored the feasibility of forming an azalea society and whether or not to be a part of the American Rhododendron Society. After much discussion we decided: 1. to be a separate entity, 2. to cooperate with ARS, and 3. to seek their support in a friendly manner.*

*Frank White felt there was a need for an azalea group everywhere in our country that azaleas are grown and rather than have a small local group, that we should be nationwide. So, everyone concurring, we became "The Azalea Society of America." Alice suggested that we become the Brookside Chapter and this also met with agreement. We discussed methods of acquainting prospective members with our organization. Frank has been discussing the possibility with azalea people up and down the coast and met with much enthusiasm. Also, Ruth Harrington writes a weekly newspaper column; Tom Stevenson and Carl Hahn write garden columns in the big Washington newspapers. We could pass the word through the Federation of Garden Clubs and through county agents.*

*We discussed our purpose. It was felt that our prime purpose should be education. Also, Frank White is very interested in setting up a workable system of awards. We are to write a purpose and bring it to the next meeting.*

*We decided to get a post office box and to give press releases that we are formed. We will need a letterhead and an application for membership. Frank can do our mailing with his bulk mailing from Lanham going for about 7 cents a piece. Each of us is to bring to the next meeting ideas for the letterhead, press releases, and range of officers. Our by-laws should wait a while. We would like to have a public meeting in April and will need several meetings and a lot of work before then.*

*We discussed dues but came up with nothing*

*definite except that they should be low because we will only need money for postage, paper, and printing probably for some time. We decided to set up a bank checking account with Emile and Alice to be co-signers for checks. Frank White donated a check for \$200.00 and George Harding gave \$50.00. We will look into the possibility of a tax exempt status. Our next meeting will be Thursday, January 19th at 8:00 PM at Brookside. The meeting adjourned at 11:00 PM.*

Alice Holland, Acting Secretary

Frank White and George Harding were both growers and well known among azalea people, so events mushroomed pretty rapidly. Present at our second meeting were Nathan Fitts and Bill Parsons, both lawyers, and Warren and Judith Groomes. Until he became ill and had to resign in 1979, Nate worked very hard on setting up the basic organization and the by-laws, as did Bill. Bill assumed more and more responsibility and was national treasurer for some years. Nate was our first editor of *The Azalean*. That position was then assumed in 1979 by Jack Shaffer, a landscape designer with degrees from both Harvard and Oxford University.

Right from the beginning we decided to have a board of governors (BOG). [Known as Board of Directors after 1990 change in by-laws. Ed.] Our first five were Emile Deckert-president; Frank White-vice president, Thais Spencer (a retired lawyer and a wonderful lady from Fulton, MD), Bob Mallet, and Bill Parsons. We mostly met in the library at Brookside Gardens and sometimes at homes of members.

Our first public meeting was October 29, 1978 at Springbrook High School in Silver Spring, MD. There were 43 of our over 100 members present. Ryon Page was introduced as our plant-sale chairman, Rusty LaGuardia as our hospitality chairman and George Harding to keep the slide library.

On January 3, 1979 a proposed slate for BOG for 1979 was mailed to the membership. Included were Emile Deckert, Frank White, Bill Parsons, Thais Spencer, Nate Fitts, Judith Groomes, George Harding, Dr. Neil Campbell (a retired physician who claimed he caught "azaleaitis" from a patient, Albert Close, who was chief propagator at Glenn Dale), Alice Holland, and Nancy Swell. Nancy has been active from the very beginning. She would drive from Richmond, Virginia

*Continued on page 20*

# New Members

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## At Large

Jonathan Jochem  
469 Turner Rd  
Narrows, VA 24124

Jill Kingry  
1 Chadwick Circle  
Dothan, AL 36303

Harris Lewis  
636 Rose Dhu Rd  
Savannah, GA 31419

Nina Lührman  
1131 Armacost Rd.  
Parkton, MD 21120

## Ben Morrison

Richard H. Freeman  
4807 North Beaver Dam Road  
Waverly, VA 23890-3131

## Northern Virginia

Nancy Arrington  
8388 Briarmont Ln.  
Manassas, VA 20112

Genowefa Fiuk  
6606 Westmoreland Ave  
Tacoma Park, MD 20912

## Texas

Kristi Boyett  
10774 Shadow Wood Circle  
Whitehouse, TX 75791

Jennifer Buckner  
950 County Road 4590  
Spurger, TX 77660

Lynn & Doug Smith  
2210 Copeland St.  
Lufkin, TX 75904

## Oconee

Mark Crawford  
2867 Carroll Ulmer Rd.  
Valdosta, GA 31601

Randolph Maphis  
7476 Skipper Lane  
Tallahassee, FL 32317

Rusty Wetherington  
1207 Kimberly Drive  
Valdosta, GA 31602

Dolories Whaley  
364 Mountain Creek Church Rd  
Greenville, SC 29609

## Vaseyi

Ruth Anderson  
13114 Hermitage Ln  
Houston, TX 77079

Christine & David Blankenship  
427 Earl May Rd.  
Trade, TN 37691

Gale Carter  
321 Smith Dr.  
Hendersonville, NC 28739

Steve Earnest  
216 Landings Lane  
Lake Lure, NC 28746

Vonda Fair  
75 Georgia Guice Rd  
Flat Rock, NC 28731

John W. Simmons  
1855 E. Main St.  
Spartanburg, SC 29307

## Alabamense

Racile Casey  
4172 Wares Ferry Rd  
Montgomery, AL 36109-3019

Horace Crutchfield  
4237 Scottsville Rd  
Centreville, AL 35042

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# Chapter News

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## **Northern Virginia**

*Barry Sperling - Corresponding Secretary*

The annual December Holiday party was hosted by Barbara and Robert Randall at their fine home in Fredericksburg, Virginia, which was packed with 33 members, guests and massive amounts of food. After people had stuffed themselves and visited each other, president Rick Bauer presided over a meeting with a full agenda. Among the items discussed, sometimes extensively, were: a spring garden tour of Richmond, Paul Beck's treasurer's report (including a summary of the successful year's sales and a budget for 2013), a new website for the chapter, support for the rapidly developing Legacy Project (both online and additional member's efforts), targets for donations (the Friends of the National Arboretum, the Margaret White

Garden and Green Spring Gardens Park) and a discussion of our potential co-sponsorship in the 2016 convention.

Officers for the coming year were elected: continuing President Rick Bauer, new Vice-President Lars Larson, continuing Treasurer Paul Beck, and new Secretary Susan Bauer. Thanks were extended by all to outgoing Vice-President Carolyn Beck and Secretary Mary Hoioos (who contributed to this report).

Coming up in March will be our regular meeting with Norm Beaudry speaking on searching for the perfect rhododendron and a plant purchasing trip to North Carolina. April should see tours of open gardens in the area, and May will have the Green Spring Gardens Plant Sale. Further ahead there will be the regular cutting exchange in July.

## Texas

*Sherrie Randall, Chapter Member*

The Texas chapter held their winter meeting at the home of Jeff and Leabeth Abt in Nacogdoches. The Abts treated members to a wonderful brunch. Our business meeting discussed proposed Chapter By-law amendments and the election of our 2013 chapter officers. Elected President was David Creech, Vice-President Susan Travis, Secretary Sherrie Randall, and Treasurer Sue Botts. Following our meeting, Jeff introduced our guest Perky Beisel from Stephen F. Austin State University and Vice President of Friends of Historic Nacogdoches Inc. She gave us a brief history of the Zion Hill cemetery where we were headed next to plant azaleas donated by SFA and chapter member Bud Willis's nursery.

## Alabamense

*Patrick Thompson - Chapter President*

The Alabamense Chapter hosted an exciting spring meeting at the AU Davis Arboretum on April 7, 2013. We pooled the impressive resources of Alabama's garden clubs to host the first annual Garden Society Picnic. Tables were set up by members of Azalea Society of America's Alabamense Chapter, The Alabama Wildflower Society, Lee County Master Gardeners, Opelika Auburn Men's Camellia Society, the East Alabama Orchid Society, the Atlanta Cactus and Succulent Club, and the Alabama Plant Conservation Alliance. The groups shared their expertise and some free plants with about fifty visitors. Chapter members led two tours of the Arboretum's Azalea Collection. There was a picnic and a Chapter meeting when the afternoon of tabling was completed.



Photo: Patrick Thompson

▲ First Annual Garden Society Picnic

## Rev. John Drayton

*Linda Wood - Corresponding Secretary*

Our January meeting was held on the 28th with 21 members in attendance. The group was welcomed by Tom Johnson, president. After a wonderful meal of chili and sides, the 2014 convention was discussed. The night's speaker was Dennis Darling.

Dennis discussed his experiences with composting. He has perfected the use of a 32-gallon round can from which he transfers material to smaller buckets to mature. He had samples of his compost which is on par with that provided by the Bees Ferry Landfill.

Our February meeting was held on the 25th with 22 people in attendance.

The group was welcomed by Tom Johnson, president. After an excellent meal provided by the membership of fried chicken and sides, the meeting focused on planning for the 2014 convention. The next meeting is the 4th Monday (March 25, 2013) at 6:30 pm at the Magnolia carriage house with continued discussion of the 2014 Convention.

### Call for Articles

*The Azalean* needs more good articles about azaleas, their care, and their use in the landscape. Ideas include:

- Articles describing new public gardens or special azalea collections being created in your area.
- Descriptions and photographs of Society members' gardens.
- Information about azalea festivals and sales.
- Historic garden restoration stories.
- Articles about noteworthy azalea hybrid groups or new species or cultivar introductions.

Submit articles as Microsoft Word documents. Illustrations are highly encouraged and at least 4 x 6 inches at 300 dpi. Submit to: Preston and Bonnie Cooley, Editors, 6900 Skillman St., Unit 304C, Dallas, TX 75231,

E-mail: [theazalean@gmail.com](mailto:theazalean@gmail.com).

# Azalea City News

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## Nacogdoches Says It's Good to Be an Azalea City

Barbara Stump and Pam Fitch - Nacogdoches, Texas

Since Nacogdoches was the first city to receive the designation as an Azalea City by the Azalea Society of America (ASA) in 2004, and was the first to re-certify in 2011, it seems only right that we share why we think this is such a good program. Joe Schild had a great idea back then, and it's still a great idea now.

Nacogdoches City Manager Jim Jeffers gives the award his vote of confidence: "The Azalea City designation for the City of Nacogdoches has given our city and its annual Nacogdoches Azalea Trail national attention. Being an Azalea City helps our Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) promote the trail and our gardens to a large audience of garden enthusiasts and tourists. More cities with annual events focusing on azaleas should apply for certification by this program of the ASA. The application process is easy."

We believe there are several benefits of being an ASA Azalea City:

**Increased tourism potential.** Being an ASA Azalea City allows our Convention and Visitors Bureau to use this designation on our annual Azalea Trail brochures and in publicity to attract tourists to our town. The designation also serves as a motivator for groups in town to continue to think of new programs and ways to use azaleas. Since our first application in 2004 there have been two big gardens added in our community, one on the campus of Stephen F. Austin State University and one on the site of a Victorian park, which is now a Master Gardeners Demonstration Garden. New events have been added to the Azalea Trail celebration as well. We now have an annual Little Princess Tea Party, the Art of Flora Design using azaleas, and an azalea photography competition.

**Increased convention potential.** The fact that we applied to become an Azalea City in 2004 possibly helped convince the ASA board to approve our city as the site for the 2007 national convention. Then, when they saw the scope of the azalea gardens we have built,

and continue to build in both the city and the university, they agreed to have us host the national convention here in 2015 as well.

**Expanded marketing potential.** Our Nacogdoches Convention and Visitors Bureau saw early the value of the Azalea City program as a vehicle for increasing tourist interest in our annual month-long Azalea Trail. The directors of our CVB created the initial application package in 2004 and the re-certification package in 2011. We proudly display the fact of our being the first Azalea City in the nation on our tourism brochure each year. Says current executive director Melissa Sanford, "Being designated as the first ASA Azalea City establishes a unique selling point for us to use in our marketing to tourists, and it has enabled us to expand our marketing efforts to include different target audiences such as gardeners and photographers. We have approximately 5,000 individuals and 25 group tours that visit Nacogdoches during the Azalea Trail, and the designation as an ASA Azalea City has been a contributing factor to annual attendance."

The certification is also used by the Chamber of Commerce to market our city as a certified retirement community.

**Increased ASA membership potential.** Another benefit is that the Azalea City program helped motivate us to work harder to develop memberships locally. The basic requirement for certification is just three members, but with the interest generated by the publicity about our Azalea Trail and the ASA, we grew to 40 members in the East Texas area. Because of the relatively long distances between our main cities in the Texas Chapter, Azalea City program chairman and past chapter president Bart Brechter and current president Jo Ann Smith, developed membership in the Houston and Tyler areas, respectively. Both cities have had "Azalea Trails" for more than 20 years, but until the ASA Azalea City program there was little recognition

*Continued on page 16*

# Thoughts On Pruning Azaleas

Debby Emory - Silver Spring, Maryland

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*Editor's Note: It has been suggested by several members that we should reprint articles from past issues of **The Azalean**. As we have room, we will reprint items from the archive. This piece originally appeared in the June, 1991 issue of **The Azalean**. Thank you to Audrey Stelloh for suggesting this article.*

How much pruning an azalea undergoes can depend on the space available for the plant to grow, the vigor of the plant, and the inclination of the gardener. In public parks and large estates where plenty of space is available, plants can age gracefully and need only an occasional trimming of dead wood to be kept healthy and attractive. In smaller and more formal areas where azaleas have been planted closely, more intense pruning is needed to prevent the more vigorous plants from smothering others. Many azaleas are naturally bushy, compact shrubs and need very little pruning, especially when compared with other shrubs such as *Forsythia*. Probably the most frequent mistake made in planting azaleas is in spacing plants too close together. Nursery grown plants in 2-or 3-gallon containers look great just as they are, so we often plant them for immediate effect. Within a few years they are fighting each other for space, and we then remove every other plant and replant it someplace else. But 10 to 20 years later we realize they're still too close together and they're now too big to move easily. THEN we have to prune.

Implements of pruning range from fingernails to power saws. Fingernails work well on fresh crisp growth in late summer and the gardener always has them on hand! A power saw may be required for the drastic pruning of an old plant. Hand pruners with either straight or curved edges are readily available and suitable for most requirements. Lopping shears will handle a thicker branch than hand shears and will also extend the gardener's reach to very high or very low branches. Unfortunately lopping shears do not readily fit in a pocket. Power hedge trimmers are enjoyed by men who like playing with power tools and they are quite useful in achieving a geometrical artificial look.

The routinely recommended time for pruning azaleas is immediately after blooming so that new growth will have plenty of time to form next year's buds. Early pruning is especially important for old, badly overgrown plants where drastic measures are required.

Plants that are grown in tight artificial forms such as gumdrops and topiaries are often sheared frequently and closely, so that they develop dense surface foliage with few leaves inside the plant. If a Mr. Scissorhands is too enthusiastic or too late in cutting off the vigorous new growth that develops in late summer, much of next spring's bloom will be lost.

Pruning at blooming time may be desirable for a plant that sports freely. The branches bearing the sports can then be identified, and the desired balance of sports (high, low, or zero) can be maintained. Pruning at blooming time also provides branches for flower shows and interior decoration. Most azalea growers are, however, apt to prune whenever the mood strikes them and to limit their cutting to plants that are growing over something else.

Winter pruning is seldom recommended, but it has many advantages. It does, of course, remove a lot of spring flowers, but established plants are generally so loaded with buds that quite a few branches can be removed without being noticed. Evergreen azaleas are not totally evergreen in the same sense as the evergreen hollies or rhododendrons. Instead they have two types of leaves. The spring leaves, which form about blooming time, are large and usually drop in early winter. The summer leaves — located closer to the terminal bud — are smaller, more closely spaced on the stem, and remain all winter. After the new year, with the leaves thinned out, the branch structure of the plant becomes more apparent so that the gardener can more easily see where pruning is needed. On a mild winter day (when available) we often look for a chance to be outdoors. Furthermore, in the winter the gardener is much less likely to step on a snake or a nest of yellow-jackets.

The amount of pruning an individual plant needs varies considerably. A young plant may need nothing whatsoever for several years. An old plant with a lot of dead wood can be cut nearly to the ground and in time, recover nicely. When heavy pruning is needed, removal

of all excess wood in one year may leave an unsightly space. It may be desirable to reach inside the bush and cut back to the desired level about a third of the branches each year for three years.

Young plants of *Rhododendron kaempferi*, R. 'Vittatum', and their hybrids which make loose but vigorous upright growth can be pruned frequently to encourage branching close to the ground. On the other hand, young plants of Satsuki hybrids often make dense, spreading growth close to the ground leading many gardeners to hope that they will always remain dwarf. The gardener should be aware however that vigorous upright growth can readily develop on older plants and must be kept pruned if it is desired to keep the plant low.

A bush looks better after pruning when the stems are cut low enough that the stumps are hidden by foliage. Most of the new growth on a plant forms as a cluster of three to seven stems, of which one or two are often very much longer than the others. Cutting the longest stems back to their bases is an easy way to keep a plant compact. It is also often wise to cut branches growing horizontally when they are likely to smother lower growth. Stems that have grown a foot or more in a season should also be cut back since future growth from these stems will also be vigorous and overshadow other plants. Be alert to remove so-called "water sprouts," vertical shoots from the base of the plant that may grow two feet or more in height during the summer!

A massive planting of azaleas appears more natural when individual plants or groups of plants of one variety are trimmed so that they can be displayed separately rather than blending with other varieties into a hedge-like grouping. For best results it may be wise to prune lightly at first—then step back a ways and look the planting over critically before doing more.

A few last words of advice. Fertilizer can be a dangerous chemical around azaleas. Just as using fertilizer on grass results in the lawn having to be cut more often, so fertilizing azaleas more than may be needed to maintain them in healthy condition only means that they have to be pruned more often. Some use of chemicals in pruning may be desirable: plant diseases can be spread by your tools. Cleaning shears or saws frequently with rubbing alcohol or a 10% solution of Clorox in water is a wise precaution. And don't forget — before closing the shears always make sure where your fingers are!

*Continued from page 14*

ASA Azalea City program there was little recognition on a national scale. Both cities were initially certified in 2007 and are in the process of re-certifying this year.

**Increased interchange of nursery plants.** We give tours of our eight-acre Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden on the campus of Stephen F. Austin State University during the annual Azalea Trail to bus groups from southeast Texas and western Louisiana. People always ask where we got our many kinds of azaleas (more than 520 cultivars from 52 hybrid groups, including 20 deciduous azalea species or cultivars). We very proudly tell them about our many nursery-owner friends from the ASA, without whom we couldn't have such a wonderful collection. We encourage them to ask their local nurseries to branch out into the newest kinds of azaleas and some of the not-so-typical ones. We tell them they, too, can create gardens by working with other groups in their local community to develop service project gardens for beautification. We also tell them about the ASA and how joining would help them learn from azaleaphiles ready and willing to share knowledge and enthusiasm. With luck this will help not only expand the ASA's membership but also keep our local nurseries growing.

**Increased community pride.** Receiving national recognition as an ASA Azalea City promotes civic pride. Being an ASA Azalea City gives the gardening souls in your city credibility for their efforts, while inspiring their neighbors to join together to beautify their public and private lands through hands-on projects. Citizens begin taking an increased interest and awareness in the local gardening community and are inspired to get involved. Levels of involvement may range from plantings in residential yards to visiting one of the public gardens.

If your city is just beginning to organize in this way, keep track of your efforts and contact the Azalea City program for ideas. If your city has a history of gardening projects and efforts, review them; you may be surprised to discover that you already qualify, especially if you can recruit some ASA members.



# Azalea Petal Blight: Request for Research Proposals

Hale Booth - Signal Mountain, Tennessee

**P**etal blight was first reported in 1931 on Indian and Kurume hybrids in South Carolina.<sup>1</sup> It can attack most azaleas, rhododendrons, and kalmias under favorable weather conditions. Infected flowers first exhibit small spots which appear water-soaked. The spots enlarge rapidly and cause petals to become slimy and limp within two to three days after initial infection. Infected flowers soon become tan or light brown and eventually collapse as shown by Figure 1, Petal Blight on 'Vision'. Infected flowers dry, turn prematurely brown and cling to the plant longer than uninfected flowers do. One to 20 (commonly two to five) small, black sclerotia (a fungal resting stage) form on an infected flower six to eight weeks later. The sclerotia appear as small white areas on the dried petals and slowly become dark as they mature.

Caused by the *Ovulinia azaleae* fungus, the disease develops at flowering time. Early-flowering and late-flowering cultivars or species tend to escape the disease. The fungus overwinters as sclerotia on diseased petals adhering to plants, on the soil surface, or in leaf mulch under the plants. At the beginning of the host's blooming period, the sclerotia germinate and in three to five days give rise to small stalked, cup-shaped fruiting bodies filled with spore sacs, which are discharged with enough force to strike the lower blooms above the sclerotia or be carried in air currents to blooms on adjacent plants.

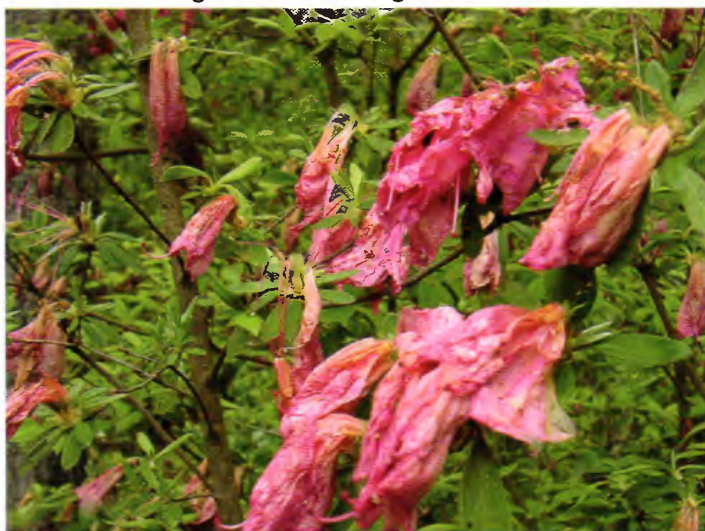
The rate of infection is higher when periods of frequent precipitation and warm weather coincide with flowering. Heavy dew or extended periods of misty weather are particularly favorable. Low temperatures at the beginning of the flowering period and dry conditions toward the end of it reduce the infection potential.

Fungicides sprayed when the buds are just beginning to show some color have controlled the blight and inhibited formation of sclerotia. Making sure diseased or disease-carrying plants are not introduced into the growing area reduces the disease potential.<sup>2</sup>

When we, as gardeners, wait a year to see an azalea bloom it is highly disappointing to see the blooms quickly fall victim to azalea petal blight—contrast the beauty of Figure 2. 'Vision' with the infected 'Vision' shown in Figure 1. Even if you do not have this problem, as your azalea collection grows with new acquisitions, the opportunity for accidentally introducing petal blight to an otherwise uninfected garden increases over time. Therefore this fungus is of concern to many Azalea Society members, and the Azalea Research Foundation has been requested by some members to seek proposals for research on petal blight. There are a number of aspects of petal blight which need investigation. Some broad but basic areas yet to be explored include:

- 1) Determining the susceptibility of different species and hybrids;
- 2) Best management practices for treating the symptoms of petal blight; and

▼ Figure 1. Petal Blight on 'Vision'



▼ Figure 2. 'Vision'



Photos (Figs. 1 & 2): Bob Stelloh

3) Research into methods and processes for eliminating azalea petal blight.

Your Azalea Research Foundation funds small grants to leverage needed research on azaleas. We do not directly conduct research projects, so we are requesting proposals that address the desired research on azalea petal blight. We are also interested in any other aspects of the fungus on which we could leverage research.

Azalea Society members can help with this research in two ways. Some of you may work with staff of research groups or colleges and universities with students and professors who may be interested in researching aspects of azalea petal blight. Some of you may have the background and skills to directly initiate some of the research. A second way members can support this work is by a tax deductible donation to the Azalea Research Foundation.

During the next few months, your Azalea Research Foundation will be mailing requests for proposals to university departments that we think would be interested in tackling this issue. We would appreciate any leads you may suggest to help this process succeed.

For the research proposal application form and more information on your research foundation, please visit:

the Azalea Society of America Website  
**www.azaleas.org**

or contact the research foundation

**Hale Booth**  
**Committee Chairman**

**hbooth@BrightBridgeInc.org**

**Azalea Research Foundation**  
**c/o Hale Booth**  
**7085 Sawyer Road**  
**Signal Mtn. TN 37377**

<sup>1</sup> Weiss, Freeman and Floyd F. Smith, *A Flower-Spot Disease of Cultivated Azaleas*. United States Department of Agriculture Circular No. 556. Issued July 1940, Revised July 1941, Washington DC.

<sup>2</sup> Excerpted and summarized by permission from *Compendium of Rhododendron and Azalea Diseases*, 1986, American Phytopathological Society, ISBN 0-89054-075-6.



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Spring 2014	Feb. 1, 2014	Mar. 2014

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# Thanks, Ethel

Bob Stelloh - Hendersonville, North Carolina

On December 24, 2012, the Azalea Research Foundation received \$10,000 worth of American common stock from Ethel Larus, in memory of her husband Charlie Larus, who was 88 when he died in 2007. Here are a few personal memories to help you know a little about Charlie and Ethel, especially if you did not have the privilege of meeting them.

A long time member of the Azalea Society and the American Rhododendron Society, Charlie was an excellent plantsman and gardener, with particular interests in dwarf big-leaf rhododendrons and conifers, native azaleas, Japanese maples, daylilies, groundcovers, and wildflowers.

After retirement in 1979, they lived next door to Augie and Mary Lou Kehr in Flat Rock, North Carolina. There, they had a large garden crowded with specimen plants Charlie had collected or grown from seed. You may have seen it, as their garden was on tour at the 1994 ARS convention in Asheville and the 2001, 2008, and 2012 ASA conventions in Asheville. I was visiting one day when Charlie announced he was going to chainsaw down some overgrown evergreen azaleas in his garden, since he was mostly interested in dwarfs and natives. That led to my digging and dragging, with his help, three or four pickup truck loads of azaleas out of their garden. These were planted along the driveway in our garden only four miles away. I also ended up with a number of native azaleas he had raised from seed collected on Gregory Bald and other locations in western North Carolina. Charlie commonly grew plants from seed, and he was quite generous about sharing them with anyone who admired them. We enjoy a constant reminder of that generosity in our garden.

In 2002, Charlie and I were part of a group hiking to Gregory Bald in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. It is a long, slow and tiring hike, four miles long with a 3000-foot elevation gain. Although Charlie was over 80 at the time, he made it without a problem. At the top, just to the left of the trail, there is a group of low growing azaleas, including one with purplish pink flowers (which I think is the plant Don Hyatt has since named 'Royal Star'). I saw Charlie putting a twist tie on the plant and asked why he was marking it. Ever



Photo: Bob Stelloh

▲ Gregory Bald 'Royal Star' 2002

optimistic, he replied: "I'm going to come back this fall to get some seed, because I like its color and form."

On the way back down the hill, Charlie started having trouble. He was fine when he was walking, but when he stopped to rest, he would half fall backward and half sit down, and he would have a hard time getting back up. So I started walking in step with him, just a foot behind him, to catch him when he stopped.

Eventually we decided Charlie was dehydrated, but no one had anything left for him to drink. Finally, we were close enough to the trail head for someone to walk ahead, get water from his car and hike back with it. After Charlie drank quite a bit of water he was fine, and he made the rest of the trip on his own.

Years later, a number of friends including Charlie were going to a native plant lecture in South Carolina. As we were walking from the car to the lecture hall I noticed Charlie had his hands in his pockets, as he usually did, and we were about to climb some steps.

Like the rest of us, Charlie was getting older and a little unsteady, so I worried about what might happen if he tripped on the steps. When I suggested he take his hands out of his pockets to catch himself if he tripped, he did, and he had no trouble with the steps. Since then, I think of Charlie every time I notice I'm walking with my hands in my pockets, especially on steps or rough



Photo: Bob Stelloh

▲ Charlie Larus, Delia Bankhead 2003

ground—and then follow my advice.

In 2005, when it became too much work for Charlie to take care of his many plants, he and Ethel moved to a retirement home in Hendersonville. They sold their house and garden to Ed and Mary Collins, perhaps partly because they were good friends, and perhaps partly because they knew the Collinses would take

good care of Charlie's beloved plants. And they have. I know, because my wife Audrey and I have pizza at the Collins' house almost every Wednesday night, and we usually come early so we can walk around and admire the garden first.

Soon after selling their house, Charlie and Ethel moved to Connecticut to be near some of their children. Thanks, Ethel, for your gift to the Azalea Research Foundation in Charlie's honor. It will help to keep Charlie's memory alive amongst his many friends in the Azalea Society, and it will fund some much-needed research on one of his favorite plant families.

*Bob Stelloh is a long-time member of the Azalea Society. He was the national treasurer from 1995 to 2007, and has been the Azalea Society webmaster since 1999. He has known the Larus and Collins families since moving to Hendersonville in 1996.*

*Continued from page 11*

to Silver Spring, Maryland, just to attend board meetings. She put together the Richmond Chapter and was their first president. We were attempting to move along as fast as possible.

Our annual meeting was held at the National Arboretum on March 25, 1979. Seventy-five members of our 140 were present. Ryon Page reported on the mart to be held in May. Nate Fitts announced that issue #2 of *The Azalean* would be out shortly. Buck Clagett was putting together a source list. The slate for BOG was accepted unanimously. When Nate's resignation was put before the BOG, it was accepted with reluctance and Jack Shaffer was asked to take his place.

By the next year, 1980, we were able to confer charters on five chapters: Brookside Gardens, Richmond, Northern Virginia, Ben Morrison, and Robert D. Gartrell. The presidents of chapters were automatically made members of the BOG.

In 1981 Bob Barry chaired the work for ASA to be represented at Flora Fest at the US Botanical Gardens as one of 29 plant societies. While he was working there, a big, lovely man walked through. He was in Washington, DC with the dairyman's association and was fascinated with the azalea display. His name was John Rochester. He and Bob talked, and the result was a new chapter in Louisiana and a friendship that lasted many years and beyond John's death. John was the president of ASA in 1985.

I think that what pulls at my heartstrings the most is the memories of all the dear wonderful people. You know azalea people are very special. I felt that so many of the people that I worked with were my very dear friends: George Harding, Emile Deckert, Ryon Page, Bill and Thurza Parsons, Bob Barry, Nancy Swell, Jerry Goodman, Mal Clark, Gordon Severe, Roger Brown, Art Vance, Marge and Glenn Taylor, Rusty LaGuardia. It was a privilege for me to know Tony Dove, John Rochester, Frank White, Fred Galle, Don Hyatt, Charles Evans; and on and on and on. This eight years was a part of my life that I wouldn't give up for anything. When people say "Hey, who are you?" I say "I'm the lady that started the Azalea Society of America."