



The Azalean

Vol. 42 • No. 4 • Winter 2020

Journal of the Azalea Society of America

President's Letter

Rick Bauer—Yorktown, Virginia

Well, we have finally come to the end of 2020. This is one year that I don't think will be soon forgotten. The COVID-19 situation has resulted in the cancellation of many activities, including our convention in Houston. Our next convention is scheduled for Charlotte, NC. Kevin McCorkle and the folks from Central Carolinas are working hard on the "Unconventional Convention." They are acting on the premise that we will still be dealing with COVID-19 and thus will have to implement changes to our normal means of conducting conventions. I refer you to his article in this issue. I'm excited about this convention and I'm looking forward to seeing old friends, visiting beautiful gardens, and adding some excellent azalea varieties to my collection. A convention registration form will be posted on the 2021 convention link on the ASA website as soon as it is available. That site is shown in the convention article on p. 80.

The President, Vice President, and three Director positions are up for election. Biographies for the candidates are included in this issue. We thank those members who stepped forward to fill leadership positions within the society. Additionally, we are asking you to vote for your favorite article in *The Azalean* this year. Please take the time to vote and to return your ballot to the society secretary by email or by mail.

COVID-19 has curtailed a lot of indoor activities; however, that hasn't stopped all activities. A number of chapters continue with their propagation efforts, plant sales, and work on their Legacy Projects. The Northern Virginia Chapter is supporting a number of Legacy Gardens, including the development of a Holly Springs Legacy Garden at Jenkins Arboretum in Devon, PA. (See related article on Jenkins in this issue, p. 81.) I encourage all of you to consider sponsoring a hybrid group as a Legacy Project and to coordinate with local public gardens to establish Legacy Gardens.

We have also been working to update our society logos. Last issue I introduced the letterhead logo. We have approved three additional logos for different purposes. Our goal was to establish a common look and feel across all of our logos. I refer you to a separate article in this issue, p. 91. If your chapter doesn't currently have a logo, I encourage you to consider adopting one based on the design of the society logos.

Finally, this is the last issue of *The Azalean* being created and published by our editor Barbara Stump and designer Pam Fitch. Both Pam and Barb previously served as editors prior to their current stints with our journal. Together they are responsible for producing over 70 journals over their combined 17+ years of service to the society. Under their auspices, the journal went from a combination of color and black and white photos to totally color photos. The articles and photos contained in the journal made it a source of excellent information and pride for our society. We will miss them and thank them for their contributions. I happy to report that Barb has agreed to continue serving on the Editorial Advisory Board of *The Azalean*.

While that is the sad news, I'm happy to report that the society has filled both their positions. Kathy Jentz has agreed to be the new editor and designer. Kathy is new to the society, but not to the field of publishing or horticulture. Many of our members in the Washington, DC area are familiar with the magazine, *Washington Gardener*, which Kathy founded and publishes. She is also the editor of the *Water Garden Journal*, the journal of the International Waterlily and Water Gardening Society. We welcome her to the society and to her new position.



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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Regular membership is open to all interested parties for an annual amount of \$30; life-membership for one or two persons at the same address is \$600. Members receive *The Azalean* and are eligible for participation in all activities of the Society. For information and a membership application, write to Leslie Nanney, Secretary, 8646 Tuttle Road, Springfield, VA 22152 or visit www.azaleas.org.

The Azalean

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

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

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

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

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NUMBER 4

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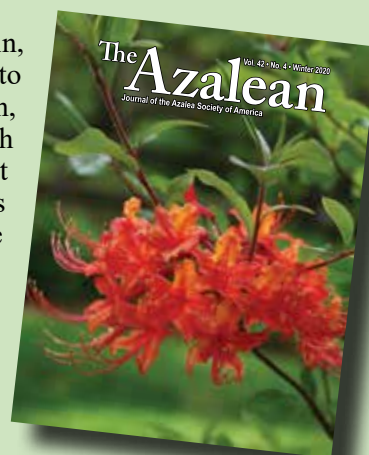
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On the Cover

In 2016, Mt. Cuba Center in Hockessin, Delaware, donated several *R. austrinum* to Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens in Devon, Pennsylvania, at the conclusion of a research study. These were added to the gardens at Jenkins and evaluated. The plant that was later named Tomato Soup was among those plants and was named by Steve Wright, Jenkins' Director of Horticulture, for its dark orange, nearly red flowers that resemble Campbell's tomato soup. See related article in this issue, p. 81 (Photo Chris Swisher).



2021 Convention Preview—“Carolina in My Mind”

Charlotte, NC and Beyond

April 15, 16, 17, 18, 2021

By Kevin McCorkle—Charlotte, NC

“They came on one of April’s most brilliant days—a day as sparkling as a newly-washed lemon...a day when even the shadows were a mélange of blue and orange and jade, like the shadows that poured from the tipsy brush of Monet.”

— Beverley Nichols, “A Thatched Roof”

The Central Carolinas Chapter invites you to join us for the 2021 ASA Convention, April 15-18, in Charlotte, NC and surrounding areas. On the heels of the Houston Convention cancellation due to the pandemic, we initially feared the same fate for the Charlotte event. Out of the talks of cancellation came some “outside of the box thinking” and a quest to preserve as much of the event we had already planned, but in a way mindful of the current conditions. An informal query of ASA board members and chapter presidents revealed, surprisingly, that many others felt similarly. There were mixed responses, some with hesitation, but the majority indicated they would support and attend such an event. Buddy Lee may have summed it up best when he wrote: “We will still be able to see one another. Friend groups could go get meals and tour together. Best thing is that we get to see beautiful gardens and fantastic blooming azaleas.”

We set out to develop a new model in a new age, based on what may be the new normal for a while...an unconventional convention compared to those of the past, with the safety of our members as our primary concern and focus. This new model convention would be almost exclusively outdoors and built around the safety principles of social distancing. At the time of this writing, the State of North Carolina mandated maximum group size is 25 persons indoors and 50 persons outdoors, so this must be taken into consideration.

This event will differ from conventions of years past, including the following:

- There will be no tour busses. Each attendee is responsible for his or her transportation to and from the field trip venues and elsewhere.
- There will be no indoor sit-down group meals, banquet dinner, or annual meeting and awards program.
- There are no indoor speaking engagements or workshops scheduled at this time. Instead, the docents, garden owners, curators, or other knowledgeable individuals will take the role of speakers in each garden.
- To assist with maximizing social distancing and field trip venue manageability, attendance will be limited to the first 80 ASA member registrants.

- Many of our field trip venues are parking challenged and that has been a concern of the venue hosts. Therefore, registrants may be asked to consent to a carpool of a minimum of 3 masked persons per vehicle for short duration travel from a designated carpool rendezvous spot located near the associated venue.

The following is a summary of our current agenda at the time of this writing. Due to unpredictable future conditions with the COVID-19 pandemic, some venues or logistics may need to be modified if conditions do not improve, or if they worsen. Therefore, this agenda and list of field trip venues should be considered flexible and subject to change. Our goal is to have a clearer view of the final agenda prior to the time of registration. Again, the safety of our members is paramount, so we reserve the right to cancel the event if conditions should warrant.

By their nature, the gardens on tour are unfortunately not fully accessible for persons with disabilities or persons that use a wheelchair so please take this into consideration regarding attendance.

Thursday, April 15—Optional Open Garden Day, Welcome, and Plant Sale Social

On what would traditionally be a convention travel day, we have chosen to include an optional garden venue for those with the time and interest to attend. We have partnered with **Juniper Level Botanic Garden (JLBG)**, located near Raleigh (2.5 hours from our convention base hotel), to reserve an Open Garden Day for ASA Convention attendees on Thursday, April 15. In addition to informal strolling in the garden on a drop-in basis, scheduled tours of the garden will be led by celebrated plantsman Tony Avent and/or garden curator Amanda Wilkins, our speakers in the garden. **Plant Delights Nursery** will be open to our group for browsing and plant sales during that day. At any one time, over 1,500 of the perennial plants displayed in JLBG are for sale in the adjacent nursery.

Juniper Level Botanic Garden was founded by Tony Avent in the late 1980s when he realized he needed to trial and display the rare and unusual perennials he was offering through Plant Delights Nursery, Inc. What started as garden

areas around his first home on the property quickly grew to vast, sweeping beds full of thousands of perennials, trees, and shrubs.

In its current form, JLBG is a botanical garden, conservation center, plant breeding hub, and research facility, encompassing 28 acres of gardens, research beds, and greenhouses. Plant Delights Nursery is nestled within the grounds and is one of the ways JLBG introduces new plants to home gardeners. The plant collection contains more than 28,000 unique plants from around the world, collected by Tony, JLBG staff, and research associates with a keen eye for the rare, unusual, or horticulturally unique. The garden trials these plants, displaying and evaluating them for form, growth habit, and ability to grow in USDA Zone 7b/8a, Raleigh, NC. The garden believes in getting good plants to the people and using home gardeners to aid in ex-situ conservation.

The JLBG azalea collection consists of Aromi Azaleas, Encore(R) Azaleas, Carla Hybrids, and an assortment of other azaleas. The garden (JLBG) has been working with folks on the Gulf Coast to get the Aromi Azaleas to Raleigh for evaluation. April is a beautiful time to experience the other major collections, including the Front Woodland Garden that comes alive during this time of year.

Thursday evening will feature the opening of the Plant Sale in an outdoor setting at the base hotel, along with an informal outdoor social to allow old friends to reconnect and new friendships to be formed.

Friday, April 16—Explore a Living Museum— The R.A. Bartlett Research Arboretum

We are fortunate to have the opportunity to spend the day enjoying the Bartlett Research Arboretum, which is not open to the public. During the morning hours, our speaker in the garden will be curator Greg Paige as he leads us on an overview of the grounds. He will be discussing the extensive plantings in the main collections and research areas. After lunch outdoors on the grounds, everyone will have the opportunity to re-visit their favorite area on their own for a more in-depth exploration. If you are a woody plant

▼ Photo 1—An enticing pathway on Rhodie Hill, Bartlett Research Arboretum.



Photo Kevin McCorkle

person, this is your ultimate wonderland! The arboretum is a majestically peaceful place, and the serenity will stay with you long after a visit. Not to be missed: the vast variety of unique understory specimen plants within the woodland throughout “Rhodie Hill.” A personal favorite: the golden oak cultivar ‘Concordia’ (*Quercus robur* ‘Concordia’), a chartreuse wonder that draws your eye from afar.

Nestled within 350 acres, the private accredited Level IV Class **Bartlett Research Arboretum** contains an extensive collection of tree and plant species from around the world. With over 21,000 accessioned plants, the arboretum includes some of the best collections of rhododendrons, oaks, and conifers on the East Coast, the largest collection of magnolia cultivars in the world, and the third largest collection of holly in the United States. (See Photo 1.)

The R.A Bartlett Tree Research Laboratories and Arboretum is actively developed, curated, and managed to support learning, discovery, research, and training, and to serve as a resource to the employees and customers of The Bartlett Tree Expert Company. The arboretum seeks to contribute to, and showcase, a wide range of plant material as well as set an example of a sustainable, enjoyable, and thought-provoking living museum. A more extensive article on the Bartlett Research Arboretum was published in the Summer 2020 edition of *The Azalean*.¹

See the 2021 ASA Convention webpage located here <https://www.azaleas.org/convention-2021/> for a beautiful aerial video of the arboretum grounds set to music. “The 4 Seasons of Bartlett” was recorded and produced by Sean Henry with Bartlett Tree Research Laboratory.

The 445-page alphabetized Master Inventory Plant List as well as the Ericaceae inventory is posted on the 2021 Convention webpage. ASA members that register for the convention will be provided with an aerial grid map of the arboretum that will key the grid location of a specific plant from the list to an area on the ground. All plants are labeled with embossed metal dog tags providing the botanical name, cultivar name, and accession source. The combination of plant list, keyed map, and plant tags can result in interesting botanical “Easter egg” hunts, often resulting in discovering other unique plants along the way.

Please note that due to current conditions and required social distancing, this will be a walking tour and adventure. Attendees should be prepared for extensive walking over regular and uneven ground, rain, or shine. Although a large property overall, most of the major collections are not far apart. There will be time to rest and reflect during the day.

Saturday, April 17—Sunday, April 18— Scheduled Tours

University of North Carolina at Charlotte Botanical Gardens. The UNC Charlotte Botanical Gardens has 10 acres of outdoor gardens, and 5,000 sq. ft. of greenhouse display. If conditions at event time will allow, this scheduled tour will be led by botanical gardens staff, knowledgeable volunteers, and Director Emeritus Dr. Larry Mellichamp, who has worked with the gardens for 45 years. The outdoor gardens represent three distinct themes.

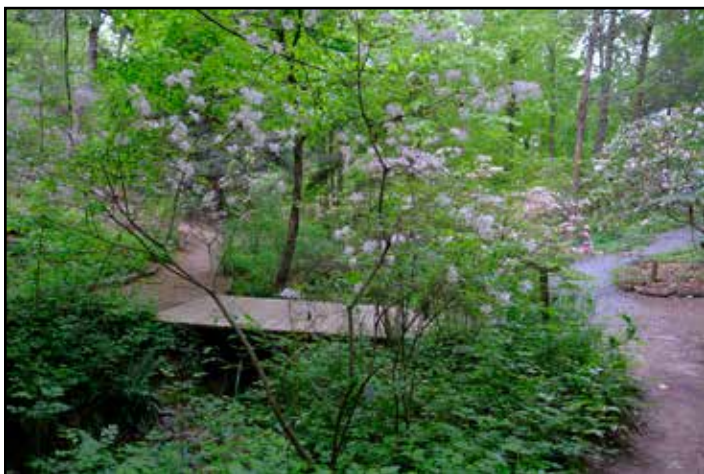


Photo Kevin McCorkle

▲ Photo 2—Wooden footbridge through deciduous azaleas within the Van Landingham Glen, UNC Charlotte Botanical Gardens



Photo Kevin McCorkle

▲ Photo 3—A room with a view: the pond within the Susie Harwood Garden, UNC Charlotte Botanical Gardens, as viewed from the gazebo.

1. The **Van Landingham Glen** is a seven-acre native woodland garden in a north-east facing, gently sloping creek valley with informal gravel and wood-chip paths. Started in 1966, The glen contains over 1,000 species of native plants of the Southeast, but at one time had some 3,000 specimens of species and hybrid traditional evergreen rhododendrons. Over time, many of the evergreen rhododendron have declined due to heat exhaustion, but there are still quite a few beauties. The glen contains all the southeastern native azaleas and many hybrids. It is a spring garden, with bountiful wildflowers at their peak in mid-April. Many native shrubs are included, for example rare species such as *Dirca palustris* (eastern leatherwood), *Ribes echinellum* (Miccosukee gooseberry), most native hollies, dwarf pawpaw, chalk maple, Carolina hemlock, needle palm, horse-sugar, and *Stewartia malacodendron*. It is a pleasure to walk the secluded paths and pretend that you are in the mountains. (See Photo 2).
2. The **Susie Harwood Garden** is a three-acre semi-formal garden started in 1980, displaying exotic trees, shrubs, and flowers from around the world. It has an eclectic feel with bridges, a gazebo, moon gate, and an Asian garden. There are many evergreen and some deciduous azaleas, numerous dwarf conifers (including a very fine Florida torrey), and some 40 Japanese maples. Decorative rockwork, a lively pond, stone steps, and other unique features adorn the garden. (See Photo 3.)
3. The **Mellichamp Natives Terrace** is a half-acre garden devoted to demonstrating the uses of southeastern species in a variety of typical homeowner situations (such as rain garden, sunny border, patio, deck, lawn, rock wall, contemporary setting). A small area has edible native fruit plants. The play of light and texture in this carefully

constructed garden is enjoyable. This may be the only such public native plant garden of its type in the Southeast.

Other Scheduled Tours—Saturday, April 17

The magnificent private garden of **Margaret and Price Zimmermann**, a few miles north of Charlotte in Huntersville is also available for touring. Designated *Pian del Pino* (meaning a level spot among pines), their 30-year-old estate has a European flavor with Italian architecture and statuary. Hundreds of rare woody and herbaceous plants are discovered throughout a delightful walk on moss-covered paths in formal and informal settings. Many evergreen and deciduous azaleas will be seen in garden context. The patches of ostrich ferns with new fronds unfurling and masses of wildflowers are a pleasure to behold in the spring. (See Photo 4.)

Sunday, April 18

MapleWalk, the garden of **Lib and Tom Nunnenkamp** is a two and one-quarter-acre labor of love located in southeast Charlotte. (See Photo 5.) In the words of Tom and Lib: “Little did we know when we bought our home in December 1990 that our plans for the property would take on a life of their own. While our garden is named MapleWalk

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Photo Kevin McCorkle

▲ Photo 4—A mossy path covered with petals within the woodland garden of *Pian del Pino*.



Photo Tom Nunnenkamp

▲ Photo 5—Stone steps among the beautiful Japanese maples at MapleWalk.

to reflect the over 90 different Japanese maples, it has become much more, with hundreds of perennials, over 20 different dogwoods, nine varieties of redbud, a myriad of dwarf conifers, deciduous azaleas, and many unusual trees and shrubs. The 1600 feet of path are lined with Tennessee fieldstone laid by Tom. MapleWalk is very animal friendly, containing thirteen bird feeders, and a home for two rescued rabbits who live in the “Taj Mahutch.” Tom Nunnenkamp will serve as guide and speaker in the garden for this scheduled tour.

Additional gardens may be added as unguided side tours on Sunday pending availability based on conditions at the time of registration. Be sure to check the 2021 ASA Convention webpage <https://www.azaleas.org/convention-2021/> for updates.

The Collector’s Plant Sale

The location of the plant sale has been chosen to be both convenient to attendees as well as more conducive to ventilation and social distancing. Located on a rooftop terrace at the base hotel, the location has a commanding view of the University Place Lake and provides an ideal location for both the plant sale and a place to socialize outdoors. The plant sale will be open intermittently every day throughout the convention week.

Assembled with the collector in mind, the plant sale will feature a carefully chosen and exciting mix of evergreen azaleas, deciduous azaleas, and companion plants, many of which are unique, hard-to-find, or not available in the trade. Included in the deciduous offering will be selections and hybrids from the late Kelly Strickland, as well as Earl Sommerville, Sally and John Perkins, and others. A special group of stellar Gregory Bald seedlings produced through micropropagation will be included.

Many of these may only be available at this sale. A complete list of plants will be made available to registered attendees prior to the sale. Watch for pop-up silent auctions of unique specimen plants throughout the convention.

Accommodations

We have chosen the Hilton Charlotte University Place as our recommended base hotel. The hotel is located along the northeastern edge of the city and is close to and easily accessible from I-85 and I-77. Attendees will be able to travel to and from the hotel and the field trip venues via major highways without having to enter the more urban areas of center city. For the more adventuresome interested in visiting center city for sightseeing during their stay, there is a light rail rapid transit station within a short walk from the hotel. There are also many restaurants with a wide variety of cuisines in the commercial areas immediately adjacent to the hotel.

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A courtesy block of rooms has been reserved for us by the hotel and a specialized web page will be provided for ease of registration for attendees: We request that attendees wait until the hotel registration website is published at the time of convention registration rather than reserve accommodations in advance. Parking at the hotel is complimentary, except for valet parking.

The Hilton Charlotte University Place has stated that rooms reserved via the courtesy block are refundable if cancelled the day before the reservation date.

Registration

More information about registration, including venues, registration fees, hotel rates, and a more detailed schedule will be forthcoming.

The opening of registration may be delayed beyond that of past conventions, as we monitor and assess conditions with everyone's safety in mind. We expect registration to open in early 2021 but no later than Feb 1, 2021. An email or mailed reminder will be sent to all ASA members in advance of the opening of registration. Please check the ASA home page <https://www.azaleas.org/> and the Convention webpage <https://www.azaleas.org/convention-2021/> for updates.

We hope to see you in Charlotte in 2021 and together we will enjoy April's most brilliant of days.

*"In my mind I'm gone to Carolina
Can't you see the sunshine?
Can't you just feel the moonshine?
Ain't it just like a friend of mine
To hit me from behind?
Yes, I'm gone to Carolina in my mind."*

—James Taylor

References and Acknowledgments

- ¹Franklin, Patrick and Sean Henry. "The Hidden Botanical Wonderland of the Southeast—The R.A. Bartlett Research Arboretum." *The Azalean*. Summer 2020: 42(2):34-36.

The author thanks Amanda Wilkins and Dr. Larry Mellichamp for providing valuable input for this article, especially some of the copy/ information for Juniper Level Botanic Garden and UNCC Botanical Gardens. Used here with their permission.

Kevin McCorkle is a practicing Landscape Architect in Charlotte, NC, and president of the Central Carolinas Chapter since 2017. Kevin also serves as the Legacy Lead for the Kelly Strickland and Aaron Varnadoe ASA Legacy Projects.

Welcome New Editor Kathy Jentz

New Editor/Designer for *The Azalean*

Kathy Jentz will take over editing and design of *The Azalean* with the Spring 2021 issue. Since 2005, Kathy has been founder, editor, and publisher of *Washington Gardener Magazine*, the gardening publication published specifically for the local metro area—Zones 6-7—Washington, DC, and its suburbs. In this work, she coordinates the work of eight to ten steady columnists and over 20 volunteer book reviewers. She is a life-long gardener from a family of farmers and dedicated gardeners. Her mission is to turn black thumbs green. Kathy believes that growing plants should be stress-free and enjoyable. Her philosophy is inspiration over perspiration.

Currently, she is President of the Silver Spring Garden Club and on the board of several other clubs and organizations. You can read Kathy's work in the *Washington Examiner* and *Washington Woman* in addition to regular guest spots on Channel 9, Channel 4 and WAMU radio. Kathy's work has been featured in numerous area publications including the *Washington Examiner* newspaper, *Pathways* magazine, and *Washington Woman* magazine. In addition, she appears on regular gardening guest spots on Channel 9, Channel 4, as well as WTOP, WAMU, and WOWD-LP radio stations in Washington, DC.

She is currently the Green Media columnist for the *Mid-Atlantic Grower* newspaper, where she does a great deal of hand-holding and coaxing to get independent garden centers, plant breeders, and other horticultural businesses to join the social media revolution and maximize their online brands. She also edits the quarterly *Water Garden Journal*, the official publication of the International Waterlily & Water Gardening Society. Welcome to the ASA!

▼ Kathy Jentz does it all: gardens, writes, publishes.



Photo Drena J. Galaza, WGM

Rare Finds and Exceptional Specimens: The Native Rhododendron Germplasm Repository at Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens

By Steve Wright—Devon, Pennsylvania

Part 1: A Growing Obsession

We all have a story to tell—a life filled with moments of inspiration that lead us down new paths to new adventures. The story of how I came to be curator of an accredited collection of rhododendrons and azaleas at a public garden in America’s Garden Capital has been filled with those moments. In fact, horticulture is a second career for me and, at one time, one that I could have never imagined pursuing. Though there were many of those inspirational moments, I admit that when I came to Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens almost twelve years ago I had very little experience with rhododendrons and azaleas and at the time, little interest. The truth is, I just didn’t know enough about them to appreciate them. Through these years of immersion though, I have come to treasure them.

With an existing interest in the value and beauty of native plants, and a newfound interest in rhododendrons, I quickly became fascinated by the native azaleas and rhododendrons. It started with the pinxters (*R. periclymenoides*), which grow in great abundance at Jenkins and light up the garden with drifts of pink in early May. Over time though, I started to get to know the other species as well and came to appreciate the differences among them—their growth habit, bloom time, fragrance, flower colors, site requirements, and so on. With so much variation, it seemed there was a native azalea or rhododendron for just about every spot in the garden.

In time, I started to notice the diversity that existed *within* each species as well. Naturally, this too would start with a pinxter—one that came to be known, at least in-house, as Stiff Upper Lip (See Photo 1). Harold Sweetman, our director at the time, told me about a particularly interesting

pinxter that he had been observing for 30 years. Every year, it bloomed a little later than the others, and was a little bit darker than the others, but, most notably, it had one bright white petal. Of course, I had to see for myself. Was it really so different? Well, yes, yes it was, and it was fantastic! I wondered, are there others in this collection that have unusual characteristics? I had to investigate. Of hundreds of specimens, there were a handful that were really nice, but only a couple that were much different from the norm. One we would call Starfish for its somewhat slender, contorted petals and another we would call Orchid Ombre for its intense lavender-pink flowers. The latter is especially nice.

Shortly after these discoveries, I was walking around the garden and crossed paths with Barbara Bullock, then the curator of the azalea collection at the National Arboretum. I just happened to be near Stiff Upper Lip and had to show her. She went on to tell me about a man named Allen Cantrell and his collection of split-petaled and double flowering native azaleas of various species. This was intriguing; at that time, I had no idea such plants existed. I had to know more. I learned from Allen that he had operated a nursery, called Fern Gulley, and sold many of these unusual selections, but that he no longer ran the nursery. He told me, though, that when he did close up shop, he sent many of his plants to Vivian Abney at East Fork Nursery in Sevierville, TN. I had to see these plants, so off to Tennessee I went. I was about to dive into a rabbit hole that I could have never imagined would be so deep.

As I worked to grow the collections at Jenkins, I would stumble across other remarkable selections in catalogs, nursery lists, and journal articles. I am particularly thankful for Don Hyatt and his prolific writing that introduced me to plants like *R. maximum* ‘Red Max’ and others at Curtis Creek, *R. minus* f. *smokianum*, the *R. calendulaceum* at Hooper Bald, and countless other outstanding, though unnamed plants growing wild throughout the Appalachians. I started collecting and traveling to meet others who shared this appreciation for native azaleas.

In 2014, we grew out a couple hundred *R. vaseyi* (pinkshell azalea) from seed collected near the Blue Ridge Parkway. If you have grown plants from seed, you surely know that you end up with many more than you can possibly use. We did not have the space to grow them all to blooming size, so we started sharing with our regional colleagues. A couple of years later, I received an email saying there must have been a mistake—one of the plants we had gifted bloomed white. I requested a photograph and, sure enough, there was no mistake, it was a white *vaseyi*. Several others had been

▼ Photo 1—*R. periclymenoides* Stiff Upper Lip.



Photo Nancy Cosmos



Photo Steve Wright

▲ Photo 2—*R. vaseyi*—unnamed dark pink.

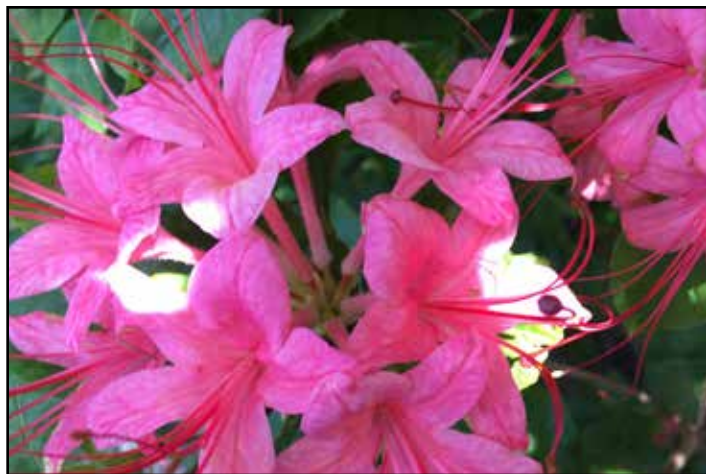


Photo Nancy Cosmos

▲ Photo 3—*R. prunifolium* Best in Show.

set aside to share with another regional garden, but before they were picked up, there was one that started to come into bloom. The opening buds were quite dark, so I pulled it aside and waited for it to open. Within a few days, that small azalea was covered with unusually dark pink flowers (See Photo 2). I'm happy to say that that plant found a place in the Jenkins collection and we collected seeds from it and grew another batch of seedlings. I'm anxiously awaiting the results.

Though my passion for these plants had been building for years, it was those two pinkshell azaleas that finally pushed me over the edge. There were so many great plants out there—I had to have them, I had to display them, and I had to share my appreciation for these beautiful plants with as many people as I could. Perhaps more importantly though, I had a desperate desire to preserve them. It was the start of a new mission—the project of a lifetime.

Part 2: A New Venture

In fall of 2019, Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens was awarded a small grant to begin working toward establishing a Native Rhododendron Germplasm Repository. Though it is a multi-faceted project, the three main goals of this project are to:

1. Acquire plants, cuttings, and/or seeds from known wild populations, grow them, plant them, and share them with others thus preserving the genetics of those populations.
2. Collect rare, unusual, and exceptional specimens and share these plants with others, again preserving genetics of those specimens.
3. Display and actively promote the ornamental value of these beautiful plants through programs, publications, and guided tours of the collection.

This emphasis on germplasm preservation stemmed from Jenkins' participation in the Plant Collections Network (PCN). Administered by the American Public Gardens Association, the PCN "coordinates a continent-wide approach to plant germplasm (genetics) preservation and promotes excellence in plant collections management." It is a collaborative effort with collections holders working

together to compare holdings and share germplasm to prevent the loss of significant plants. It is a noble and worthy cause.

When I started to pursue the idea of developing a germplasm repository, I was a strict purist. I told myself, "I only want native species or selections of species." This was partly because I liked the idea of marrying Jenkins' native plant focus with its rhododendron collection. It was also because I started realizing just how big this could get if there wasn't a line drawn somewhere. With so many native azalea hybrids, the possibilities are seemingly infinite. Though








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Photo Steve Wright

▲ Photo 4—*R. flammeum* Salmon Sunset.



Photo Steve Wright

▲ Photo 5— *R. atlanticum* Plyler's Paintbrush.

there is still a line, that line is starting to blur, and I have begun to soften a bit.

I now also realize that much of the diversity within the species could be the result of hybridization somewhere in a plant's ancestry. There may be a gene that has lain in waiting for generations that suddenly pops up and the voila—a yellow flowering *prunifolium*, a pink *viscosum*, or a magenta *flammeum*. This has me rethinking the purist outlook, but for the purposes of developing this collection, I prefer sticking with species and natural hybrids over hand-pollinated, complex hybrids.

With these guidelines set, I would get to work tracking down some great plants.

Part 3: A Growing Collection

Despite the setbacks caused by COVID-19, the project is off to a promising start. We have collected cuttings from dozens of interesting plants from several botanic gardens and specialty nurseries, as well as those in our own collection. We have had mixed results with propagation using Vernon Bush's rooting bin method, though it was not unexpected—the species that are known to be difficult to root, were.

There were many plants purchased as well including a white form of *R. canadense*, a pink form of *R. viscosum*, and a pink form of *R. maximum*. The most significant additions so far though have come from Jim Plyler's Natural Landscapes Nursery in West Grove, PA. I had heard about Jim's nursery

many times over the years, but just never took the time to make the 45-minute trip down to see what he was growing. I am so happy I finally did. In fact, I made several trips to Jim's nursery this year in search of exceptional specimens, and I didn't have to search very long.—There were many scattered throughout his 40+ acres. Among the best plants we selected were a salmon-orange ball-trussed *R. flammeum* that we named Salmon Sunset (See Photo 4), a bright pink *R. prunifolium* that we named Best in Show (See Photo 3), and a dark-pink-tipped *R. atlanticum* that we named Plyler's Paintbrush (See Photo 5). They, and several others, have already been added to the garden.

It has been an exciting project so far as I have spent a great deal of time evaluating, selecting, and naming noteworthy specimens. Though it continues to grow, Table 1 shows a list of selected plants that are now part of this collection. If anyone is interested in seeing our full list, I am happy to share that. Those shown as "In-process" are plants in the pipeline: we have either well-rooted cuttings or potted plants growing on in our nursery, but not yet in the ground.

Working Names

The names for some cultivated plants in this article were given to the plants by the author during propagation and evaluation. They are considered here as descriptive working names, not cultivar names as defined by the International Code for Nomenclature of Cultivated Plants. ICNCP cultivar names will always be shown in single quotes. These azaleas with working names may be officially named and possibly registered in the future with these working names as the cultivar names or with other names as the cultivar names.

Part 4: A Call for Support and Collaboration

Though I have only just begun, I realize that this effort will never end—I will forever be in search of remarkable plants and will spend the rest of my career building this collection. I do not see this though as my collection or Jenkins Arboretum's collection, but rather a collaborative effort. If

**Table 1. Native Rhododendron Germplasm Repository Collection
Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens**

		<u>In- Process</u>
Alabama Azalea (<i>Rhododendron Alabamense</i>)		
Alabama Snowballs	Ball truss selection by Vivian Abney.	X
Catherine	Larger than normal flowers.	X
Coleman's Sunshine	Fragrant, bright yellow flowers. May be a hybrid with <i>R. austrinum</i> without its vigor.	X
Double White	Double-flowered form w/other genes mixed in.	X
'Mary Brooke'	A very nice pale yellow selection.	
'Pete McNees'	A selection with some double flowers.	
'Terry Greer' (syn. Frosty)	A foliage selection w/small glaucous leaves with white, powdery undersides.	
Sweet Azalea (<i>Rhododendron arborescens</i>)		
Dwarf Arborescens	Dwarf/compact Clarence Towe selection.	X
Georgia Belle	Clarence Towe selection for large, leathery dark green leaves, late flowering, vigor.	X
var. <i>georgiana</i>	Late-blooming, southern form, blooming with <i>R. prunifolium</i> .	
var. <i>richardsonii</i>	A high-elevation variety, smaller/compact.	X
'White Lightning'	Dense, compact selection w/exceptional fragrance, Discovered by Towe near Franklin, NC. Possible natural hybrid.	
Coast Azalea (<i>Rhododendron atlanticum</i>)		
Baby Blues	Selection with very small, bluish leaves.	
Double White	Double-flowering selection, Allen Cantrell found growing wild.	X
'Fragrant Star'	Created by Briggs Nursery: chemically treated <i>R. atlanticum</i> 'Snowbird'—highly fragrant octoploid.	X
Pistil	Henry Skinner selection, compact ball trusses w/small, contorted petals, with long pistils.	X
Plyler's Paintbrush	Jenkins selection dark-pink-tipped buds and white petals; selected in Jim Plyler's fields.	
'Snowbird'	Fragrant selection from Biltmore Estate, white flowers w/hint of pink in pistils and tubes.	X
Strap Pink	Strap-petal selection found by Allen Cantrell growing wild in North Carolina.	X
Florida Flame Azalea (<i>Rhododendron austrinum</i>)		
Dryocampa	Jenkins Arb. selection; yellow petals, pink tubes. Named for rosy maple moth, an insect with same color combination.	X
'Evening Sunset'	Natural hybrid collected in SW corner of GA by Earl Sommerville, late 1970s. Produces large orange ball trusses.	
'Harrison's Red'	A unique, coral-colored selection discovered by Falling Waters Nursery, Chipley, FL.	
Lemon Ice	Selected by Jim Plyler, Natural Landscapes Nursery, named for its light yellow flowers.	X
Mac's Millie	The inverse of 'Millie Mac' with white petals and orange picotee margins. Selected by Floyd McConnell (who discovered 'Millie Mac') in a batch of seedlings of 'Millie Mac'.	X
'Millie Mac'	Noted for its unusual gold picotee flower with a thin white margin. Floyd McConnell found this as a limb sport on a wild-growing plant in Escambia County, AL. Lineage debatable, but some believe contains <i>R. canescens</i> genes.	

‘Moonbeam’	An early-blooming, yellow flowering vigorous outstanding plant. Found by Kelly Strickland.	
‘Ruffled Gold’	A Vivian Abney selection with bright ruffled gold flowers.	
Tomato Soup	Dark orange, nearly red selection by Jenkins Arb.	X
Flame Azalea (<i>Rhododendron calendulaceum</i>)		
‘Curahee’	White-striped selection, red-and-yellow buds open to orange blooms w/rosy pink margins.	
‘Mandarin Red’	A selection w/intense orange-red flowers.	X
Marmalade	A Jenkins Arb. selection w/orange flowers w/dark orange accents.	
Big Bird	Don Hyatt/George McLellan selection found on Roan Mt. near Jane Bald: clear yellow w/ top petal frilled and overlaid with gold.	X
Serenity Yellow	A yellow-flowered selection by Jim Gears.	X
Piedmont Azalea (<i>Rhododendron canescens</i>)		
Babydoll	A Jenkins Arb. selection with light pink, frilled petals; plant typically has ball trusses.	
‘Candy Striper’	An outstanding Vivian Abney selection from the fields of Jim Plyler. Pink flowers with a light pink stripe down middle of each petal.	
‘Chocolate Drop’	An unusual foliage selection of <i>R. canescens</i> made by Ernest Koone: new leaves are chocolate-red, flowers are white. Leaves fade to green with age.	
Glenda's Spider	A very thin strap-petaled selection by Hubert and Glenda Jones from a wild-growing plant.	X
‘Summer Lynn’	A bright pink selection by Superior Trees.	
Watermelon	A gorgeous watermelon pink selection by Superior Trees.	
Oconee Azalea (<i>Rhododendron flammeum</i>)		
Double Pleasure	A selection w/orange-red flowers, some are doubles. Discovered by Tom Dodd. Possibly a hybrid.	
‘Jack Melton’	A vivid red cultivar discovered in central GA by Jack Melton. Blooms in ball trusses.	
‘Jake’s Red’	A dwarf (3'-4') selection by Earl Sommerville. Flowers are light red, in ball trusses.	
Raspberry Sorbet	A Jenkins Arb. selection with vibrant raspberry flowers with faint orange blotch.	X
‘Red Inferno’	An Ernest Koone selection with bright orange flowers w/a yellow blotch that mature to solid bright red.	
Salmon Sunset	An outstanding Jenkins Arb. selection with salmon-orange flowers in large ball trusses.	
Rosebay Rhododendron (<i>Rhododendron maximum</i>)		
Ballet Slipper	A Jenkins Arb. selection with delicate pink flowers without a blotch.	X
Independence	A selection with bright pink flowers	
‘Red Max’ aka	A rare selection with variable red/white/pink flowers and red staining along leaf veins.	
‘Mt. Mitchell’		
var. <i>leachii</i>	A curly-leafed selection that tends to be more compact than the species.	
‘Whirligig’		

Pinxterbloom Azalea (*Rhododendron periclymenoides*)

Gumball	A Jenkins Arb. selection w/light bubble-gum pink ball trusses. Possibly a natural hybrid.	
Lavender Girl	A selection by Jeff Beasley of Transplant Nursery: slightly lavender blooms and diffused white blotch.	X
Orchid Ombre	A Jenkins Arb. selection w/intense lavender-pink flowers.	
‘Paxton’s Blue’	A selection w/showy lavender-blue blooms, by B. Bower & J. Paxton, Transplant Nursery.	
Purple Paladin	A medium purple selection with red tubes, found growing in SC by Nick Anostos.	X
Stiff Upper Lip	A Jenkins Arb. selection w/dark pink flowers w/a bright white top petal. With age, the pink fades and the white less pronounced.	

Plumleaf Azalea (*Rhododendron prunifolium*)

Best in Show	A Jenkins Arb. selection from fields of Jim Plyler; a knockout with intense pink flowers. Most likely a hybrid.	
Butter Yellow	A yellow-flowering selection by Allen Cantrell.	X
‘John Conner’	A nice red selection found in Harris County, GA, by Earl Sommerville.	
Summer Pumpkin	An outstanding orange selection by Jenkins Arb. from the fields of Jim Plyler.	

Pinkshell Azalea (*Rhododendron vaseyi*)

Red Vaseyi	A dark pink/red flowering selection.
‘White Find’	A pure-white-flowering selection.
Unnamed	White w/purple-pink spotting on upper petals
Unnamed	Deep pink (referenced earlier in this article)

Swamp Azalea (*Rhododendron viscosum*)

‘Betty Cummins’	A pink-flowering selection of <i>R. viscosum</i> discovered growing wild in NJ by Dave Lewis.	
Cumberland Blue	A selection by Joe Schild for its bluish foliage.	
‘Delaware Blue’	A selection by Polly Hill for its bluish foliage.	
‘Pink Mist’	A selection with light pink buds that open to white flowers.	X
Roseum	A selection discovered growing wild in Aiken County, SC by Woodlanders Nursery.	
‘Summer Eyelet’	A selection made by Summer Hill Nursery, Madison, CT, for its blue-green foliage.	



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the germplasm is to be preserved, it must be shared with other like-minded enthusiasts, so I would like to offer the Jenkins collection as a resource for cuttings, seeds, pollen, or even potted plants if they are available. I encourage you to evaluate your collections or nursery stock in search of plants you believe are exceptional. Tell me about them. Send me pictures. I want to see them and perhaps collect cuttings or even purchase the plants.

Finally, if you believe this to be a worthy cause and can support this project financially, it would be greatly appreciated as well. Any financial contributions would be used to fund collecting trips, cover propagation costs, purchase plants, and ship germplasm upon request. Please visit jenkinsarboretum.org and click on the "Support" tab to make contributions.

In closing, I hope you will reach out to me at steve@jenkinsarboretum.org with any questions, comments, corrections, or support. It is such a great project and I look forward to many years of collaboration.

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Bits of information also came from countless nursery websites including: Woodlanders, Dodd & Dodd, Mountain Mist, Mail Order Natives, Summer Hill, and Superior Trees.

Steve Wright is the Director of Horticulture and Curator of Plant Collections at Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens, in Devon, Pennsylvania, a member of the Northern Virginia Chapter of the Azalea Society of America, and a Director for the Valley Forge Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society.

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Kinney Azalea Gardens, Rhode Island—Part 1

By Dr. Susan Gordon—Kingston, Rhode Island

Editor's Note: This is part one of a two part series. Dr. Gordon is horticulturist and manager of Kinney Azalea Gardens.

In a time not so long ago or far away, humans walked the Earth without face masks. They greeted each other by touching hands and encircling one another with their arms. And young people congregated, to learn, in groups. One such setting was the Rhode Island State College of Agriculture and the Mechanic Arts (RISCA, now University of Rhode Island, URI) in Kingston, RI. The college was young in 1894. It had a lady professor of art, Helen May Wells, and a man who was the college's first botany professor, Lorenzo Foster Kinney. These two educators gave birth to a son. They called him Lorenzo Foster Kinney Jr. Over the years, many simply called him "the Azalea Man." (See Photo 1.)

In the Beginning

Lorenzo graduated from RISCA in 1914. He earned his MS from the University of Wisconsin in 1915, just as WWI was unfolding. Lorenzo registered to serve but was deemed too thin to send overseas. Instead, he began his career as an agricultural extension agent and leader of the "Boys & Girls Clubs" (now 4-H). He did his part in both war efforts via the "food will win the war" program. Teaching young people to grow and preserve food, in his role as extension agent and youth educator, Lorenzo traveled frequently. On one of his trips, he was smitten by a Virginian with sparkling blue eyes. This was Elizabeth Todd, soon to be Elizabeth Todd Kinney.

As Lorenzo courted Elizabeth, he couldn't help but notice some flowering shrubs nearby. Shrubs like none the young Lorenzo knew. He was well acquainted with rhododendrons and a few deciduous azaleas. He'd grown up summering and working at his father's nursery, "Lowland Rhododendron Farm". Lorenzo Jr., like his mother, was a painter. To his artist's eye, those azaleas didn't compare to what he saw in Virginia. It was like colored balloons in the sky vs. an entire sunset. He never forgot those plants.

Elizabeth agreed to become Mrs. Kinney. Before young Lorenzo could bring his young bride north, he needed to build a house worthy of her. He decided on a tract of farmland in Kingston. The land was at the top of Kingston Hill. Many of the surficial rocks had been removed and placed in piles or used in the fieldstone walls. But deeper down, 3 or 4 feet, there was a compressed layer of granitic sand and shale. This layer, called crushed glacial till, created a hardpan. The soil was arable but a little poorly drained. The result was soil perfect for many woody plants, including azaleas.

Lorenzo Sr. was very interested in the timber industry. He collaborated with a local sawyer, harvesting white pine and cedar from the woodlands at his nursery. But he wished to try other species, so he and Lorenzo planted groves of hemlock, spruce, arborvitae, yews, and even a China Fir on



Photo Susan Gordon

▲ Photo 1—Lorenzo Kinney Jr., "the Azalea Man" with 'Indian Summer' a Gable selection from *R. kaempferi*.

the property on the hill. Later, he gifted 50 umbrella pines to Lorenzo to celebrate his wedding

Lorenzo brought his bride north. Soon there were three young Kinneys at the home they called "Virginia Oaks".

At first the front of the house was planted with red cedar, an umbrella pine, and rhododendrons. The rhodies were *R. maximum*, ironclads, and Lorenzo Sr.'s own hybrids. He'd crossed *R. maximum* with *R. ponticum* from Europe. The latter species was used as the understock on which catawbiense hybrids were grafted. The cross yielded about 15 nice selections worth keeping and propagating that we call the "Peachblow Series." (See Photo 2.)

These large rhodies and conifers created a perfect backdrop for the azaleas. They also divide the landscape visually, creating "rooms". This makes the garden feel bigger than its' 15 acres. It also results in many ladies becoming lost and asking for directions. The men just walk in circles for a while.

Most importantly, the large evergreens create microclimates. The wind is vastly diminished, and their canopy literally insulates the garden. As warm air begins to rise, the convective cooling is blocked or decreased by evergreen boughs.



Photo Susan Gordon

▲ Photo 2—*Rhododendron* 'Peachblow'.



Photo Susan Gordon

▲ Photo 3—(L to R): 'Brazil', 'Narcissiflora', "Sue's Golden Oriole" (a Susan Gordon selection), 'Amoena Coccinea', 'Palestrina', 'Amoena'; in foreground, unnamed Red Kalmia (Ed Mezzitt), 'Hino Crimson'.

▼ Photo 4—Azalea color along a trail, highlighted by deciduous azalea 'Brazil' in foreground.



Photo Lorna Wright; Courtesy of John Carter, Landscape Architecture

Lorenzo continued his work as 4H leader and extension agent, traveling a good deal. One of these trips included a visit to the USDA experiment station in Glendale, MD. There he met Ben Morrison. It was the beginning of a lifelong friendship that would change Kinney's life. Lorenzo and Elizabeth never missed an opportunity to visit Morrison and bring back a few of his latest azalea hybrids. Morrison and his companion, Ivan Anderson, would host elaborate dinners and private recitals with Ben singing and playing the organ.

Lorenzo was determined to have Morrison's hybrids survive in Rhode Island. He quickly learned that "protection" meant some shade and wind buffers. It also became apparent that size mattered. Plants that were "knee high" had a much higher survival rate than small ones.

The year was 1955. A young URI grad named John Creech was working with the USDA at Glendale. Creech brought a large selection of Morrison's hybrids to URI to test their cold hardiness. The plants were young, and Creech planted them in the middle of a windy field in full sun. Within a year or two, all had died. The USDA's recommendation was to avoid planting the Glenn Dales as far north as Rhode Island.

Meanwhile, two miles away, up the hill and sheltered by trees, Lorenzo's collection was growing.

Lorenzo continued to travel in his work with URI, and even more upon retirement. He sought out hybridizers and nurseries, collecting friends, cultivars, and knowledge as he went. The list of friends/sources reads like a horticultural all-star team—Tingle, Serbin, Jaynes, Mezitt, Hershey, Hill, Linwood, Medeiros, Galle...

Besides Morrison, it was Joe Gable who had the biggest impact on Lorenzo and his gardens. Joe shared his knowledge of species, hybridizing, and cold hardiness freely. Some of our most magnificent specimens are species and hybrids from Gable.

There was never a "master plan" for the gardens. In his travels, Lorenzo also visited and learned from many gardens: Arnold Arboretum, Longwood, Callaway... US gardens he didn't visit would probably be a shorter list.

Ben Morrison was his biggest mentor here as well. The influence of Morrison's work at the US National Arboretum on Kinney is clearly evident. And Lorenzo took to heart

Morrison's advice on color. He always included a white in plantings. It brought out the other colors, "...like a brooch or corsage on a lady's dress." (See Photos 3, 4.)

The Kinney garden grew organically as plants and land were added. The original six acres were actually three separate purchases, resulting in a "T" shape with minimal road frontage. Later, in 1997, the next generation of garden owners, Betty Kinney Faella and Tony Faella, purchased nine abutting acres.

In Memory

William Ray Dodd Sr.—1920–2020

Allen Owings—Robert, Louisiana

The Azalea Society of America was sad to hear of the passing of William Ray Dodd Sr. earlier this year. Mr. Dodd died on the morning of August 9th at his home in Lillian, AL, at the age of 99. He was a retired US Army Lt. Colonel and lifetime member of the ASA.

He was born in Semmes, AL August 25, 1920, into a family whose values instilled a love of all things botanical. At a young age, he added photography to his repertoire, and throughout his life documented his many travels and experiences in film. He graduated from Murphy High School in Mobile, AL, then attended Alabama Polytechnic Institute from 1938 to 1940 before it became Auburn University and remained an active Auburn Alumni over the years. He finished his studies at Troy State with a degree in History in 1964. In 1939 he took his first flight from Auburn Airport, and proceeded to become a licensed pilot in 1940, leading to his entry into the Army Air Corps in 1942, until he retired in 1966. By



that point he had flown on three continents, and roughly 70 airplanes, helicopters, and experimental aircraft. In 1942 he married Mary Elizabeth Evans of Butler, AL, and they had three children, Elizabeth Evans, William Ray Jr, and David Franklin.

Following his military service, he returned to the realm of horticulture by rejoining Tom Dodd Nurseries, as well as starting his own nursery dedicated to rare plants. He pursued his passion for plants heading up the Mobile Parks Department from 1971-1984, helping to start the Mobile Botanical Gardens, working closely with the Magnolia Society and Camellia Society, and being active in the Alabama Wildflower Society, and a lifetime member of the Azalea Society of America. Once fully retired, he moved to Lillian, AL, and proceeded to dote on his wife until her passing, and then spoil his grandchildren and great grandchildren while also entertaining them with a never-ending series of photos and stories from all over the world. He has left us to join his wife, Mary Elizabeth Evans Dodd, and sons, William Ray Dodd Jr, and David Franklin Dodd. He was the brother of Tom Dodd Sr.

A private graveside service was held on Saturday, August 15, 2020. In lieu of flowers donations may be made to Lillian Recreational Park, home of his last project—the Bill and Mary Dodd Native Azalea Garden. Lillian Recreational Park, P.O.

A large advertisement for the Lafayette, Louisiana's Historic Azalea Trail. The top half features a photograph of a brown and green trolley bus with "LAFAYETTE LIMO & TROLLEY" written on its side, parked on a street next to a large, vibrant pink azalea bush. Below the photo is a green banner with white and pink text. The banner includes the text "LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA'S HISTORIC AZALEA TRAIL Official Azalea City" and the website "WWW.AZALEATRIL.ORG". On the left side of the banner, it says "TROLLEY RIDES SATURDAY, MARCH 6, 2021 HISTORIC AND GARDEN DISTRICTS". On the right side, it says "BEAUTIFUL MUSEUMS, HISTORIC HOMES, CHURCHES, AND SCHOOLS RESTAURANTS, SHOPPING ARTS, AND MUSIC". At the bottom of the banner, there are two QR codes and several logos: Scenic Lafayette, Azalea Society of America, Atchafalaya, and Lafayette Louisiana.

Box 865, Lillian, AL 36549. Website: lillianrecreationalpark.org.

The world will forever be a smaller place without him to remind of us the wonder that awaits.

Robert Thau—1949-2020

Richard Bauer—Yorktown, Virginia

October 19th was a sad day for the Azalea Society of America. After battling cancer for over a year, Robert Thau, President of the Texas Forest Country Chapter, succumbed to the disease. I met Robert at the national convention in Williamsburg in 2016, soon after he had joined the society and we became fast friends.



Robert was an active member of the Texas Chapter and became chapter president in 2018.

Robert actively promoted the society in his hometown of Jasper, TX. He frequently gave talks to other plants societies, including the Master Gardeners. He held many workshops on propagating azaleas and was a consummate collector of azaleas, amassing a collection of over 1400. He was always willing to open his garden to visitors, sharing his knowledge and enthusiasm for azaleas. It was not unusual for visitors to depart with an azalea given to them by Robert.

Robert was known as “Mr. Azalea” in Jasper. His presentations and interactions with other groups resulted in enough new members joining the society that he was able to start the Texas Forest Country Chapter and serve as its first president. During this time, he was instrumental in getting Jasper recognized as an Azalea City. He was also deeply involved in a state-funded beautification project for Jasper, with a focus on azaleas.

Besides serving as president of two different chapters, Robert also served as a Director on the society’s board and was also chair of the Membership Committee. He was also an Associate Member of the Northern Virginia Chapter and joined us annually for chapter events. His contributions to the society and to the promotion of azaleas resulted in him being awarded the Society’s Distinguished Service Award in March 2020.

Throughout his illness, Robert was always upbeat. While he set about getting all of his affairs in order, he also continued to plan for the future, propagating azaleas for upcoming conventions and planning azalea buying trips to Virginia and Maryland next spring.

Robert is survived by his wife Rosa Lee. He leaves behind countless friends who will miss his infectious enthusiasm and positive outlook, as well as his in-depth knowledge of azaleas.

New Society Logos

The Azalea Society has had a couple of different logos for many years. Several years ago, the ASA Board of Directors started an effort to update the logos. Allen Owings and the Louisiana Chapter stepped forward to create a new letterhead logo with input from Charlie Andrews. This logo was introduced in the Fall 2020 issue of *The Azalean*. Three additional logos were created, building on the same theme. They are shown below:



Our goal is to standardize the look of the logos and develop “brand identity.” Places where the logo could be used are return address labels, business cards, ball caps, shirts, etc. While the Letterhead, Abbreviated and Curved Text logos are primarily society level logos, chapters are encouraged to use the Flower Only logo as part of their chapter logos. Here is an example from the Northern Virginia Chapter:



The logos are accessible from the society webpage at <https://www.azaleas.org/society-logos> in jpg format, both with white background and with clear. Instructions for downloading the logos are on the logo webpage.

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Chapter News and New Members

Alabamense Chapter

John Torbert—President

The Alabamense Chapter held its fall meeting on October 8 via Zoom. It was decided that we will try again to hold the Spring 2021 meeting at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, which was planned for this past spring but cancelled due to COVID-19. We decided to award an annual membership to the Azalea Society and the Alabamense Chapter to three promising college students in an attempt to stimulate their long-term interest in azaleas. And finally, just as native azalea seed pods are ripening, Patrick Thompson gave a presentation on the science of seed collection.

The chapter welcomes new member Glenn Keith Bush, Nashville, TN.

Ben Morrison Chapter

Diane Reinke—Secretary

The Ben Morrison Chapter members have been staying in touch by email and tending our own gardens. We look forward to the end of the pandemic and future activities.

The chapter welcomes new member Kathy Jentz, Silver Spring, MD.

Louisiana Chapter

Allen Owings—President

As I write this short update in mid-October, our first in-person get together is planned for Friday November 6th at the LSU AgCenter's Hammond Research Station in Hammond. Items on the agenda include our chapter hosting the national meeting in 2022, confirmation of new officers, education plans for 2021, an update on the Azalea Trial activities in Lafayette, and more. Chapter members have also been discussing going to NC for our annual meeting next spring.

Officers for the next year are President—Allen Owings, Vice President—Peggy Cox, Secretary—Louis Wolfe, and Treasurer—Jim Campbell.

The scholarship fund and garden maintenance funds in memory of Margie Jenkins are going well. The Margie Jenkins Scholarship Fund with the Louisiana Nursery and Landscape Foundation has \$6,800. The first scholarship will be awarded at the Gulf States Horticultural Expo in January 2021 in Mobile, AL. The Margie Jenkins Azalea Garden maintenance fund contribution has received over \$11,000 with more pledged. These funds will be used to continue care and maintenance of the garden named in Margie's honor at the Hammond Research Station.

The Louisiana Chapter thanks Charlie Andrews, Rick Bauer, and Paul Beck for working with us on development of and corrections to the new ASA logos. We were glad to contribute in a small way that unfortunately took a long time.

Our group also made a \$250 donation to the Louisiana Nursery and Landscape Foundation for Scholarship and Research.



▲ Photo 1—Work party at Klimavicz Legacy Garden, July 2020.

▼ Photo 2—Paul and Carolyn Beck at NVA Chapter plant sale, Meadowlark Gardens, Vienna, VA.



The chapter welcomes new member Jeb Fields, Hammond, LA.

Northern Virginia Chapter

Rick Bauer—Corresponding Secretary

Chapter activities have been curtailed for most of the year due to COVID-19. We have continued activities which occur outdoors. During the growing season we have chapter workdays at the Klimavicz Legacy Garden at Meadowlark Gardens in Vienna, VA. On 29 July, David Meadows, Ralph Habegger, Dave Nanney, Lars Larson, and Paul and Carolyn Beck performed work weeding and removing debris from the legacy garden. (See Composite Photo 1.)

On the 19 September, chapter members Lars Larson, Karen Kinsey, and Paul and Carolyn Beck participated in a chapter plant sale at Meadowlark Gardens in Vienna, VA. The sale was successful and helped raise the visibility of the chapter. We will likely participate in spring sales at the garden to leverage our sponsorship of the Klimavicz Legacy Garden. (See Photo 2.)

On 26 September we held our 13th annual azalea sale at Kirkwood Presbyterian Church in Springfield, VA. We

Society Officer Candidates

Charles A. Andrews III—President

Charles Andrews is a retired Georgia Tech engineer, whose life-long hobby of trout fishing introduced him many years ago to native azaleas, often called wild honeysuckle, a subject about which he wants to learn everything possible.

He writes and speaks on azalea topics as well as on genealogical and history subjects. Charlie is co-author of two history books, many articles, and is currently working on two books about native azaleas: one on historic illustrations from 1690 to the present and the other on the history and characteristics of our North American azaleas. He talks on various azalea topics and has written articles in *The Azalean* and the *Journal of the American Rhododendron Society*.

Charlie is vice president of the Azalea Society of America and serves on the Editorial Advisory Board of *The Azalean*. He is past president of the Azalea Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society.

With notebook, jeweler's loupe, and camera in hand, Charlie has roamed the woods in search of native azaleas for 40 years. He is fortunate to have had properties with many thousands of them, including amazing swarms of hybrids. His garden is filled with *Ericaceae* and other, mostly native, plants.

Charlie believes the ASA has much to contribute to anyone interested in these beautiful and useful plants. As popular as they are, there is still much we do not know about the two basic groups, both called azaleas. These unique plants should not be lost as stepchildren hidden behind the wide skirt of the *Rhododendron* genus. The ASA needs to be the place to go for azalea facts, culture, research, and spreading the love of gardening, and can contribute much more to its members and the public.

Tom Johnson—Vice President

Tom Johnson is a lifelong horticulturist whose penchant for sharing horticulture with his professional colleagues and friends has taken him to Europe and Caribbean.

As a youth, Tom oversaw the redesign of downtown Perry, Georgia. The landscaping project won for the city a prestigious national award. He was the first student in the state of Georgia to be elected to The Governor's Honors Program in Vocational Agriculture.

In 1985, when President Jimmy Carter began building his presidential library in Atlanta, he enlisted Tom to help oversee the building of the gardens. That experience led to Tom being selected for the design team for the construction of the Evan Allen III Pavilion and the Cecil B. Day Chapel. During the development of the Carter Center Gardens, Tom apprenticed for five years under world-renowned Japanese architect Kinsako Nakane. Tom is among a handful of Americans to have had this opportunity.

After a decade at the Carter Presidential Center, Tom returned to Middle Georgia as the national horticulturist with the American Camellia Society. For the next eight years, he managed the society's camellia collection at Masee Lane Gardens, the society's national headquarters. In that role, while at Masee Lane, Tom was approached by



Photo Helen Standen, Jenkins Arb.

▲ Photo 3—Shown (l to r) Jake Summers, intern at Jenkins Arboretum, Rick and Susan Bauer. Jake is coordinating the Jenkins' Holly Springs Legacy Garden project at Jenkins Arboretum.

normally hold a live and a silent auction; however, due to COVID we cancelled the indoor events this year. A presale was open to chapter members. Members were able to select azaleas online and to pay for and pick up the orders at the church or, if desired, at another pre-coordinated time and location. We use the funds derived from our sales to support our various Legacy Project initiatives as well as to make donations to other horticultural activities.

The chapter also provided many Marshy Point Azaleas to the Potomac Valley Chapter (PVC) of the American Rhododendron Society. PVC is developing a Marshy Point Legacy Garden at Historic London Town and Gardens in Edgewater, MD. Carolyn Beck is working with Carol Segree, Don Hyatt, and others to make this garden a reality.

Finally, the chapter is working with Jenkins Arboretum in Devon, PA, to develop a Holly Springs Legacy Garden. Jenkins has assigned one of their interns, Jake Summers, to coordinate this project. Dave and Leslie Nanney delivered the first group of Holly Springs Azaleas to Jenkins on 13 September. Additional azaleas were delivered to Jenkins by Rick and Susan Bauer on 8 October. (See Photo 3.)

The chapter welcomes new member Barbara Tozzi, Vienna, VA.

At-large Members

The ASA welcomes new at-large members Angie Hice and Robert C. Hice, Jr. Blairsville, GA; Karin Guzy, Marietta, GA; Marie Hartford and John Schmied, Bothell, WA; and Rama Lopez-Rivera, Edinburgh, Midlothian, United Kingdom.

John Drayton Hastie Jr., asking him to become Magnolia's executive director. At Magnolia, Tom's responsibilities include the restoration of America's oldest romantic-style garden.

Tom was responsible for the establishment of the Rev. Drayton Chapter of the society and has served as its president since its inception in 2010. During this period, he and his chapter sponsored two successful conventions in Charleston and Summerville, SC. Tom has also served as a director of the society.

Directors for 2021-2023

Michael Bamford—Director

Michael Bamford and his wife Pim recently became members of the Northern Virginia Chapter; their interest in native azaleas started in the 1970s. They have been members of Atlanta's Azalea Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society for almost a decade, where Mike has chaired the Plant Sale and Project Garden Committees. Under Mike's tenure, the plant sale has seen remarkable growth in both sales and profits. As Committee Chair of Projects, Mike worked collaboratively with other organizations to promote native azaleas in public areas. Connecting the chapter's expertise in growing, planting, and selection with other organizations in Georgia has resulted in successful plantings along Atlanta's Beltline and Pathways. The committee supported plantings at Lockerly Arboretum's Ernest Koone Azalea Garden and the continued preservation of rhododendrons at Hamilton Gardens at Lake Chatuge. Mike is a retired engineer and professional from the toy industry.

Dale Berrong—Director

Dale Berrong has been interested in plants, propagation, and gardening for over 20 years and joined the ASA following attendance at the joint ASA/ARS convention in Virginia in 2016. Dale is a past president of The Maple Society, North American Branch. He enjoys propagation and is in the process of building a large garden at his home in Danielsville, GA. After his retirement and the sale of his company in 2016, it has become his full-time job.

During his career, Dale has served on the boards of for-profit corporations, not-for-profit corporations, and corporate pension plans. He has been an ASA director from 2019-2021, and he would be honored to continue to serve the ASA from 2021-2023.

John Simmons—Director

John is a relatively new member of the Vaseyi Chapter. He has had an interest in azaleas since a next door neighbor taught him to root azalea cuttings during his medical school years from 1964-1968. John has explored many areas looking for wildflowers and has long been fascinated with the native azaleas. He is now the lead on a legacy garden featuring the work of George Beasley. In an effort to grow membership in the society, he is teaching a class on azaleas at a Life-Long Learning program at Wofford College. John also teaches classes on meditation and mindfulness and enjoys gardens and gardening as venues and activities for meditation.

Renewal Time is Here!

By Paul Beck, Treasurer

That time of year, when your annual dues need to be paid, is here. Check your expiration date on the mailing label on this issue of *The Azalean*. If it says '2020' you need to pay your dues for 2021. Dues are still \$30 per year. Paper mailing of reminders went out in mid-November, and an email reminder shortly thereafter. If you use email, and were not notified last year about your renewal via email, please send me your email address at treasurer@azaleas.org.

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

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

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

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

For the Record

In the Summer 2020 issue of *The Azalean* (Vol.42, No. 2), p. 42, the photograph of the back page of the *Gekkan Satsuki Ken Kyusha* should refer to the 2014 publication (No. 28), not the 2020 publication (No. 30).

In the same issue on p. 44, there are three corrections: Bottom left- 'Balsaminaeflorum' should have been spelled as given in the IRRC: 'Balsaminiflorum'. This azalea, called 'Komane' in Japan, is a garden variety of *R. indicum* and did not require the *R.* designation before its name consistent with our editorial style. On the same page, bottom right, the Satsuki 'Sumizome' should not have an *R.* designation for the same reason. 'Sumizome' is a Satsuki Hybrid, being a sport of another hybrid called 'Shinno-no-tsuki', which in turn is a hybrid of 'Adesugata' x 'Zetsurin'.

“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.



Be enchanted all year by Magnolia's stunning natural setting, and make your Charleston visit complete by observing the very best of our flora and fauna. Unlike most of America's gardens, which are formal and seek to control nature, Magnolia's Romantic-style Gardens cooperate with nature to create a tranquil landscape like Eden where humanity and nature are in harmony.

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