

**THE**

**A**

*Azalea*

*Journal of the Azalea Society of America*



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## EDITOR'S NOTE

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Contributors to **THE AZALEAN** are reminded that the editor's deadlines for receiving material for specific issues are as published below. Contributors of chapter news, time-critical articles, required society business matters and advertising are requested to adhere to these dates.

Contributed articles, cultural notes and azalea questions and answers are welcome at any time.

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### Azalea Calender

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#### 1996

October 7	Brookside Gardens Chapter Meeting, Davis Library at 7:30PM
October 12	Northern Virginia Chapter Meeting. Speakers will be Steve Brainerd and Ned Brockenbraugh.
October 15	Deadline for receiving material for December issue of <b>THE AZALEAN</b>
October 22	Dallas Chapter Meeting at the Camp House/DABS at 7:00PM
December 2	Brookside Gardens Chapter Meeting, Davis Library at 7:30PM
December 8	Ben Morrison Chapter Christmas Party at 2:00PM
December 8	Northern Virginia Chapter Meeting

#### 1997

January 15	Deadline for receiving material for the March issue of <b>THE AZALEAN</b>
February 3	Brookside Gardens Chapter Meeting at Davis Library at 7:30PM
April 7	Brookside Gardens Chapter Meeting at Davis Library at 7:30PM
April 15	Deadline for receiving material for the June issue of <b>THE AZALEAN</b>
April 17-19	Annual Convention and Annual Meeting sponsored by Oconee Chapter, Atlanta, Georgia
June 2	Brookside Gardens Chapter Meeting at Davis Library at 7:30PM
July 15	Deadline for receiving material for the September issue of <b>THE AZALEAN</b>
October 15	Deadline for receiving material for the December issue of <b>THE AZALEAN</b>

*On the Cover:* Kurume Azalea 'Pink Pearl'  
*Photographer:* Robert W. Hobbs

## Azalea Society of America

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 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 contribution of \$20.00 (\$25.00 in 1997); Life membership for an individual is \$300.00 (\$500.00 in 1997). Members receive **THE AZALEAN** and are eligible for participation in all activities of the Society including those of the chapter with which the member affiliates. For information and membership application, write to the Membership Committee, Azalea Society of America, P. O. Box 34536, West Bethesda, MD 20827-0536.

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# AN OVERVIEW OF THE DALLAS CONVENTION

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**Steve Brainerd**

*Rowlett, Texas*

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Conventions are a reunion of our society's family, an experience anticipated by many of the regular attendees who get the opportunity to renew friendships and interact with gardeners who have a love for azaleas.

The 1996 convention featured tours of the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Society (DABS), Fort Worth's Japanese Garden, the Fort Worth Stockyards and four private gardens. The DABS staff fought late freezes and drought conditions to bring a magnificent display of color to the senses. Fort Worth's Japanese Garden gave delegates a chance to relax and enjoy nature in a tranquil setting. The Fort Worth Stockyards offered a change of pace with a flavor of the Old West. The four private urban gardens were very different in character being estate sized, formal, cottage and intimately oriental. For those of you who did not attend, the Budd cottage garden is scheduled to be featured in the September/October issue of *Southern Accents* magazine, garden design section. For those of you who did attend, the article will be an opportunity for you to see elements of the Budd garden through the eyes of professional photographers and designers. The tours featured significant Dallas/Fort Worth gardens, offering insight into the successes and limitations of the area.

Convention speakers included Pete Vines who described his Holly Spring hybrids and Mark Wegmann who discussed using azaleas for bonsai. I spoke on Garden Design.

The Society's business was controversial but at the same time necessary. The Board of Directors, supported by convention delegates, found it necessary to raise membership dues to offset increased expenses primarily associated with the publication of **THE AZALEAN**. Individual annual memberships were increased from \$20.00 to \$25.00 effective for 1997 memberships. This represents the first dues increase since a similar \$5.00 increase was announced in the December 1989 issue of **THE AZALEAN**. Costs associated with this magazine have increased due to increased paper costs world-wide, the addition of color to the format, and an increase in the number of pages printed. The \$5.00 increase will balance expenses if membership stays level. For your Society to maintain a balanced budget and provide current levels of service, we must recruit new members at a matching rate with losses which in recent experience is about 12%. It is my view that this Society provides beneficial services and activities which should be shared with greater numbers of people (not just maintain the *status quo*). In the recent past, we have been declining in membership



*Speaker Pete Vines describes his Holly Springs hybrids*



*Society President Steve Brainerd addresses Society members at the Annual Meeting*



*Convention attendees enjoy spring in Dallas*



*Speaker Mark Wegmann describes azalea bonsai*



*More enjoyment of spring*

rather than gaining, but this can be turned around through your continued membership and recruiting. The business side of the Society is unfortunately necessary. With your continued support we can all enjoy the opportunities available through shared experiences and friendship.

I want to thank two couples for their extraordinary gifts, presented to the Society at the convention. Colonel and Mrs. Murray Sheffield gave the editor, Bob Hobbs, \$1000.00 to be applied towards production costs of color photographs in **THE AZALEAN**. Jean and Fred Minch delivered a check for \$800.00 which represents thirty-eight new members previously associated with a chapter of the American Rhododendron Society and two renewing members of the Azalea Society. With members such as these, our Society will remain strong and continue to grow.

Until the next time, enjoy the cool weather! I wish you bountiful fall azalea blooms and tranquility in your gardening. □

*Photographs by Bob Hobbs*

## WHERE CAN I FIND THAT AZALEA?

*William McDavit*

We are very interested in obtaining a few specific Satsuki varieties, and we'd like to know of any possible supply sources. The list of varieties is as follows:

- 'Shikoden'
- 'Hiodoshi'
- 'Harunishiki'
- 'Suzu-no-homare'
- 'Hyugano'
- 'Momo-no-haru'
- 'Ishiyama'
- 'Wakiginu'
- 'Mori-no-miyako'
- 'Korin'
- 'Taishonishiki'
- 'Sakigake'
- 'Kureopatora'
- 'Hino Tsukasa'
- 'Shiryu-no-homare'
- 'Sekimori-no-sai' (Double)
- 'Yaegoromo'

BILL MCDAVIT  
AZALEA SUNSET  
674 SUNSET LAKES BLVD. SW  
SUNSET BEACH, NC 28468

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# ON PATHS AND HILLS

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Robert Stelloh

Hendersonville, North Carolina

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Gardening on a hillside requires a few decisions not needed for a flat garden. One of the decisions is how best to get up and down the hill. On our property, an existing horse trail going down the hill on the diagonal was the natural main path. When widening that trail, I decided to slope the path into the uphill side, with a ditch on the uphill side to act as a gutter. A few major rainstorms revealed the folly of that, as the ditch grew into a stream bed that threatened to take over the path, and the water created great muddy messes at the bottom of the hill. By then I had read that a better approach is to slope the path to the downhill side to help the water run off the path as soon as possible, before it becomes a stream (1). Doing that was a definite improvement. Many minor improvements followed over the years as the need for them became apparent, either by seeing the damage after a storm, or by going out into a storm to see where the water was going.

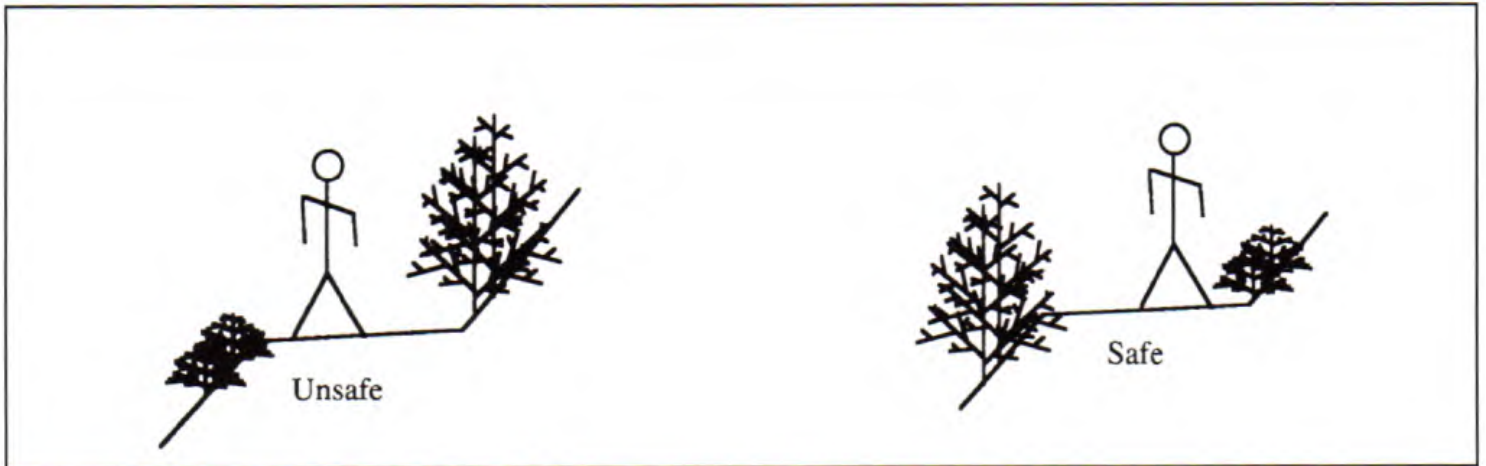
A major decision in any garden is laying out the beds and paths, with a few extra nuances for a hillside garden. We decided to have long slender beds following the contour of the hill, such that most of the paths could be cut into the hillside and be relatively flat rather than going up and down the hill. We also decided to make the primary paths 5' wide to handle two people side by side, to handle garden carts easily, and to reduce the effect of plants encroaching on the path as they grow.

Another decision is how to surface the paths. We started with shredded hardwood mulch, which was soft and easy to walk on, and stayed on the paths pretty well during a rainstorm. The major problems were the cost and effort of renewing it every year or two, and the fact that the rotting mulch made very nice soft soil where we didn't want anything to grow. The soft soil also led to rutting and slipping when we drove a tractor up the hill. The next thing we tried was bank run gravel, with stones ranging in size from about 1" on down to pea gravel. One problem with gravel is that it runs down hill in a rainstorm and needs to be raked back up, and raked out of the beds on the downhill sides of the paths. Another problem is that gravel rolls underfoot, which is a safety problem on a steep path. Both of these problems were abated considerably by getting the gravel embedded into the soil, which the tractor did nicely when the soil was damp, and by keeping it just a few stones thick. The gravel then made a pretty good surface, and renewing it amounted to adding a little more every few years as it got pushed into the soil. While an unexpected bonus was that *Houstonia caerulea* (Bluets) alongside the paths seeded themselves into the gravel, transplanting them back to the edges was a new maintenance problem since we couldn't bear to walk on them.

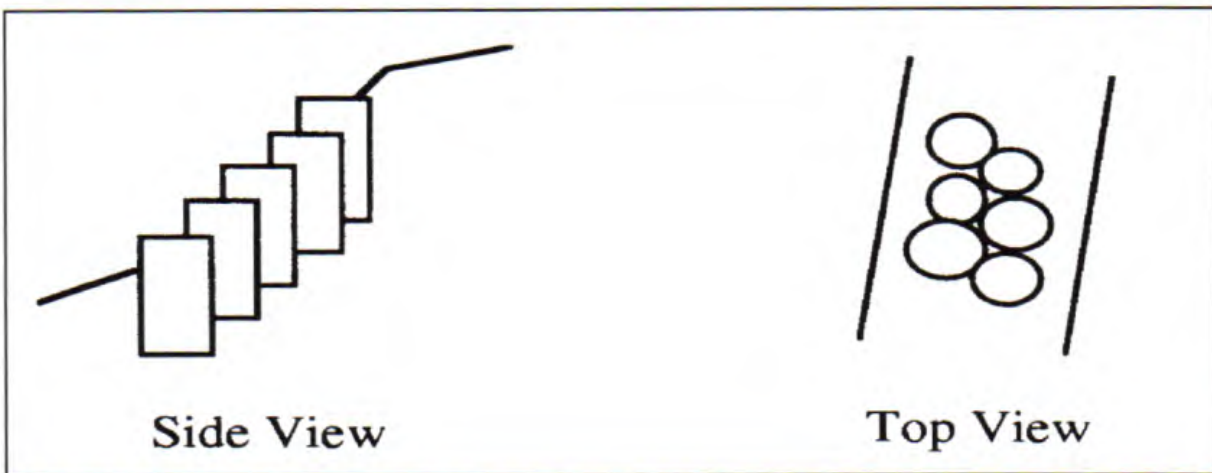
Parts of a few very steep paths demanded steps. We used short sections of railroad ties in one such area. Another type of steps we used was patterned after a design we had seen in the Pacific Northwest. They consisted of about 3'

lengths of tree trunks planted on end as "stumps", quite near each other, with each stump partly beside and partly below the previous one, such that your feet naturally go from one to the next, with the top of each stump about 7" or so lower than its neighbor. Four or five such steps take very little space to negotiate a steep part of a path in a fairly comfortable manner. Other than getting the rather good sized logs to the right place on the hill, they are quite easy to install, and the untreated stumps we used lasted around ten years before they rotted away and needed to be replaced.

After making the paths, we had planted the beds following the general concept of putting low-growing plants near the paths, with taller plants toward the centers of the beds. The idea was to allow more of the plants to be seen from the paths, to avoid a "tunnel" effect of having tall plants near the paths, and to reduce the need for pruning to keep the paths open. Over time, we began to notice that we had feelings of being uncomfortable or unsafe on some parts of a path, yet felt quite safe on other parts of the same path. Upon studying the differences, we began to realize these different feelings could be due to the different heights of the plants near the paths. Some parts of the paths had deviated from our general concept of having low plants along the edges, because of having put the paths between existing trees, *Kalmia* and *Rhododendron periclymenoides*. Where those tall plants were near the downhill side of the path, we felt safe. On the other hand, where those tall plants were near the uphill side of the path, we felt unsafe. We think there are two reasons for these feelings: while people naturally keep some comfortable distance from tall plants (similar to the way we keep some distance from other people—our



*Siting large and small plants along a hillside path*



*Using tree-trunk sections to build hillside steps*

“comfort zone”), we don’t do that for low plants; and people feel less comfortable walking on a slope than walking on flat ground, probably since walking on a slope includes the possibility of falling down the hill. We conclude that tall plants on the uphill side of a path quite literally “push you off the hill” as you maintain your comfort zone. Those same tall plants also emphasize your feeling of being on a hillside, particularly when the downhill side has low plantings directly across from the tall plants. For the same reasons, tall

plants on the downhill side of a path literally “hold you on the hill”, and reduce the feeling of being on a hillside. The figures illustrate these concepts. Tall plants on the downhill side of a path can enhance safety, since avoiding the plants also avoids stepping on a potentially soft or crumbly downhill edge of the path.

- (1) *The Earth Manual—How To Work On Wild Land Without Taming It*, Malcolm Margolin, Heyday Books, Berkeley, CA, 1985, pp. 214-215. A very informative book written with a sense of humor.

*Bob and Denise Stelloh recently sold their house and garden in Darnestown, Maryland (some of you may remember having had lunch there as part of the 1988 Azalea Society of America Convention hosted by the Brookside Gardens Chapter) and moved to a different hillside property in Hendersonville, North Carolina. These thoughts came to mind in the course of describing their previous garden to its new owners. □*

# A Few Thoughts on the Kurume Hybrids

William C. Miller III  
Bethesda, Maryland

In assessing Asian influence in our gardens, it is pretty tough to ignore the Kurume hybrid azaleas. Without even considering how the Kurume hybrids may have influenced subsequent breeding programs, who among us does not have a 'Coral Bells' somewhere in the landscape? Who has not marveled at the magnificent explosion of color which characterizes this important hybrid group?

I am reminded of a wise old chemistry professor who, upon lighting a candle in the front of the laboratory, invited the students about the room to describe what they saw. All of the descriptions were as accurate as they were different. The people in the back of the room could not see the minute details of the quality of the flame and so their descriptions lacked such references. The people in the front however, went on about the red and blue hues at the heart of the flame and the droplets of melted wax that coursed down the side of the candle; in other words, they reported details that were not perceivable from far away. This is a long-winded introduction to say that it is very useful from time to time to share observations and experiences. We all have different perspectives, and there are a number of issues regarding the Kurume hybrids that I would like those of you "in the front" to consider.



*Donated to the First International Azalea Festival at Kurume by Tatebayashi City, this 350-year-old azalea provides one answer to the perennial question, "How long can azaleas be expected to last?"*

"What is a Kurume Hybrid and Who Says?"

There are groupers and splitters. Groupers merge subgroups into larger groups while splitters seek to divide existing groups into multiple subgroups. Is it *Rhododendron mucronatum* or "Mucronatum"? Who makes these decisions, and once the opinions are rendered, can any of the pronouncements be considered permanent?

When Robert Gartrell introduced the Robin Hill hybrids, he specifically stated that only the 69 cultivars he named should carry the designation "Robin Hill Hybrid" with his others being referred to as "Gartrell Hybrids." Here the "groupers" are in trouble because there is no basis for anyone to suggest that there are any more than 69 Robin Hill hybrids—the wishes of the hybridizer having been documented. The Kurume hybrids, however, present a different situation. Dating back to early 19th century feudal Japan, no recognized authority on either side of the Pacific Ocean has declared what is or is not a Kurume hybrid. One perfectly reasonable view is that a Kurume hybrid is a cultivar that was developed in or emanated from a geographical region known as the Kurume region. This could encompass the product of much interspecific crossing and reflect cultivars of widely varying characteristics—much like the 454 Glenn Dale hybrids which are related by geography rather than morphology. Under that notion, cultivars like 'Koromo Shikibu' and 'Ho-Oden' could continue to be considered Kurume hybrids despite their distinctiveness and dissimilarity from some proffered standard. Some individuals delight in talking about Kurume hybrid characteristics as though all Kurume hybrids necessarily must look like 'Hinodegiri', 'Kirin' ('Coral Bells'), or





The Kurume-Azalea Forest Park on Mt. Kōra. A six-hectare government park containing 61,000 azaleas which provides a commanding view of Kurume and the Chikugo River system.

than 700 Kurume hybrids have been produced, and while approximately 300 can be found today in Japan, only 20 or so are in commercial production (4).

To make matters more interesting, the development of Kurume hybrids continues today. According to Dr. Satoshi Yamaguchi, breeders are seeking to incorporate the shiny leaf of the Satsuki; the cold tolerance of *R. kiusianum* and *R. poukanensis*; the heat resistance of *R. sataense* and *R. scabrum*;

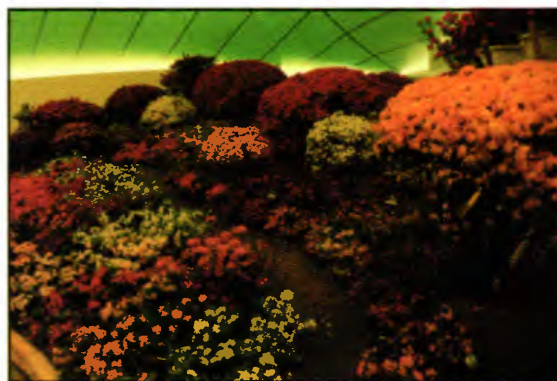
'Christmas Cheer'. And, while it may well be later concluded that all Kurume hybrids really should look like 'Hinodegiri', the fact has not been established.

The origin of the Kurume azalea is attributed to Motozo Sakamoto, who lived in Kurume in the early 1800's. Kurume is on Kyushu, the most southern island of the big four that make up most of Japan. It is believed that the Kurume azalea is derived from *R. kaempferi* (*R. obtusum* var. *kaempferi*, after Wilson), *R. kiusianum* (*R. obtusum* var. *japonicum*, after Wilson) and *R. sataense* (1). In Sakamoto's time there were 80-some cultivars. At his death, Sakamoto's collection was acquired by Kijiro Akashi whose garden E. H. Wilson visited in 1918 and from which "Wilson's Fifty" was obtained. The story of E. H. Wilson's discovery of the Kurume azaleas in 1914 and his subsequent activities are well documented and will not be repeated here (2, 3). Since Sakamoto's time more

flowering of *R. tosaense*; and the evergreen habit of the Hirado hybrids, *R. indicum*, and *R. eriocarpum* (5). One can only imagine how these future Kurume hybrids will compare to 'Hinodegiri'.

#### Kurume Hybrids and Fertilizer

A well known North Carolina nurseryman has repeatedly stated that Kurume hybrids do not like fertilizer. This seems to me to be a curious and counter-intuitive proposition. The presumption is that this is based on his many years of experience, and the message would seem to be then that



Indoor floral exhibits simulating landscapes at the 1st International Azalea Festival at Kurume in 1989.

you should not fertilize Kurume hybrids. Reluctant as I am to question people who know far more than I do, I cannot help but wonder why the Japanese recommend that Kurume azaleas be fertilized five times a year, February - March for flower feeding; May for recovery after flowering; July - August for maintenance; September - October for additional feeding; and November for winter feeding (6).

#### Which Kurume Hybrids are the Best?

I have always struggled with the question of which azaleas are the best. It would probably be possible for six world class experts to produce six different lists of "best" Kurume azaleas. This matter is much complicated by Wilson's suggestion that the Japanese were not very selective and had a tendency to name everything.

The confusion is further fueled by the fact that most westerners have difficulty with Japanese names and many of the Kurume hybrids were given English names and in some cases several different names (e.g., 'Kirin' was renamed 'Daybreak' and 'Coral Bells'; 'Ima Shojo' was renamed 'Fascination' and 'Christmas Cheer'). Today, even when we have the romaji (the English representation of the Japanese name) correct, there is a lot of variety to be found on tags. One might find 'Ima Shojo', 'Ima-Shojo', 'Imashojo', 'Imashoujou', or 'Imashōjō' depending on who wrote it and when it was written. My suspicion is that it probably ought to be no hyphens, no spaces, and only initial caps. Therefore, even if we have a plant we like, we may not have it properly named or correctly spelled.

At the request of Wilson, Kijiro Akashi and Kyuichi Kuwano selected six, in Wilson's words, as "the pick of them all".

'Takasago' ('Cherryblossom')  
pale pink, hose-in-hose (H-n-H)

'Azumakagami' ('Pink Pearl')  
deep pink, H-n-H

'Kirin' ('Daybreak')  
deep rose shading to silvery rose,  
H-n-H

'Kumo-no-uye' ('Salmon Prince')  
pure salmon

'Kurai-no-himo' ('Carmine Queen')  
carmine, H-n-H

'Kure-no-yuki' ('Snowflake')  
white, H-n-H

Another opinion was rendered by Patrick M. Syngé, an English horticulturist. In the early and mid 1930's, an Englishman by the name of John Stevenson imported a collection of Kurume azaleas over and above Wilson's Fifty. Syngé considered the following seven to be the best of Stevenson's Kurume collection (7).

'Fudetsukasa'  
clear rose pink

'Gyokuko'  
salmon orange

'Haru-no-akebono'  
vivid salmon rose

'Iwatokagami'  
pale pink

'Senju'  
pale rose, crimson spotting

'Shinimiagagino'  
deep rose, HnH

'Shintsune'  
white

In 1983, the U.S. National Arboretum distributed a new group of Kurume hybrids. A list of 33 cultivars was published in the September 1987 issue of THE AZALEAN (8). Some of these had been obtained by Stevenson in the 1930's but had not yet been imported to the U.S.

In 1989, I attended the 1st International Azalea Festival in Kurume, Japan, and saw first-hand the work in progress. It was a dream trip that I will never forget. I was particularly impressed by the genuine warmth and hospitality of the Japanese people. The festival was a huge success, our timing was perfect, and I had never seen a 350-year-old azalea before (9).

If I had to declare my "favorite" Kurume, I would offer 'Mizu-no-yamabuki' for its hint of yellow. Conversely, my all time least favorite azalea happens to be the Kurume 'Snow' which today is still propagated by the zillions despite the negative tendency for the spent flowers to persist, turn brown, and look quite unattractive.

In closing, what is there about the Kurume hybrids that makes them special? Perhaps, it is their tendency to bloom even at the rooted cutting stage. If I were playing a hybrid azalea word-association game and I drew the word "Kurume", "floriferous" would readily spring to mind.

#### Notes and References

- (1) Creech, J. L., "Some Plants of Kyushu, Japan and the Kurume Azaleas", **The American Horticultural Magazine**, 46(2), April 1967, pp 58-69.
- (2) "Kurume Azaleas", **Bulletin of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, Boston**, No. 3, March 15, 1920, pp 9-12.

- (3) Wilson, E. H. and A. Rehder, *A Monograph of Azaleas*, The University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, in series: Publications of the Arnold Arboretum, No. 9, 1921, pp 33-38.

- (4) *Azaleas in Kurume - Monograph of Kurume Azalea and Its Relatives*, Published proceedings of the 1st International Azalea Festival, 1989, p 57

- (5) *Ibid.*, pp 31-32.

- (6) *Ibid.*, pp 57-58.

- (7) Nosal, M. A., "The Kurume Azaleas, Neglected Garden Jewels", Undated manuscript. Probably published in the ARS Journal in the early 1980's since there is a reference to the Azalea Society of America.

- (8) Schum, L. K., "U.S. National Arboretum Kurumes", **THE AZALEAN**, 9(3), September 1987, pp 54-55.

- (9) Creech, J. L., "Japan Journey - 1989", **THE AZALEAN**, 11(3), September 1989, pp 46-49.

*Photographs by the author.*

*William C. Miller III, co-Chairman of the Azalea Society of America's Membership Committee and Chair of the Public Information Committee, is a recipient of the Society's Distinguished Service Award. He is a former Vice President of the Society and a long-time ASA member. He is a member of the Brookside Gardens Chapter and has served as Chair of Horticulture for many years. He is a frequent contributor to THE AZALEAN. He is a co-sponsor of the Ten Oaks Glenn Dale Project. □*

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## CULTURAL NOTES

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### Winter Damage to Azaleas

Arthur and Anita Frazer

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*Winter is not far away, and as described in this article, winter damage can be affected by actions we take. This article is reprinted (with some editing) from the August 1996 issue of the Azalea Clipper, the newsletter of the Northern Virginia Chapter by permission of Anita Frazer. Anita and her late husband, Dr. Arthur Frazer, operated Columbia Nursery near Mount Vernon, Virginia, and published the following information in their newsletter in 1970..*

To prevent winter damage (or “winter-kill”), or to remedy it once it has occurred, it is essential to understand something about its nature. Winter-kill is not a disease. However, shrubs that are diseased or infected or for some other reason go into winter in a weakened condition are inevitably the most likely to suffer fatal consequences of winter-kill.

Winter damage or winter-kill, if it is that drastic—is a functional problem. In its least severe form, it is evident by a larger than normal dropping of leaves. In more severe damage, parts or all of the shrub is completely defoliated, i.e., loses all of its leaves.

In the kind of damage just described, there is usually no winter-kill in the customary context of the term. The extensive leaf drop, given a hard, cold winter, is nature’s method of reducing the demand for moisture from the roots to supply the leaves with moisture which in turn is evaporated from the leaf surfaces by the winter wind—the regular transpiration process. (It is primarily for this reason that deciduous trees and shrubs shed their leaves in the fall.) First, because the compact rootballs of evergreen shrubs are periodically frozen during the winter they have a limited moisture supply to send to the leaves. Second, wintry winds, often lower in humidity than summer winds, tend to increase transpiration (evaporation of moisture) from the leaves. Third, if there is excessive new growth, it simply overloads the call for moisture from the root system. If any one, or all, of these conditions is especially severe, then complete defoliation occurs. But remember, in addition, that we may have extended periods particularly in January and February, when the ground is solidly frozen for weeks on end, depriving shallow-rooted evergreens of the means of obtaining and storing moisture.

So much for winter damage represented by leaf defoliation—with an explanation later what to do about it. What about the more severe stage of winter damage? The next stage is functionally comparable to a burst waterpipe or perhaps more aptly comparable to a burst hose on the radiator in your car. The cambium layer (directly underneath the bark) freezes and bursts causing what is appropriately called “bark split”. The damage is easily visible along the stem, or on one of the affected branches.

The cambium layer is the artery which provides the means of transporting water and nutrition between the roots and the upper part of the shrub. If

freezing causes a minor rupture, the cambium layer will heal over with minor (temporary) damage to the affected section of the shrub above the rupture. If the rupture is severe, the cambium layer above the rupture will die—and so will the affected section—or the entire plant, if the bark split occurs on the main stem.

The freezing and rupture of the cambium layer, or bark split if you prefer, is the result of two conditions, or actually only one. It’s a problem of “not enough anti-freeze”—just like in your car. Of course, the plant may have enough “anti-freeze” in its system for a normal winter—but some winters are not normal for this area.

But what is this anti-freeze business, sez [sic] you? The hardening-off process of shrubs in the fall is typified by a process of concentrating carbohydrates in preparation for winter. This concentration of carbohydrates in the sap raises its resistance to freezing. But if the shrub gets a lot of late, new, lush growth in the fall, this new top growth calls on the roots to provide a greater supply of moisture. So the root system does the best it can and the sap is proportionally diluted, and is proportionally more susceptible to freezing. In popular language, the plant hasn’t had a chance to harden-off properly. For those of you who possibly may have become engrossed in this long-winded explanation of a fascinating subject, see: *Rhododendrons of the World*, by David C. Leach, Chapter VII.

#### What to Do To Prevent Bark Split

On azaleas, and other broadleaf evergreen shrubs, this kind of damage shows up as an apparently dead branch or entire shrub—which it may be. But again it may be only minor damage, and it’s worth checking to find out. Bark split is easy to spot by

examining the affected stem or branch. Bark split is self-descriptive—it is a rupture in the bark where the cambium layer underneath has burst and forced the bark to rupture. It is usually a wound an inch or so long and running parallel along the stem or branch. Check above and below the rupture by using your fingernail or a penknife blade to gently scrape back a tiny sliver of bark. The cambium layer is directly beneath the bark. If it appears green when you scrape back the sliver of bark, the damaged section will recover. If the cambium layer is brown or a dirty green (dying), make further checks back down the branch of the stem, until you reach a place (usually below the bark-split) where the cambium layer is green—and prune back to there.

### Preventing Winter Damage

Preventing a problem is always better than trying to cure one, once it has happened. It is not always possible to prevent winter damage if we have an unusually severe winter. But a few simple rules will generally prevent such damage.

(1) Plant shrubs and varieties that are known to be hardy in this area. Avoid the southern shrubs (especially azaleas) which are very lovely in the South—and which may survive one or two winters here—but a cold winter will surely wipe them out. Don't be confused—some of the azaleas grown in North Carolina and elsewhere are in fact Kurume varieties and others perfectly hardy here. It is the "INDICA" (Indian) Hybrids which are so lovely in North and South Carolina (and Norfolk) that will not survive our winters here. Every year 'Formosa' (tender early purple) azaleas are trucked into this area and sold to unsuspecting customers.

(2) Plant only vigorous, healthy shrubs. Plants from truck hucksters or wayside markets with loose and/or dried out rootballs have two strikes against them. A "bargain", remember, has to be something worth more than you pay for it. Nursery bargains do not mean "cheap" plants. A sick or unthrifty plant is a prime candidate for winter damage, for reasons explained earlier.

(3) Any pruning and fertilizing should be done before the end of June to avoid the stimulation of late, tender growth.

(4) Water regularly during summer if the rainfall is inadequate, to maintain vigorous healthy shrubs, and to minimize the stimulation of new growth caused by late wet weather following a drought period. Azaleas should have one inch of water every ten days, either rainfall or by watering. The fact that a shrub does not look like it is suffering from lack of adequate moisture is not an acceptable standard. By the time leaves droop, or appear withered, an azalea has suffered the calamity of major shock.

(5) If the late fall has been dry, it is especially important to water azaleas well in November and December before the ground (and rootballs) freeze.

(6) Mulching under azaleas is an excellent practice to conserve moisture and even out sudden changes in temperature. Mulch of two to three inches can be leaves, wood chips, sawdust, etc. [Use of sawdust requires some finesse. As sawdust rots it may draw nitrogen from the soil. But as the Frazers point out, application of fertilizer must be timed to

avoid interference with the hardening off, ed.] Leave the mulch on the year round and replace as necessary. Keep and/or pick fallen deciduous leaves out of the azalea branches. They restrict air circulation and may cause some defoliation.

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### Post Script to Winter Damage

*Phil and Frances Louer*

*Also reprinted from the August 1996 issue of the Azalea Clipper.*

Art and Anita Frazer's article addresses the effects of weather, but many of us suffer damage in winter from wildlife. The following is how we (the Louers) came out with the least amount of deer damage this last winter that we have had. First, we bought some fencing from the Benner's Gardens in New Hope, PA. It is 7-1/2 feet high, made of plastic mesh and it comes in rolls of 100 feet or 330 feet. We installed the fencing surrounding two selected areas where we had trees to support the corners, and 20 large plants enclosed. Both of these were completely effective, with no deer damage. Some small animals chewed a couple holes at the ground level, presumably rabbits, but no damage was done. This fence can be rolled back up in the spring and stored out of sight. For the other plants outside of the fencing, we used "Deer-Away" spray. It is expensive, especially when spraying about 400 medium size plants. We sprayed in late November, and again when the temperature was high enough in early February. The spray was very effective for the first couple of months, but the second spraying seemed to be a little late (the freeze lasted too long). Some damage was beginning to occur. Even so, it was the least we have had, in spite of the fact that a number of deer spent the winter in the back woods close to the plants. □

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# FALL BLOOMING AZALEA VARIETIES

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By the Louisiana Chapter, Azalea Society of America

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The Louisiana Chapter has compiled the following list of fall blooming azaleas. Readers are invited to provide their observations and comments on this list to the Louisiana Chapter.

Abbot (Glenn Dale)*	Irene Purswell (Purswell)	Sandra Ann (Girard)*
Allure (Glenn Dale)*	Jane Spalding (Carla)	Saybrook Glory (Girard)
Anytime (Belgian Indica)	Janet Rhea (Linwood)*	Sekidera (Mucronatum)*
Arabesk (Kaempferi)*	Jennifer (Dodd)*	Sherbrooke (Robin Hill)
Autumn Sun (Carla)	Joan Garrett (Harris)	Sherwood Cerise (Kurume)
Avalon Exquisite (Satsuki)	John Rochester (Carla)	Shinnyo-no-tsuki (Satsuki)
Baton Rouge (Carla)*	Koromo Shikibu (Kurume)*	Sir Robert (Robin Hill)*
Betty Anne Voss (Robin Hill)	Linwood Blush (Linwood)	Skyblue Diamond (Diamant)
Betty Hemmingway (Harris)	Linwood Lilac (Linwood)	Skylark (Whitewater)
Carla (Carla)	Marian Lee (Back Acres)	Southern Summer Rose (Hammond)*
Carror (Carla)	Marvel (Glenn Dale)	Talbot (Robin Hill)
Cherie (Gartrell)	Misty Plum (Back Acres)	Unsurpassable (Girard)*
Chinzan (Satsuki)*	Momo-no-haru (Satsuki)	Vittatum (species)*
Conversation Piece (Robin Hill)*	Mrs. Anne G. Pennington	Vuyk's Rosyred (Vuyk)*
Copperman (Glenn Dale)	(Pennington)	Warai Jishi (Satsuki)
Corsage (Gable)	Murasaki Shikibu ( <i>R. kiusianum</i> )*	Watchet (Robin Hill)*
Dogwood (Roberts)	Nancy of Robinhill (Robin Hill)	White Orchid (Mossholder-Bristow)
Dorothy Clark (Harris)*	National Beauty (Girard)	Whitehouse (Belgian-Glenn Dale)
Dorothy Rees (Robin Hill)*	Nellie (Linwood)	
Dusty Pink (Misc.)	Nolan's Pink (Misc.)	
Edward M. Boehm (Linwood)	Opal (Linwood)	
Eikan (Satsuki)	Orange Cup (Kurume)	
Elaine (Carla)	Parfait (Harris)	
Encore (Back Acres)	Pink Camellia (Carla)*	
Fascination (Harris)	Pink Cascade (Harris)*	
Fashion (Glenn Dale)*	Pink Cloud (Carla)*	
Festive (Glenn Dale)	Pink Ice (Belgian-Glenn Dale)	
Fourth of July ( <i>R. oldhamii</i> )	Pink Pincushion (Linwood)	
Fuji Mori (Satsuki)	Polypetalum (Satsuki)	
Gaiety (Glenn Dale)	Purple Macrantha (Macrantha)	
Girard Pleasant White (Girard)	R. W. Pennington (Pennington)*	
Glamour (Glenn Dale)	Rachel Cunningham (Back Acres)	
Grandeur (Brooks)	Red Macrantha (Macrantha)	
Gwenda (Robin Hill)	Red Slipper (Back Acres)*	
Hardy Gardenia (Linwood)*	Rivermist (Harris)	
Herbert (Gable)	Robin Hill Wendy (Robin Hill)*	
Huang 2-1-22 (Huang)	Rochester's Promise (Rochester)	
Huang 2-7-51 (Huang)*	Rosebud (Gable)	
Huang 4-6-71 (Huang)	Ruth May (Kurume)	
Huang 3-5-72 (Huang)	Salmon Pincushion (Linwood)	

\* While all listed varieties bloom in the fall and all but 'Fourth of July' and 'Southern Summer Rose' bloom again in the spring, observations in St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, and Washington Parishes (USDA Hardiness Zone 8B) indicate that only varieties marked with an asterisk (\*) are superior for dependable and abundant flowering.

*Robert J. Miravalle*  
Chairman (504-796-5750)  
Fall Blooming Azalea Committee  
Louisiana Chapter  
Azalea Society of America  
October, 1995

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## AZALEA QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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QUESTION: *From Eastford, Connecticut: "I am a novice azalea grower attempting to find a comprehensive flower/foliage rating list. How may I do this?"*

ANSWER: Unfortunately, there are no "comprehensive flower/foliage rating lists" for azaleas that are worth anything. Azaleas do not lend themselves to such exercises. The fallacy of rating lists is demonstrated by the fact that an azalea that someone would rate as exceptional (or whatever superlative you prefer) in Mobile, Alabama, might prove to be a total wash in Eastford, Connecticut. In your situation, I would imagine that you had better focus on determining what will survive in your region. All azaleas do not "perform" alike. Some are more cold-hardy (better for the North). Some are more heat-tolerant (better for the South). In other words azaleas should be thought of as regional. Having said that, there is a great deal of overlap.

I would suggest that at first you restrict your efforts to selections from hybrid groups that were developed in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Michigan. For example, if you can find them you might try the Great Lakes hybrids that were developed by Mr. Ernest Stanton at Westcroft Gardens in Grosse Ile, Michigan; the Girard hybrids of Girard Nursery in Geneva, Ohio; the Schroeder Hybrids from Holly Hills Nursery in Evansville, Indiana; the Shammarello hybrids from South Euclid, Ohio; the Gable hybrids from Stewartstown, Pennsylvania; and the Pride hybrids from Butler, Pennsylvania. These are the hybrid groups from which I would select. The problem will be finding them. Gable, Pride, and Shammarello are dead and I do not know about Stanton. The Girard Nursery is alive and well, and the Schroeder hybrids can be obtained from the Holly Hills Nursery. The Carlson Nursery in New York can provide many selections including Carlson's own hybrids. Write or call these people, explain your situation, and see what they tell you. To this point I have been discussing the evergreen azaleas. You also should consider the deciduous azaleas (lose their leaves in the fall), including native species and the Northern Lights hybrids, developed in Minnesota.

QUESTION: *From Green Cove Springs, Florida: "I am very much interested in learning more about azaleas. In particular, I am looking for books dealing specifically with the growth of unusual specimens and hybrids. I have over 1,500 azaleas in my yard with some color variation, but mostly the same general plants. Each year, I root about 1,000 cuttings which I give away when they are of sufficient size. This dabbling is getting boring, and with retirement on the horizon, I'd like to increase my knowledge."*

ANSWER: There are a number of books which I think you would find very helpful. The first that I would recommend is *Azaleas* by Fred Galle. It is the current definitive text and is presently in a revised and enlarged edition. It is commonly called the "Galle Book". It is available from Timber Press, 9999 S.W. Wilshire, Portland, OR 97225 or through the Azalea Society of America Bookstore (see advertisement this issue). It is the successor to *The Azalea Book* by Frederic P. Lee which is out of print. It remains available as a reprint from Theophrastus Publishers, P O Box 458, Little Compton, RI 02837. Both of these are comprehensive texts and are must additions to any personal library. The only problem with the "Lee Book" is that the second edition is twenty years old and would not have all of the latest cultivar lists—though it is still a fine book. Another excellent book is *Success with Rhododendrons and Azaleas* by H. Edward Reiley, also available from Timber Press and the Azalea Society of America Bookstore. Finally, there is one entitled *Great American Azaleas* by Jim Darden. It is available from Greenhouse Press, 1239 Sunset Avenue, Clinton, NC 28328. An azalea booklist has been published in **THE AZALEAN** 13, p. 31, 1991 and **THE AZALEAN** 14, p. 95, 1992. You might check with your library to see if any of these titles are there. Some of the books are out-of-print, but may be available through a used book dealer.

To address your boredom with asexual propagation (cuttings), you might try your hand with sexual reproduction (hybridization). There are a lot of yellow, deciduous azaleas, but no one has succeeded in developing a yellow evergreen azalea. Or, you could try to understand and describe the mechanism that controls color in azaleas. From year-to-year, why are some azaleas more variable than others in terms of the intensity of color or the degree of petaloidy [doubling, ed.], just to name a few characteristics? What controls "sporting"? Are some cultivars more resistant to petal blight than others? Can an azalea that is resistant to petal blight be developed? It could fill up your retirement. There is a lot that needs to be done and many questions that need to be answered.

**QUESTION:** *From Tampa, Florida: "Recently I planted several 'Formosa', 'Mrs. G. G. Gerbing', and 'Southern Charm' azaleas. These shrubs have been lightly infested with lace bugs. I understand that an application of Orthene® will kill the lace bugs, although I would prefer not to apply chemicals to the garden. I have used tobacco juice, derived from chewing tobacco and a gallon of water, to control a caterpillar infestation on oleander. Would an application of this solution eliminate the lace bugs? If not, I would welcome any suggestions."*

**ANSWER:** I am not a certified pesticide applicator, so I am really not "qualified" to tell you what you should use. I understand your concern about using Orthene® but it is a fine product which is safe if handled properly. It is a systemic and should be treated with respect like all pesti-

cides. I do not know if your chewing tobacco will work or not. You should be aware, however, that the nicotine in your tobacco is no less a chemical. It is available from many garden stores as nicotine sulfate (Black Leaf 40®).

I would suggest that you contact your state agricultural extension officer for advice. He/she is supposed to be up on the labels and should be able to tell you what is currently approved. There have been articles in the literature regarding the use of the horticultural soaps like "Insecticidal Soap" to control lace bug. I would imagine that a little dilute Ivory soap or a mild detergent of your choice would be just as effective, if properly applied, as the higher priced Safer products.

There is another very important issue. Orthene®, "Insecticidal Soap", tobacco juice, a horticultural oil...or whatever would probably be effective since lace bug is pretty easy to control. But, you will have to be careful about phytotoxicity. You should test the pesticide on a small area first to make sure that you do not kill the plants too. I know from experience because I wiped out an entire generation of azalea cuttings when I used "Insecticidal Soap" to control whitefly. The cuttings were indoors under lights and I think it was too hot because they clearly burned (chemical burn).

For any of the non-systemic sprays to be effective, you must direct the spray to the underside of the leaves since that is where the lace bug is. You will want to make a second application about ten to twelve days later to catch any in-

dividuals who subsequently hatch. Again, I would not pick the heat of the day.

The September 1995 issue of **THE AZALEAN** featured an article on integrated pest management. Some of the methods described there may solve your problem without the use of insecticides.

Please send in your questions and we'll do our best to find answers.

## News Release

THE AZALEA WORKS  
Bethesda, Maryland

Summer 1996

### **The Glenn Dale Azaleas Revised**

*Richard T. West and William C. Miller III*

Finally, after more than forty years, the book of the official descriptions of the Glenn Dale hybrid azaleas will be available. *The Glenn Dale Azaleas Revised* is based on Morrison's original monograph which has been out of print and unavailable for many years. The combined efforts of Richard T. West and William C. Miller III bring the historic account of the development of the Glenn Dale hybrid azaleas up to the present. The revision contains a brief history for all Glenn Dale program activities, a reprinting of Morrison's original introduction and sections, revised cultivar descriptions, an extremely valuable and updated color translation appendix, and an extensive bibliography.

Details on the cost and the terms of availability will be published in the December 1996 issue of **THE AZALEAN**.

### BROOKSIDE GARDENS CHAPTER

Bill Johnson, *President*

Our annual show was a tremendous success in spite of a cold spring. There were 202 entries brought in by 18 entrants. Charlie Evans won best of show with a spray of 'Karen'. Bill Miller took the Sweepstakes prize. The judges were very tough and didn't let anything slip by. The judges were Phil Normandy, Bob Hobbs, Bob Stewart, Bill Johnson, Don Voss, Barbara Bullock, and Carol Allen. Thank you all who worked to make this a success!

Carol Allen has resigned as president of the chapter and Bill Johnson will serve as president for the rest of her term.

### NORTHERN VIRGINIA CHAPTER

John Zottoli, *President*

A meeting was held on April 28, 1996 at the Green Spring Gardens Park. Our speaker was Dr. Ajit Thakur speaking on "Satsuki Azaleas".

Ajit has been to Japan a number of times, and he had some excellent slides to depict the varieties and garden placements used in Japan. In fact, due to the excellent leaf form of the Satsukis, some are used in hedgerow patterns, and some used as ground cover. The leaf form of the Satsuki is an important distinction, and he showed the three leaf forms into which most plants fall. They like open areas in Japan, but like shade here in the U.S. A large percentage of hybrids have Satsukis somewhere in the parentage. The Satsuki was introduced into the U.S. during the 1930's, and there are about 1,000 varieties now available.

The July meeting featured our annual azalea cutting exchange. The meeting was held at Green Spring Gardens Park with good attendance and plenty of cuttings.

The next Northern Virginia Chapter meeting will be on October 12, 1996 and will feature Steve Brainerd, President of the Azalea Society of America, and Ned Brockenbraugh as our speakers. This will be a joint dinner meeting with the local Rhododendron Chapter.

The following meeting is scheduled for December 8, 1996. The program will be announced later. Election of new officers will take place at this meeting.

### WASHINGTON, DC AREA JOINT CHAPTER MEETING

The October 12 meeting of the Northern Virginia Chapter will be a joint meeting with the Potomac Valley Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society. The speakers will be Azalea Society of America President Steve Brainerd and Ned Brockenbraugh. All ASA members in the Washington area are invited to the dinner meeting which will be held at the Marriot in Bethesda, Maryland. For more information call Don Hyatt (703) 241-5421.

There were 793 copies of the June issue of **THE AZALEAN** in the bulk mailing. Below is a state-by-state summary of the mailing:

- Foreign = 17
- Massachusetts = 8
- Maine = 1
- Connecticut = 3
- New Jersey = 26
- New York = 29
- Pennsylvania = 18
- Delaware = 2
- Maryland = 143
- Virginia = 126
- West Virginia = 5
- Washington, DC = 15
- North Carolina = 35
- South Carolina = 12
- Georgia = 79
- Florida = 14
- Alabama = 22
- Tennessee = 9
- Mississippi = 8
- Kentucky = 3
- Ohio = 3
- Indiana = 23
- Iowa = 1
- Wisconsin = 1
- Minnesota = 1
- Illinois = 2
- Missouri = 3
- Kansas = 2
- Nebraska = 1
- Louisiana = 25
- Arkansas = 5
- Oklahoma = 4
- Texas = 58
- Colorado = 1
- California = 17
- Oregon = 9
- Washington = 50

### Chapter Achievement

Following is a list of Chapter membership numbers as of August 1, 1996, and new members for 1996:

Members	Total	New
Ben Morrison	31	3
Brookside Gardens	130	6
Dallas	57	11
Louisiana	35	9
Northern Virginia	69	2
Oconee	86	17
Richmond Virginia	41	3
Tri-State	22	11



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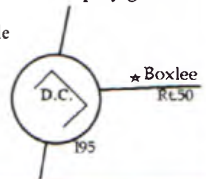
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