

March 2009



The Azalea Clipper

Northern Virginia Chapter, Azalea Society of America

Volume 30, Issue 2



Bob Stewart's Azaleas, Rick Bauer, NV Chapter Vice President

We will hold our next NVASA Chapter meeting on 29 March at the **Pohick Regional Library** on Sydenstricker Road in Burke. The meeting will begin at 1:30 PM with a social hour, followed by a presentation and then the business meeting.

The presentation will be by Rick Bauer on Bob Stewart's Azaleas. Bob, a member of the Northern Virginia Chapter, began producing hybrid azaleas in 1990 at his home in Springfield and has developed and registered a number of beautiful varieties. His garden is included in the garden tours for the 2009 convention. The presentation will cover a number of the beautiful azalea hybrids Bob has produced over the years.

The business meeting will include discussions on the upcoming national convention and how members can help to make it a successful one. (See page 3)

Refreshments will be available—please refer to the Refreshment Duty box to see if you need to bring something.



ASA National Convention
May 1-3 in Herndon, VA

From the President *Eve Harrison*

Hi Everyone!

It's always better to write a letter when the sun is shining, isn't it? After several days of mist and rain (happily for the plants!), I am thrilled to see some sun just in time to help push out the first flushes of spring. The deer have been on a rampage up here this season due to lack of food supply (except for my garden) so now the wild honeysuckle will burst out giving those creatures of destruction more to eat! My tried and true Liquid Fence simply didn't deter them after nearly four years so I had to hurriedly switch to Plantskyd to save my camellias and most of the azaleas. That was a month ago and so far they're intact.

You say, why in the world don't you erect deer fencing? Have you priced it? Truthfully, the lay of our 10 acres is spread from a 400' ornamental garden in the woods to the whole new areas, around the pond and up at the house so just trying to determine how to do it hasn't

(Continued on page 2)

*Meeting on
March 29th
at the Pohick
Regional
Library
1:30 PM
Directions on
page four*

Refreshment Duty—

For this meeting, the duty falls to those whose last names begin with the letters-

K through Q



(Continued from page 1)

happened yet, while I stockpile the cash to pay for it! Sometimes I envy the city dwellers or suburban folks who at least have sensible boundaries!

Our January meeting was extremely well attended, probably in part because of the importance, timing and content of ARS president Bob McWhorter's talk on the Asian Ambrosia beetle. His digital pictures, handouts and instructions on building traps to help prevent an invasion of the destructive pest were outstanding and we are very grateful that he and Rosa took the time to travel to Herndon to present this important information. Bob generously stayed afterward to answer questions many of us posed.

We did meet at the convention site, the Crowne Plaza Hotel, in Herndon to "get a lay of the land" and make determinations of where meetings, the banquet room and plant sale site would be. A committee later met there again to nail down the final site of the plant sale which will be quite accommodating and will allow for plenty of room for both plants and attendees.

There have been two convention committee meetings since the general meeting so there is wonderful involvement by a large number of the membership helping to guide this huge endeavor successfully to its opening, May 1st. I'm sure anyone inclined to help during the actual event will have no trouble filling a need. Just come to the meeting March 29 and speak to anyone on the committee and you'll quickly find yourself a niche.

At the last meeting our illustrious hospitality committee suggested we all pitch \$1 into a jar at the meetings and we would be richly rewarded with wonderful snacks before the meet-

ings. Apparently it worked quite well as the food table was packed and sampled throughout the afternoon. What a great idea! We are so grateful to Carolyn and Paul Beck who bring in their 50-cup coffee maker along with all of the other supplies and goodies Carolyn has brought in so come with an appetite!

With Don Hyatt's encouragement Bob and I were a part of a group of ARS and ASA members who traveled down to Pine Knot Farms in Clarksville, Va. to participate in their annual Hellebore Days event. I never saw so many hellebores in bloom at one time! We all left with armloads. We all arrived in Garner at different times because some folks had no idea they were going to get stuck in I-40 traffic outside Durham that quickly rivaled I-495 for creeping at 15-20 MPH for over an hour to go probably 30 miles. Guess who?

It's a great late winter break that includes plants--what's better than that after a prolonged cold season? A total of 5 nurseries were visited in 3 days. Thanks to Joe Marsala for coordinating the trip and Don who, the inveterate traveler, always knows where to go for everything!

I know everyone is looking forward to the pictures and Rick Bauer's talk on Bob Stewart's plants at this month's meeting. I have so few in my garden that it will be a wealth of information just to have his named cultivars at hand. Please come this early springtime and get energized to be involved in the final stages of the convention as well as the great experience we've planned.

See you there!

Eve

January 2009 Chapter Meeting

At our January meeting, Bob McWhorter presented an excellent program on a threatening new insect pest in our region, the Asian Ambrosia Beetle, *Xylosandrus crassiusculus*. Although the insect itself is very tiny and doesn't look like it should do much damage, when the adults emerge in early spring they bore small holes in a variety of host plants to lay their eggs. The hole the insect bores is only 2 mm across, and there is usually some delicate, toothpick-like frass exuding from the opening. That hole shouldn't cause much damage to the plant, but at the same time the insect also infects the host plant with a fungus and that causes the problem since it will kill the plant. There is no known cure for the fungus, and insecticides cannot kill the larva inside, either.

It is time to get ready to monitor our gardens by building your own Ambrosia Beetle Traps. The traps should be set out in March, a few days before the temperatures are likely to hit 70' F. The first flight of these destructive insects is typically between March 11 and April 10 in our area. If insects are found, there are some rather poisonous sprays can be applied to the bark of susceptible trees and shrubs that will kill the adults before they bore through the bark. After they are inside, there is little that can be done to kill them.

Traps can be made from an inverted, 2-liter soda bottle. Cut three holes cut in the side to allow easy entry for the beetles. Fill a pill bottle with ethyl alcohol and insert a wick in the top since that will act as a chemical lure to attract beetles to the trap. Attach the pill bottle inside the soda bottle as shown in the drawing. ⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨

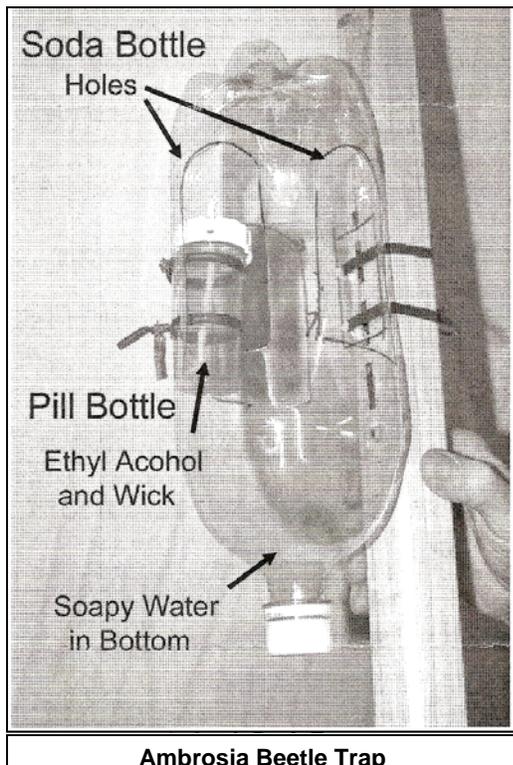
(Continued on page 3)

ASA 2009 Convention Planning

Believe it or not, we are in the final stages of planning and preparing for the annual convention. The planning committee has been meeting regularly at the new Merrifield Garden Center in Gainesville, VA. The owner, Bob Warhurst has been very gracious to give us some meeting space in his new greenhouse for our last three meetings. He has also made a donation to our convention expenses. I include below once again the sequence of events and where we will need support by chapter members.

The Convention will open officially at 7:30 PM Friday evening (May 1, 2009). Prior to this, the Board meeting will begin at 2:00 PM. We have revised the registration time. It will begin at 1:00 PM so that the board members can register before their meeting. Ginger and Sam Burd will be hosting the registration table. They will need at least one more person to help them.

We will probably start plant sales earlier than the announced time of 5:00 PM depending on how early we can set up and get underway. Barry Sperling is arranging this function. The plant sale will take



Then put some soapy water in the bottom of the soda bottle since that will trap the insects as they fly into the trap, and fall to the bottom. Check the traps often for insects.

place on the second floor parking garage area which is under cover and accessible through the second floor exit to the parking lot. The plants can be delivered to this area the day before the convention starts.

Following the welcoming announcements, there will be a brief slide preview of some of the gardens we will visit on Saturday and Sunday, followed by a presentation by **Tony Dove**. **Pete Vine** was scheduled to give a presentation also, but Pete has had to bow out. We are now in the process of recruiting another speaker.

A reminder that the tours on Saturday (May 2, 2009) include the gardens of **Dan and Barbara Krabill, Don Hyatt, Joe and Brenda Klimavicz, Meadowlark Gardens, and Frances and Phil Louer**. Busses for these tours will load on the second floor parking lot next to the plant sale area. On Saturday evening there will be presentations, one by **Bob Stelloh along with John Brown** and another by **George McLellan**.

Tours on Sunday include **Bob and Betty Stewart, Leslie and Dave Nanney, Green Springs Garden Park, Dave and Sharon Raden, and Carolyn and Paul Beck**. On Sunday evening, there will be a short, but very entertaining auction. The banquet will begin at 7:00 PM in the same room followed by our evening speakers, **Rosalie Nachman and Don Hyatt**. The ceremonies will conclude with the annual meeting.

The final plant sale will take place from 9:00 to 10:00 AM on Monday morning. A Board meeting will also take place from 9:00 to 11:00 AM.

The special hotel room rates are applicable for three nights before the convention and for three nights following the convention. For those who wish to arrive early and/or stay after the convention, we have put together a list of the major attractions in the area including many gardens in the metropolitan area, and some of our local gardens will also be open for informal tours. Information on these possibilities are included in a letter you will receive confirming your registration, and will be available during registration at the convention.

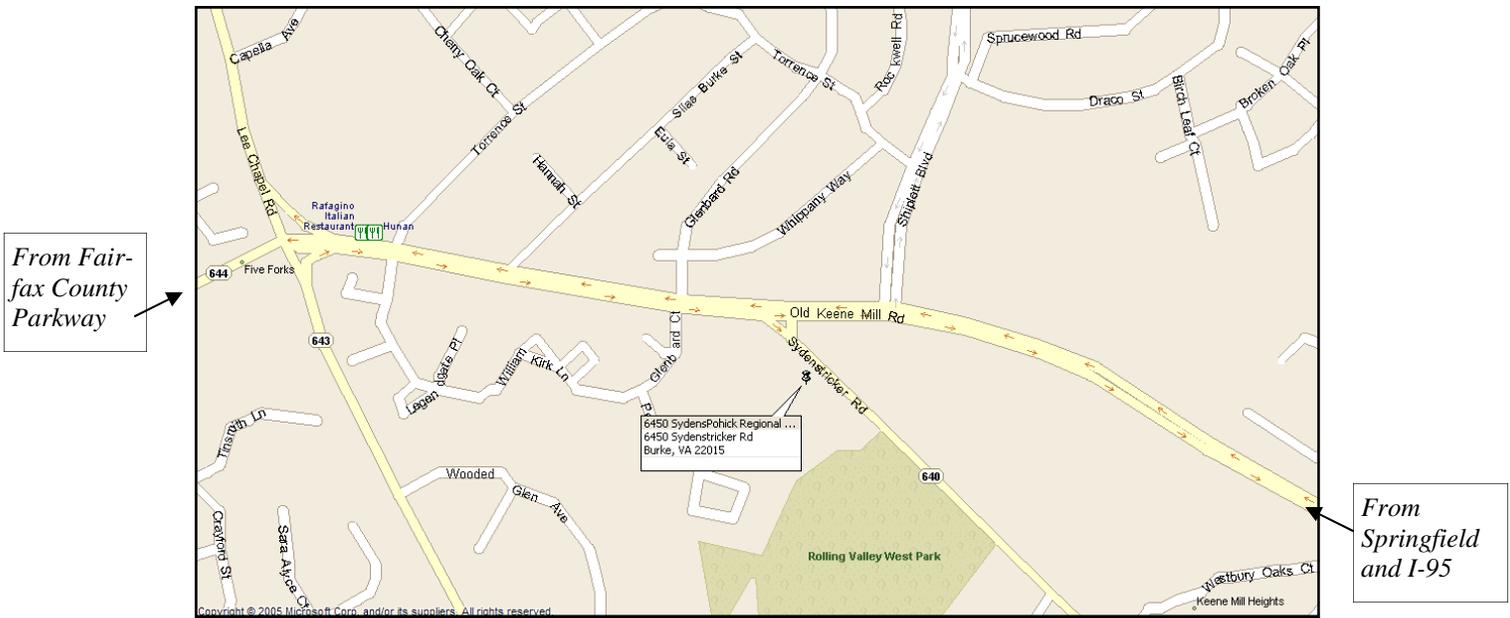
Our next convention planning committee meeting will be on April 18th at the Gainesville Merrifield Garden Center. Final plans and personnel assignments will be made at this meeting.

Phil Louer,
Convention Chair

Directions to Pohick Regional Library

From Fairfax County Parkway, take Old Keene Mill Road east past Lee Chapel Road and Burke Town Center. Turn Right at Sydenstricker Road. Library is on the right.

From the Beltway and I-95 take the Springfield exit and stay on Old Keen Mill Road for about 4 ½ miles. Cross Rolling Road past Rolling Valley Mall to Sydenstricker Road and turn left.



The Azalea Clipper is published BI-monthly by the **Northern Virginia Chapter** of the **Azalea Society of America**. The officers of this Chapter are:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| President: | Eve Harrison | (540)778-1945 |
| Vice President: | Rick Bauer | (703)455-4850 |
| Secretary: | Rosie Field | (703)922-6362 |
| Treasurer: | David Nanney | (703)644-5651 |
| Corresponding Secretary: | Frances Louer | (703)754-2824 |

News items may be provided to **Frances Louer**,
 15800 Palmer Lane, Haymarket, VA 20169-1808.
 E-mail: plouer@msn.com