



The Azalea Clipper

Northern Virginia Chapter, Azalea Society of America

Volume 30, Issue 3



Annual Azalea Cutting Exchange, *Chapter Membership*

We will hold our annual chapter azaleas cutting exchange on Sunday **July 12 2009**. The meeting will be held at the George Mason Library in Annandale, VA. **Directions to the library are on page four.**

Please refer to the article "Guidance for Taking Cuttings" on page three before taking them. No matter how many years you have been doing this, it is always good to refresh your memory so no mistakes are made. Ask anyone who has been rooting cuttings for years if they always get what was identified on the bag they acquired at these exchanges. The answer is bound to be "no".

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



From the President *Eve Harrison*

Hi Everyone,

As always, May flies by while I'm madly planting those convention plants and transplanting others as well as getting the vegetable garden started and mulched. I'm always amazed in late August when I come up for air and realize there is a stack of garden magazines that accumulated while I was outside! Sound familiar?

I have received so many compliments on how well the convention was organized, how good the food was at the banquet and what a wonderful plant sale we had. As avid gardeners we all appreciate the many months that it took for our members to prepare their gardens for tours and it showed! What huge efforts you all made and you certainly made our chapter proud to "show off" all your hard work. Thank you so very much.

(Continued on page 2)

*Meeting on
July 12th at
the George
Mason
Regional
Library
1:30 P.M
Directions on
page four*

Refreshment Duty—

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



(Continued from page 1)

The convention committee members, some 14 consistently present and others when their schedules allowed, just made our chapter so proud in turning out the kind of convention that was presented. It occurred to me frequently that there are many people who actually plan conventions for a *living* and I can only say that without the help of Phil Louer, in particular, we would probably have had a much more difficult time of it. The efforts made by our illustrious registrars, Ginger and Sam Burd were admired many times by the registrants. In addition, the team of Phyllis Rittman and Don Hyatt proved invaluable due to their '06 planning experiences. Lee McElvain, Lars Larson, Rick Bauer, Carolyn and Paul Beck, Larry Martin, Jim Cotter, Dan Krabill, Leslie and Dave Nanney and Barry Sperling all were workhorses to the end! The plant sale would have been so very much more difficult without the wonderful organizational skills of Rosie Fields and Lars. Landon Davis arrived from Richmond and hauled plants everywhere in preparation for the sale all day! I also saw Dave and Virginia Banks pitching in after arriving from Williamsburg. It's so great to see our out-of-town members. Amazing. Many, many thanks to you all for making this a convention to remember.

We were so proud to introduce Bob Stewart and Joe Klimavicz to our attendees and grateful for the wonderful gifts they provided during the tours and at the banquet. Gardeners are just the most generous of folk! Speaking of that, we were very fortunate to be the recipients of that fabulous Japanese maple donated by John Brown for the auction as well as to Bob

Stelloh for donating a large number of perennials for the plant sale. See what I mean? Thanks guys, for a huge, generous effort!

Many thanks to Bob Harrison and Don Hyatt who raced through the auction in order to keep a very tight schedule of the annual business meeting as well as allowing plenty of time for our speakers. Don, of course, did a masterful job as Keynote Speaker.

We were so proud of our awardees who received Service Awards from the ASA. These include Don Hyatt, Frances and Phil Louer, Jane Newman, and Bob Stewart. What a great event!

A lot was accomplished at the two Board meetings Friday and Monday. I really enjoy getting to put names with faces after reading so much on the Azalea Board throughout the year. It has become apparent that we need to appoint a Membership Committee to carry out a few occasional duties in connection with welcoming new members as well as aiding Dan in reminding folks of their dues. This work was outlined and isn't at all time consuming but will certainly help the national chapter in collecting dues. I'm also very interested in forming a task committee, which probably should be the membership committee to carry out some ideas on obtaining not only new members but retaining old ones as well. Please contact me if you can assist in this very important aspect of being a member of ASA.

Several people have asked me if we will continue our two year history of a public auction in August and we certainly have a fair number of plants "on hold" to make available at an auction so

I'm sure it will be decided and various tasks given out at the cutting exchange on July 12. Certainly that auction is lively and fun for everyone, in addition to being very educational due to Don Hyatt's wonderful digital "show" of the auction plants accompanied by soothing music. The food table just groans under all of the offerings so that stands alone as another reason to attend. Due to the anticipated absence of a crucial member we will most likely want to have the auction in early September.

This week we erected 1250 feet of Benner deer fencing around the vast shade garden, much to the chagrin of the nightly deer. Stay tuned to see if the bears will be equally chagrined (horrors!) or if they'll be content to walk on by. We made them their own path so we're hoping they'll be grateful enough to take it and mosey on.

I seriously hope if you've never attended a cutting exchange, that you'll join us at the George Mason Library. There are always so many, many more cuttings than we ever need so don't fret if you have none to spare. We should have a vast array of unusual cuttings from the wonderful gardens of our members. Be sure to take cuttings from well hydrated plants, ideally the day of the exchange. I've found that putting them alone in plastic sandwich bags into a cooler generates the most successful outcome. We have plenty of experts if you need any help in the how-to's.

See you on the 12th!

Eve

Guidance for Taking Cuttings

Select cuttings from new growth found at the terminal branch ends (**avoid branches that have produced “sport” blossoms uncharacteristic of the named variety**). Collect cuttings after the leaves are fully mature, but before they turn woody. The parent plants must be in good health. A good time to take the cuttings is in the early morning. If drought conditions are present, water the plants well the evening before.

Select stems of medium diameter rather than thin weak wood. Place cuttings (4 to 6) from each plant in a separate plastic bag (identified by the parent variety) along with a few drops of water, and seal it to retain 100% humidity inside. Print the name of the plant variety on the outside of the bag, along with a short description of the plant. Avoid overheating of cuttings from direct sunlight.

Cuttings should be stuck in the rooting medium as soon as possible after taking the cuttings, but they can be stored in a closed container in the refrigerator for up to a week.

Any mixture of rooting material that is sterile, holds moisture, and is well aerated should produce satisfactory results. One effective medium consists of 50% coarse sphagnum peat moss and 50% perlite by volume. After mixing thoroughly, wet it completely with plenty of water. Press out excess water after soaking has taken place.

The container should be sterile when the medium is put in it. Cut-off milk or water jugs, sterilized flowerpots, or any plastic container may be used, as long as you can get **several inches of medium depth and coverage by a plastic bag**. The bag must be air tight to maintain the required 100% humidity on the rooted cuttings. Spraying the entire surface of the medium and the cuttings with a broad-spectrum fungicide will prevent mold and algae from growing on the surface.

Prepare the cuttings for the rooting medium by stripping the leaves from the lower half of the cutting and pinching off the tip to prevent flowering and to foster branching. Dip the cuttings in a rooting hormone. If a liquid hormone is used, immerse cutting

stems for 5 seconds. If the talc is used immerse to one inch and then tap to remove excess material. Place the cuttings in the medium about two inches apart, and don't forget to label them!

Water the cuttings lightly after placing them to settle the medium around the roots. Since the sealed cover maintains 100% humidity, the cuttings do not need to be watered until roots develop. Place the container in good light, but not direct sunlight.

Suggestions for placing the rooted cuttings in separate pots will be included in our next issue .

ASA 2009 Convention

The success of this convention can be wholly attributed to those who contributed their resources, time, and talents in the planning and execution phases of the convention.

In her letter (page 1), Eve paid tribute to committee members who really gave so much effort in this undertaking by our chapter.

I, personally, give my great appreciation to all the committee members who attended our planning meetings so faithfully and varied out their parts with dedication and earnestness. Everything ran so smoothly during the convention that I felt my job as chair was over with. I guess that is how it should be!

I want to mention, also, how gracious Bob Warhurst (owner of Merrifield Garden Center) was in allowing us to use his new greenhouse in Gainesville for our committee meetings. They accommodated us by setting up tables and chairs inside their massive greenhouse each time for our meetings, all of this with no charge. (They also contributed some money to help us finance the convention.)

Phil Louer, Chair 2009 ASA Convention

Directions to George Mason Branch Library

The George Mason Branch Library is located at 7001 Little River Turnpike (Route 236) in Annandale, VA. It is on the south side of Little River Turnpike at the intersection of **Hillbrook Dr.** to the south and **Evergreen Lane** to the north — between the Capital Beltway, I-495, and the Shirley Highway, I-395.

- ♦ **From the Beltway I-495:** go east on Route 236 about 1.70 miles to Hillbrook; the library is on the right at the corner.
- ♦ **From Shirley Hwy. I-395:** go west about 2.75 miles to Hillbrook. Turn left to the library on the corner.

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