

April 2008



# The Azalea Clipper

Northern Virginia Chapter, Azalea Society of America

Volume 29, Issue 2



## Chapter Picnic Event, *Hosts—Leslie and David Nanney*

### April 2008

Su	M	Tu	We	Th	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
<b>27</b>	28	29	30			

*April 27th-- at  
1:00 P.M  
Chapter  
Meeting, and  
Picnic --at  
Leslie and  
Dave  
Nanney's  
Home  
Directions on  
page three*

We will hold our next meeting on **27 April at 1 p.m. at Dave and Leslie Nanney's house.** We will be having a **picnic** to replace the Christmas party, which was pre-empted by the weather. We will also have the opportunity to enjoy their garden, which will be on the garden tours for the 2009 convention.

Members are asked to bring a favorite dish to share. For more information, see the President's column on page two.

Directions to the Nanney's home are on page three.

### AZALEA SOCIETY OF AMERICA NATIONAL CONVENTION

A number of our members are attending the ASA national convention will be held in Asheville, NC on May 1-4. Northern Virginia Chapter members Joe Klimavicz and Dan Krabill will be featured speakers at the convention.

### PLANT SALE FUNDRAISER

We will be holding a fundraiser 9-11 May, selling azaleas at the Blandy Arboretum <http://www.virginia.edu/blandy>. The location is 1 mile east of 340 off route 50. The Blandy Experimental Farm is a part of the Virginia Arboretum there, outside White Post, Va.

It begins Friday May 9 from 5 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. and all day Sat. and Sun. from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is \$10/car. It is located in a beautiful bucolic setting of meadows and fields and has lots of plant vendors as well as food vendors. It is very well attended and stocked with all manner of plant material.

We have volunteers to cover the three days, however if you are available to assist, please contact Eve Harrison. The correct email is [bobnpvine@wildblue.net](mailto:bobnpvine@wildblue.net).

# From the President

Eve Harrison

A joyous and happy spring to everyone in our busy chapter! Though we had winter, it seemed so mild, that I never felt it had fully arrived. For the first time ever every single herb in my herb garden survived! The lowest we went down to was a mere 7 degrees (twice) and since we're in zone 6b that gave us another 12 degrees to get colder with no damage. Pretty strange but nice.

We met in February and were treated to a wonderful talk by Norman and Jean Beaudry, accompanied with a digital presentation of their massive gardens in Rockville. We all got lots of landscaping ideas as well as learning of different cultivars of all types of plants, not just azaleas or rhododendrons. Happily, I think folks are bringing lots more substantial "snacks" to meetings to keep us fortified for the many animated conversations that take place before and after the meetings themselves. Lots of impetus to attend, right?

Many members of the '09 **Convention Committee** met at the Louer's on April 5 and hammered out the time sensitive items with everyone having an area to research. Reports are due ASAP to Phil Louer, Rosie Field or Eve Harrison--the sooner the better! I think you'll all be very happy with the speaker menu, as they all have outstanding virtues and we will be quite proud to offer them to the convention attendees. The tour gardens should turn a lot of heads and all the plans being made for daily plant

sales, plus a plant auction, have lots of folks spending extra time nurturing last year's cuttings so we can produce terrific and affordable plants at very reasonable prices.

I'm sure you've all read of the upcoming events for *this* year including the annual spring plant sale at the Virginia Arboretum, commonly known as the "**Blandy sale**", **May 9-11**. We will have a booth of azaleas to sell for a fundraiser and will hand out brochures and membership applications about ASA. Sales begin that Friday evening from 5:00-7:30 and will re-open at 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. It is an outstanding event with tons of "field parking". It's located on the spacious grounds of the Arboretum and the vendors of all types of plant material abound! I've bought blueberries, unusual boxwoods, hydrangeas, bedding plants--just a cornucopia of plants and trees at very good prices. Of course, there is a long food "court" with many different offerings and picnic tables readily nearby.

The hugely successful **azalea auction** that was held last year was open to the public at the Fair Oaks location of Merrifield Garden Center and will be repeated this year on August 24 from 1 to 5 p.m. Again, lots of food will be available to keep everyone nourished as they place those wonderful bids for only the best of our hybrids! As we did last year, there will be a digital show with music and expert explanations of each variety before the bidding. We will again offer a large number of azaleas with set prices that can be purchased throughout the day which are not subject to bidding along with pictures and

written descriptions for each one. As you wander through your gardens this spring, *please* keep in mind that we can use plants of any size that you could possibly donate to the auction. **Take pictures with names, if possible.** It will help the chapter to sell the plants with much more ease

Since we had to postpone our Christmas meeting/party in December we rescheduled it for April 27 at Dave and Leslie Nanney's beautifully landscaped wooded lot and spacious home in Springfield. This is not a "closed society" chapter and we do hope you'll avail yourselves of the opportunity to come and see who we are and what we do! Many folks have visited and enjoyed each other's company so much that they have become "regulars" while others have brought visitors who became members immediately! This is just the best group of folks from which I've had the pleasure of learning and gardening. Everyone is so generous and ready to answer any questions. *And* there are always plants to give to visitors or members who have been absent for some time. Come see! I've ordered a beautiful spring day and you can get a preview of the Nanney's garden since it will be on the tour for the '09 convention!

Enjoy these lovely warmer weeks in your gardens! See you the 27th, really!

Eve

---

NEXT CHAPTER MEETING IS THE ANNUAL AZALEA CUTTING EXCHANGE ON JULY 13TH. LOCATION WILL BE AT EVE AND BOB HARRISON'S HOME NEAR LURAY, VA

---

# Chapter Meeting February 3, 2008

The Northern Va. chapter met on Feb. 3, 2008 at the George Mason Library in Annandale with 23 members and 3 visitors in attendance.

A business *meeting* was held during which the chapter elected officers for the coming year: President: Eve Harrison, VP: Rick Bauer, Secretary: Rosie Field and Treasurer: Dave Nanney. Rosie asked the members to give her information on local newspapers in their areas to use in sending information to about the August auction.

Members were happy to hear we had been invited back to Merrifield Garden Center to hold a second annual public auction in August. Members were requested to take pictures this spring of any planned donated plants and provide the variety in anticipation of the auction.

A discussion was held about the possibility of participating in Blandy Arboretum's annual spring plant sale and the members voted to spend up to \$1000 for plants, publicity and cultural information for the sale.

Norman and Jean Beaudry provided a very interesting program as well as slides of their eclectic gardens in Maryland with Don Hyatt's technical expertise on digital displays.

Don Hyatt also generously brought everyone planted pots of seeds of deciduous Calendulaceum and Vaseyi azaleas.

We were honored to have Jon Wallenmeyer, president of Potomac Valley Chapter of ARS, visit at our February meeting.

The meeting adjourned with the next meeting to be announced in the Clipper. The members provided a sumptuous layout of tasty dishes which everyone quickly dispatched!

Rosie Field,  
Secretary

## WISHES-

We want to tell Phil Louer, Leslie Nanney, Jim Cotter, Larry Martin and Bob Harrison that we hope their winter of orthopedic problems has passed and with spring, they will be mended enough to get out into the gardens again.

## Welcome

*To our newest chapter member*

*Lars Larson*

*We look forward to your participation in chapter activities*

## Directions to Nanney's

From I-95, go west on Old Keene Mill Road through West Springfield for about 3.6 miles to Hillside Road on the right. Turn right on Hillside Road for one block (past new houses) to Tuttle Road. Turn right on Tuttle Road to the end of the road and bear left on the driveway up to Nanney's home.

From Fairfax County Parkway, turn east on Old Keene Mill Road (SR 644) for about 2.7 miles to Hillside Road on the left (next road after Huntsman Blvd.). Turn left on Hillside Road for one block to Tuttle Road on the right. Turn right on Tuttle Road to the end of the road and bear left on the driveway up to Nanney's home.

From any other direction, find your way to Old Keene Mill Road and follow directions as above. Hillside Road is about 0.6 mile west of the intersection of Old Keene Mill and Rolling Road.

If you get lost or need help, call 703-644-5651.

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

<b>President:</b>	Eve Harrison	(540)778-1945
<b>Vice President:</b>	Barry Sperling	(703)765-7062
<b>Secretary:</b>	Jane Newman	(703)759-2574
<b>Treasurer:</b>	David Nanney	(703)644-5651
<b>Corresponding Secretary:</b>	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

## Never Put a \$5 Plant in a 50 Cent Hole

*(This article was written by Art Frazer of Columbia Nursery for his newsletter in Spring 1974. Used by permission of Anita Frazer.)*

That pithy bit of wisdom is even more appropriate now than when my Granny used to remind me, because in her day there was generally better soil, and fewer fidgety gardeners, impatient to get back to their TV's.

Always dig your planting hole 4 to 6 inches wider all around than the width, and at least 4 inches deeper than the root ball. With a root ball 12 inches in diameter, this means a hole 20 inches (12 plus 4 plus 4) in diameter. About half of the dirt from the hole (to be used in the planting) should be set aside and thoroughly mixed with 25 to 50% of fine organic material. We prefer sawdust, but sphagnum peat moss, or shredded leaves will work fine.

After your planting hole is dug, and, planting soil is mixed, shovel back 4 inches of planting soil in the bottom of the hole (this highly organic soil encourages proper drainage and stimulates growth). Better put in 2 inches at a time and tamp vigorously -- to prevent eventual settling. (I stamp in the hole with my big feet

After tamping the soil in the bottom of the hole, set in the azalea and check the height of the root ball. If in doubt, lay a stick or ruler across the hole. The most critical concern is shallow planting. Never, never plant azaleas with the top of the root ball beneath the soil level. Azaleas have compact root balls with a dense network of hair-size roots (which is why they can be successfully transplanted any time of the year). But the very fine hair roots are located beginning just a fraction of an inch beneath the top surface of the root ball -- and that is the way they must end up when you have finished planting. Perhaps half of the azalea problems I see are from planting too deep -- or settling and eventually being covered with more soil.

Next step: Begin a bit at a time filling in prepared planting soil all around the azalea-. Here's an important secret. After each inch or so of soil tamp gently the new soil around the plant. We use a "dibber" for this purpose. Any round stick 2 to 3 inches in diameter and about 12 inches long is fine. The tamping is necessary to prevent air pockets, to set the plant

When the hole is three-fourths full of tamped planting soil around the azalea; turn on the hose and fill the rest of the hole with water. This settles in the soil and waters the environs of the root ball. Allow the water to drain completely (usually 15 to 20 minutes in good soil). Then carefully without tamping fill the hole the rest of the way -- CAREFUL NOT TO COVER THE TOP OF THE ROOTBALL. DO NOT FERTILIZE till next year.

WATER: Azaleas, like all broadleaf evergreens are moisture loving -- not soggy wet, remember? On average they require one inch of water every ten days. This is usually a problem only if we have a prolonged summer dry spell. Check the rainfall in the newspaper or with an outside rain gauge, or tin can. An oscillating (back and forth) sprinkler requires one to two hours to distribute one inch of water. Set a shallow pan under the sprinkler in the area being sprinkled to check the rate of your particular sprinkler and water pressure. Don't overwater -- two inches is not "twice as good".