



The Azalea Clipper

Northern Virginia Chapter, Azalea Society of America

Volume 29, Issue 3



Annual Azalea Cutting Exchange with Cookout, *Chapter Membership*

July 2008

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We will hold our next meeting on **13 July at 12 noon at Eve and Bob Harrison's home near Luray, VA.** We will be having a **cookout**, followed by the azalea cutting exchange and a tour of Eve's wonderful gardens.

Members are asked to bring a favorite dish to share. Eve plans to have chicken burgers, iced tea, and some desert. If you can, please let Eve know what you plan to bring so we can have a varied menu. Eve also advise to bring lawn chairs and hats to keep the gnats off. Her number is **(540)778-1945** For more information, see the *President's column* on page two.

Directions to the Harrison's home are on page four.

NEXT CHAPTER MEETING IS THE ANNUAL AZALEA PLANT AUCTION ON AUGUST 24TH TO BE HELD AT MERRIFIELD GARDEN CENTER IN FAIR OAKS

PLANT SALE FUNDRAISER

The chapter held a fundraiser 9-11 May, selling azaleas at the Blandy Arboretum which 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 began 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. There were lots of plant vendors as well as food vendors, and was very well attended and stocked with all manner of plant material.

This was the first time our chapter has participated in the Blandy event for many years. We had beautiful, if sometimes threatening, weather. I, for one, can state that it was an enjoyable experience being in the foothills of the Shenandoah with a great group of people - our club members, the buying public and the other vendors (there is something very positive in being around people who are involved in plants and conservation.) The sales were even better, netting us \$2000. Special thanks go to Bob and Eve Harrison, Rosie Field, Jim Cotter, Lee McElvain, Dan Krabill, Dave Nanney, Carolyn Beck and Bob Stewart.

Rick Bauer, Vice President

*July 13th--
at 12 noon
Chapter
Meeting, and
Picnic --at
Eve and Bob
Harrison's
Home
Directions on
page four*

From the President

Eve Harrison

Hi Everybody!

Hope this finds your gardens as well hydrated as mine have been since those horrid days of 95-101 degrees! Thankfully we had had a good soaking rain before those humid baking days set in so nothing perished. Since then, though, there has been plenty of timely rain giving me time to continue to weed and mulch the many beds I have installed in the last three years.

Everywhere I look I see azaleas!!! Beds and beds of azaleas, rhododendron, ferns and other shady friends but, also holding beds, nursery beds and "baby" beds, all of azaleas! How did this happen? Silently..... after 5 years of membership in this generous, educational fun group of people encouraging me to learn to propagate and learn I did! I'm happy to share!

Those of us who were fortunate enough to attend the national convention in May in Asheville came back really inspired to put on as good, if not better, convention next May. The emails have fired back and forth with plans and ideas just brimming over. By the time you read this we will have had another convention committee meeting to tally our progress and to see what's next. Barry Sperling has generously taken his time to set up a web site showing the convention progress. It should be very informative after the committee meeting as people "file" their reports to Barry. Check it out at <<http://home.ix.netcom.com/~barrysperling/index.html>> . There is always room for someone else to help in the many areas of preparation. Give me a call

and I'll happily include you in on the preparations.

If you're not receiving a monthly email newsletter from VP Rick Bauer, please contact him at

RickBauer@cox.net to have him put you on his mailing list. He writes an excellent article and his calendar of events is up to date, inviting and informative.

I'd like to take his opportunity to invite all of you to our ridge top gardens for a cookout, garden tour and cutting exchange on July 13 from noon until.....Yes, the gardens are only 3 years old but that huge mountain in our front wn, Big Meadow, on the Skyline Drive is zillions of years old and you'll never tire of staring up at its vastness. The peace and quiet is free of charge and the friends you'll make are priceless. If you don't want or need cuttings or have any to bring, do not worry. We always have hundreds of them to share and you may snitch a few from what we have if they're not represented on the exchange table. Larry Martin, propagator extraordinaire, will be doing a demonstration on how to take cuttings and will also "stick" some for rooting in a pot using plastic bags. He also plans to give us more tips on how he's so successful including light requirements and fertilizing. You won't want to miss this as his cuttings are just incredible in just a few months' time! The directions to our place are in the Clipper and it just can't take anybody more than 2 hours to get here from just about anywhere in our membership list. Remember, Bob and I trek down the mountain to meetings many times a year so give yourself the gift of this one day of peace and fun and fabulous food and homemade ice cream with toppings! You'll be so glad you did!

Keep mulching! See you the 13th!

Eve

Taking Azalea 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.

An alternative method is suggested by one of our members. Before closing the cuttings up in the plastic bags with twist tie, spray a mixture of insecticidal soap, baking soda and light horticultural oil (3/4 tsp. each to 1 qt. water) lightly onto the cuttings to prevent fungus and kill any critters hanging around.

The next process is to stick the cuttings into a rooting medium and enclose them in 100% humidity so they can develop roots and grow. We plan to have handouts at the meeting with guidance on mixing the rooting media and ways of protecting the cuttings in the rooting media for propagation.

We will also have a demonstration on how to do this. Come listen and observe, we can always learn no matter how long we have been doing it.

Azalea Society of America 2008 Convention, by Rick Bauer

The 2008 Azalea Convention was sponsored by the Vaseyi Chapter of the Azalea Society of America and was held in Asheville, N.C. from 1-4 May at the Holiday Inn – Biltmore West. The theme of this year's convention was "Honor the Greats in 2008" and focused on local greats Chauncey Beadle, Henry Skinner and Dr. August Kehr. The Northern Virginia Chapter was well represented by Eve Harrison, Rick and Susan Bauer, Phil and Frances Louer, Dave and Leslie Nanney, Joe and Brenda Klimawicz, Jim and Nancy Cotter, Dan and Barbara Krabill, Dave and Virginia Banks, Ken and Sandra McDonald, Bill Bedwell, Walter and Sybil Przypek, and Sam and Virginia Burd.

Mother Nature generally was in our favor. Friday was a beautiful day with tours of gardens in Asheville, including the Charles Dexter Owen garden, Biltmore Estate Azalea Garden, the Native Azalea Repository at the North Carolina Arboretum and the garden at the Haywood Community College. The timing was perfect, as most of the azaleas and many of the rhododendrons were in full bloom.

Saturday was a overcast and severe weather threatened, but held off as we visited the gardens in the Hendersonville area, about 20 miles from Asheville. These included the gardens of Doley and Melody Bell with over 3000 azaleas and rhododendrons, and the Stelloh garden with its many wildflowers, mountain laurel and azaleas on a two acre hilly wooded site. We had a double treat in the neighboring gardens of Ed and Mary Collins and James

and Mary Ann Stewart. The Stewart garden, which previously belonged to Dr. Kehr has a large collection of azaleas as well as many hybrid magnolia specimens. Finally, we had the opportunity to visit the Skinner Gardens (now owned by Dot Turlington) and see the remaining stock of Henry Skinner's plants.

The more adventurous members were afforded the opportunity to view stands of native R. Vaseyi in the Southern Highland Reserve, with tours offered on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

The Vaseyi Chapter had a large variety of azaleas and other plants on sale each day of the convention. Many of our members were able to extend the variety of plants in their gardens through their purchases.

Attendees were afforded the opportunity to listen to lecturers each evening of the convention. Two of our Northern Virginia Chapter members, Joe Klimawicz and Dan Krabill were among the guest speakers. Joe gave a talk on plant hybridization while Dan spoke about the Glenn Dale azaleas. The convention was capped off by the final banquet on Saturday evening, the national meeting and the key note speaker, Joe Coleman who took us through a presentation of early to late blooming azaleas, punctuated by Zen moments. Phil Louer provided the preview and invitation for the 2009 convention, which is being sponsored by our chapter.

I think I speak for all of the attendees in saying that despite a few minor setbacks (such as

shoe leather beef at the banquet and a tour bus stuck on a narrow community street), the convention was worthwhile and extremely enjoyable. Additionally, it provided us with ideas for planning our convention. We have a tough act to follow, but I'm confident that we are up to the task.

Rick Bauer,
Vice President

ASA Convention for 2009

As you know, this chapter will be sponsoring the ASA National Convention in 2009. The location is the Crown Plaza Hotel in Herndon, VA, and the date is May 1-3, 2009.

The planning committee has been working to get a slate of speakers and a group of gardens tours. Hopefully, by the time you read this, we will have finalized most of these plans. You will be kept apprised of the progress.

Along with the committee, it will demand much dedication by all of us to get this done so that visiting guests will find it a rewarding experience. I know it is almost a year away, but please set aside the above dates and be prepared to offer your services whenever the need arises.

Phil Louer,
Convention Chair

Directions to Eve Harrison's

- ◆ Take I 66W to Linden exit. Turn left and go to light and right onto 55 toward Front Royal (5 miles). Go through the lights until you dead-end on 340 and turn left to go south.
- ◆ Luray is some 23 miles South, and go into Luray, avoiding the 340 by-pass. Go through the town (one minute) and follow 340 S. 7 miles to the Hawksbill Diner and the left.
- ◆ Turn left at the Hawksbill Diner and follow curvy road to stop sign. Turn left and then right back to the right onto Pine Grove Road.
- ◆ We're 3.8 miles down on the right between white board fences #3598.
- ◆ The drive is 3/8 mile and steep but just hold on and you'll make it. Go past the new house on up to the stone house and park. Parking is past house on left between the barn and the house as well as on past the barn along both sides of the drive.
- ◆ We'll try to have all of the burdock weeds hacked down by then so you won't be swallowed by them!

Please note, - the new house is for sale and anyone who would like to see inside is welcome.

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

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