



# The Azalea Clipper

Northern Virginia Chapter, Azalea Society of America

Volume 28, Issue 3



## Annual Chapter Azalea Cutting Exchange, *Membership*

July 2007						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	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	27	28
29	30	31				

*July 15th--  
Chapter  
Azalea  
Cutting  
Exchange,  
1:30 P M  
Directions  
on page four*

The annual NVASA Azalea Cutting Exchange will take place on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2007 at the home of Carolyn and Paul Beck. Directions to their home are on page 4. They have a beautiful garden in a very nice location, and it is well worth the trip to visit and participate in the cutting exchange.

In 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.

Directions for “sticking” the cuttings will be available at the meeting.

There will be refreshments as usual. Please check the refreshment duty notice below. ↓

*Upcoming Meeting--  
Chapter Plant  
Auction. —  
August 26th  
Merrifield Garden  
Center (Fairfax)*

**Refreshment Duty—**  
For this meeting, the duty falls to those persons whose last names begin with the letters:  
**K through P**

## From the President

*Eve Harrison*

Happy Summer, my friends! I must say this has been the most unusual spring I can ever remember in my gardening experience! The plants are somewhat confused by the fluctuating hot, then cool, rainy, back to hot and on and on....I've been ready, as usual, to start watering as there is normally a dry spell woven in the midst of the first flush of new growth, but I've only had to water well once and then the rains returned in a very timely manner! Oh yes! Did I say how grateful I am for this strange spring? Now we get to try to second guess Summer!

Meantime, the weeds have been very prolific with all this moisture so *that* battle goes on with the continuous search for oak leaves to grind for azaleas, rhodos. And the like and what to use in these new very sunny beds that will help keep down the persistent weed attempts.

While I work, occasionally admiring late blooming azaleas for the first time, my mind reflects on the magical trip to Roanoke in May to visit the gardens of Paul James. Just a few miles outside of Roanoke the road narrows and winds into country and then suddenly there are deciduous azaleas blooming all over a hillside. Had to be IT! After parking across the road and a short but steep walk up the drive to Paul's vast acreage, we seemed to break off into groups, each admiring a different aspect of this very hilly but well designed garden. Paul's 24 years of effort are reflected in many many different beds, each held onto its hillside moorings by stone walls and railroad ties artfully inserted into the hills. There are so

many aspects to this huge undertaking that one could spend all day walking as many of his 1000 acres as one has strength for. At each turn there is a new surprise: conifer beds, peony beds, stunning shade gardens, row after row after row of a tremendous rhododendron collection which transverses back and forth the hillsides. We were provided with a tasty box lunch before "The Tour" (led by Paul!) and we sat munching in the cool, dry sunny air, looking out at a massive mountain. Heaven. I well recommend seeing these gardens if you ever are so fortunate as to have the opportunity. Many members of the Potomac Valley Chapter of the Rhododendron Society attended the tour as well as five members of our azalea club.

There is good progress toward convention preparations in all aspects and things seem to be on a good schedule for completion dates so I'm excited to see everyone again for the upcoming cutting exchange. Please take advantage of this fun occasion to come, bring fresh cuttings to exchange with others. This is a very important exchange as much of it will be for plants to use at the convention in '09. If you don't have cuttings to share, please come anyway and have a fun time. We hope the new members will come and see how informative yet fun this event can be. Friendships are forged for life in this group and we hope as many folks can come, will. We so look forward to seeing you and everyone else! Bring a friend!

See you the 15<sup>th</sup>!

Eve Harrison, President

## Polly Hill; Prolific Cultivator

Polly Hill, 100, a horticulturist who introduced more than 60 shrubs and trees to U. S. gardens, died April 26 at her home in Hockessin, Del., of congestive heart failure.

From what was originally her family's 70-acre sheep farm on Martha's Vineyard, Mass., she developed extensive trial beds of azaleas, camellias, hollies and other ornamentals.

She was known for extensive record keeping of plant traits and was one of the first private gardeners in the country to computerize her records. That won the admiration of scientist and philanthropist David H. Smith, who arranged the purchase of the property and its development as the Polly Hill Arboretum. Opened to the public in 1998, it draws approximately 15,000 visitors a year.

Her husband, Julian Hill, once called his wife's trial gardens "pony's playpen," and it was there that she ruthlessly selected the best-cultivated varieties from hundreds of seedlings.

Perhaps her most significant contribution was a series of azaleas named North Tisbury. She registered and introduced almost 20 varieties, which are valued for their low growing and spreading habit, hardiness and performance in shade gardens. Three were named after her children.

She introduced 17 varieties of stewartia trees and selected new magnolias, crab apples, dogwoods and the native ~American winterberry.

*From article by ADRIAN HIGGINS  
Washington Post Staff Writer*

# Chapter Local Garden Tours, May 5 2007

On Sat. May 5 17 of us gathered at Dan Krabill's for the beginning of our chapter's Garden Tour. They have such a great garden in a lovely setting. Barbara kindly provided coffee, drinks and sweets before she dashed off for Finnish lessons. Dan was a gracious, informative host and tour guide.

We then caravanned to Don Hyatt's garden, though a strange car (looking like one of "ours") caused an inadvertent detour and a couple of members got lost and never found Don's while another finally found us in time to see this amazing storybook garden!

Don has lived in this house all of his life and has wonderful memories of the woods behind it full of lady's slippers, etc. before developers arrived years ago. His garden is lush, varied and enticing. Don answered question after question about his many cultivars and we were understandably inspired to return to our own gardens with lots of new ideas.

The caravan arrived at Tyson's Corner for a great anticipated T.J.Friday's lunch but discovered (horrors!) it had moved and we were left to change course in choices with Chinese.

The day seemed to cool measurably and then spatter rain but luckily most of us brought gear and we slogged through Joe Klimavicz's amazing garden, continually mesmerized by his explanations of his hybridization standards. A few of us received permission to "rescue" some of his plants destined for the compost pile, having failed to meet his strict requirements for hybridizing. Thanks to Lee McElvain's steady supply of plastic bags to

stowaway his castoffs, we all left with yes, more and more knowledge of hybridization techniques and requirements. Joe's plants are simply stunning in full bloom and light up his entire street!

The last leg of the tour was a 45 minute ride to Haymarket to feast our eyes upon Phran's Azalea Trails, the result of 25 ? years of azalea acquisition and culture. The word heard most often in walking the grounds was "Wow!". There was a mini-plant sale with plants supplied by Carolyn Beck and Jim Gears as well as many specimens dug by Frances and potted up. The chapter did quite well at this impromptu sale and it seems probable that this might be a good prototype for future tours!

The Louers are generous, kind hosts and worked extremely hard to accommodate so many visitors to their amazing and gorgeous property. Another property that should be on everyone's Tour list.

We all left, worn out, but satisfied at the end of a wonderful day with friends and fellow azaleans!

Phyllis Rittman

## Report on Visit to Aviv Goldsmith

Eve and Bob Harrison joined me on April 29th for a tour of the garden of Aviv Goldsmith and his wife Donna Pienkowski at their home a little south of Fredericksburg. The day was warm and sunny, birds were active and a Cooper's Hawk flew by as we enjoyed the garden that used to belong to club member Don Hager. When he left he took many plants from his extensive collection to be planted in the National Arboretum but managed to leave an entire garden's worth, nonetheless.

The Goldsmiths have been working on the garden since they moved in, clearing weeds and paths as well as transplanting. A lot of the plants were in bloom when we arrived and I took pictures, which I hope to put on next year's photo CD to be distributed to members. In addition to azaleas they were growing daylilies and fruit trees making the garden fully realized as a year-round event.

The 3 of us appreciate the offer to visit their garden when it looked so great. I hope others will take the opportunity if they extend the invitation next year!

Barry Sperling

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

# Directions to the Carolyn and Paul Beck's Home

2963 Fort Lee Street, Oak Hill, VA 20171 Phone 703-860-5676

## FROM THE EAST:

### Option One:

Route 66 west to Route 50 west up the hill to just past Fair Oaks Mall to West Ox Road north about 3.8 miles.

Right on Folkstone Drive which is the next light after Franklin Farm Road.

Right on Fort Lee Street at the second stop sign.

Our house is the third on the left, down a long concrete paved drive

### Option Two:

Dulles Toll Road/267 west to Reston Parkway south, passing lights at South Lakes, Glade Ave, Fox Mill, and Lawyers Road.

Left at the light onto Folkstone Drive, etc. as above.

## FROM THE WEST:

Route 66 east to Fairfax County Parkway/7100 north,

crossing over Route 50 and passing several lights to Right/east onto Franklin Farm Road to the next light.

Left onto West Ox Road to the next light.

Right onto Folkstone, etc. as above.

## FROM THE SOUTH:

From the south, take the Fairfax County Parkway and follow the rest of the directions from the west.

## The Azalea Clipper

Northern Virginia Chapter,  
Azalea Society of America



Frances Luer, Corresponding Secretary  
15800 Palmer Lane  
Haymarket, VA 20169-1808

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*AZALEA CUTTING  
EXCHANGE  
SUNDAY JULY 15TH  
1:30 PM EDT*

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