



# The Azalea Clipper

Northern Virginia Chapter, Azalea Society of America

Volume 25, Issue 6

## Pruning of Azaleas and Other Plants, Barbara Bullock, National Arboretum

Barbara Bullock will be the speaker at our November 21 meeting at Green Spring. Her main topic will be pruning of azaleas and other shrubs and small trees. This talk will be based in part on an instructional pruning workshop she and a colleague are conducting on November 20 at the National Arboretum.

Barbara is Curator of the Azalea Collection at the U.S. National Arboretum. She has spoken to our chapter on at least two occasions in the past, and conducted a tour of the azalea gardens at the National Arboretum as part of this year's ASA national convention. She will also share with us some of her experiences in managing a very large and beautiful public garden with seemingly unlimited space but definitely limited resources. Barbara will have slides to accompany her talk.

Also at this meeting, Joe Klimavicz will show slides of some of his hybrids that bloomed this past spring. Some of us were lucky or smart to take advantage of the guided tour through his garden that he provided for our chapter last spring. So far, Joe has introduced three azaleas -- Kaitlin Marie, Lovely Linda, and Sandy Dandy -- and has hundreds if not thousands more in various stages of observation and testing.

### November 2004

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				

There will be refreshments, a plant exchange, and door prizes as usual. *Please check the Refreshment Duty notice to the right to see if you should bring some goodies to eat.* ☺



#### NEXT CHAPTER MEETING

Please note our next meeting will be on Sunday, February 6, 2005 at Meadowlark Gardens in Vienna, Virginia. Doris Rodriguez, chief horticulturist, will speak to us about hostas and shade-loving perennials. She also has an interest in adding native azaleas to the collections at Meadowlark.

#### Upcoming Chapter Meetings

- ◆ November 21, 2004 "Pruning of Azaleas and Other Plants", Barbara Bullock
- ◆ February 6 2005 at Meadowlark Gardens Park (see above)

*Please mark your calendars -*



*November  
21st at Green  
Spring  
Gardens Park  
at  
1:30 P M  
EST*

#### Refreshment Duty

For this meeting on November 21st includes those persons whose last names begin with the letters:

**K through P**

For the next meeting on February 6th, persons whose last names beginning with **Q** through **Z** will be responsible.



## From the Pres *Barry Sperling*

For my last little mental-ramble ( or little-mental ramble ) I'm going to list 3 aphorisms that have been my guide since...oh, about since I ran into them.

- 1) Too much of a good thing is just enough.
- 2) When you come to a fork in the road, take it.

I'll skip a discussion of the first ( though if you've seen me around the chocolates before a meeting you know that I believe in it deeply ).

The second one is followed pretty closely. Just one line of thought tends to leave you in a rut and closed to options when new information comes around. Those of you who have followed my writings know that I've been blessed with virtual concrete as my planting medium around the house, so I've had to make my own dirt: a slow process that limits the plants I grow ( which might not be a bad thing! ). Over time, reading a lot and talking to people has altered my understanding of what the components of the dirt should be, so I keep changing the medium and am currently trying 3 fundamentally different approaches ( not counting Mike Creel's strange cuttings methods used in 5 pots on the north side of the house ). Also, I'm playing around with pruning: cutting stems at different places and on different parts of the plant. Galle mentions that growing points occur all along the stem so that it can be pruned anywhere, but I've found a couple of things that make me want to say "Yes, but..." I enjoy the "natural" look of azaleas, as opposed to pruning them tightly into a "gumball" or a shaved hedge, but sometimes pruning makes sense and I'm working through the different forks in those stems ( or roads ). Of course, the champions of the "follow every fork in the road" philosophy are our hybridizers: Bob Stewart, Joe Klimavicz and Don Hyatt. They get thousands of seeds from many crosses, evaluate them, then make backcrosses that follow even more paths for evaluation. We all get to appreciate their efforts, and I'll bet that they enjoy the process even more than we enjoy the end results! This is reminiscent of the line: "Happiness is a journey, not a place to get to."

I'm sure that we all enjoy our constantly changing gardens and would be unhappy if we couldn't "fiddle" with them!

Oh yeah, I mentioned at the top that I follow 3 aphorisms. The third is:

- 3) Never bite off less than you can chew!

See you Sunday! Barry

## Previous Chapter Meeting September 26, 2004

On September 26, the Northern Virginia Chapter of the Azalea Society met at Green Spring Gardens Park in Annandale.

President Barry Sperling conducted a short business meeting. He mentioned that the National Arboretum was planning a 50th Anniversary event for the Morrison Azalea Garden on September 28 for those who may be able to attend. Don Hyatt also announced that the Rhododendron Society Banquet was to be held on October 9 and that all of our members were invited to participate in that event.

In connection with convention planning, Barry suggested that members might want to consider photographing their gardens for possible use in publicizing the role of azaleas in the home landscape. He felt that such photos in a CD format might make a nice way to introduce convention attendees to the gardens in this area.

Librarian Rick Horan discussed some new azalea books that he thought would make good additions to the Chapter's library. Following discussion, a motion was made and approved to authorize him to purchase the recommended publications.

Following the business portion of the gathering, those attending were treated to an excellent presentation by Dan Krabill featuring the Glenn Dales. He had prepared a CD, which he distributed to all those in attendance, containing photos of many of the Glenn Dales in his azalea collection. The program included a viewing of the pictures from the CD, which, with his narrative - along with audience questions and comments - made the program interesting and informative. Dan indicated that he would be updating the CD from time to time. Everyone really appreciated the time and planning he put into preparing this program and the disk. Thanks Dan.

As usual there was a nice selection of refreshments before and after the meeting. We all thank Alice Pearson for making this part of our meetings a pleasant opportunity for members to mingle and visit.

Lee McElvain, Secretary

This last summer, Timber Press provided the Chapter with a review copy of the book **“Success With Rhododendrons and Azaleas, Revised Edition”** by **H. Edward Reiley** for our review. Eve Harrison graciously agreed to perform this review and the full text of her review is included below. Eve enthusiastically recommends this book. Copies of this review are being forwarded to Timber Press.

The book has been acquired by our Chapter Librarian, Rick Horan, and is available for use by Chapter members.

## Success with Rhododendrons and Azaleas

By **H. Edward Reiley**

Reviewed by **Eve Harrison**

This informative, well-written book kept me turning pages and making notes on the blank pages conveniently provided at the back with an ongoing sense of not being able to imagine what could possibly be around the "next corner"! The index is excellent and inclusive. The pictures are both exciting and beautiful and gave me many new ideas for my own woodland garden. I referred frequently to the well-outlined table of contents and will refer throughout the season to the Pest Management Calendar as well as the extremely helpful Good Doer and Heat, Drought and Sun tables provided.

This is the first book I've seen giving a map of Heat Zones along with the usual Cold Zones. This is quite important in choosing the right cultivar for the right site and temperature. The many zones shown in the Good Doer lists showed locations not only in the USA but Canada, British Columbia, Australia, and the British Isles.

Mr. Reiley teaches every single aspect of azalea and rhododendron gardening, leaving absolutely nothing to chance! The chapter on Plant Disorders is profound and draws one's attention to plant observation to a much higher level. The chapters on Cultural Requirements, Propagation and Landscape Uses all guide one along with easy to understand instructions.

Chapter 4, written by Don Hyatt, a well-known former teacher and current President of the Potomac Valley Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society, is an excellent reference for anyone interested in learning how to add natives to the landscape. True to his generous sharing spirit, both of knowledge and plants, Don carefully separated the natives according to Color and then listed various cultivars in each shade! He also provided an approximate Sequence of Bloom chart for his species, along with a Hardiness and Adaptability list, Fragrance lists and Size charts! Great!! One can easily feel prepared to delve into natives after a quick read of this informative, concise chapter.

How I wish I'd read this book thirty years ago when I first pushed a shovel into dirt! It would have saved me many, many hours of unnecessary labor and helped me avoid countless mistakes over the years! I highly recommend *Success with Rhododendrons and Azaleas* to anyone interested in these beautiful plants.

## Dues Payments

We all know what it is like to receive a chapter dues notice, lay it aside, and then either forget to pay or think we have paid. This is particularly the case when only one notice is received.

Membership in the ASA runs from January to December each year, and you should have received dues notices by now. **If you have not renewed already, please send in your payment as soon as possible. Please do not let your membership lapse.**

There is an old adage that goes like this:

*"Learn from the mistakes of others — you can never live long enough to make them all yourself."*

Sounds like one of the benefits of membership in the Azalea Society of America!

## Directions to Green Spring Gardens Park

**Green Spring Gardens Park** is located on Braddock Road just off Little River Turnpike (Rte. 236) between Annandale and the Shirley Highway (I-395).

- ⇒ **From I-495 Take Exit 52B (Little River Turnpike going east.).**  
Travel 3.5 miles. Turn left on Braddock Road. Park entrance is Witch Hazel Road on first right.
- ⇒ **From I-95 Take Exit 3B (Little River Turnpike going west.),**  
Travel 1.5 miles. Turn right on Braddock Road. Park entrance is Witch Hazel Road on first right.

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>	Barry Sperling	(703)765-7062
<b>Vice President:</b>	Dan Krabill	(703)534-7441
<b>Secretary:</b>	Lee McElvain	(703)536-9730
<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](mailto:plouer@msn.com)

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

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*NEXT MEETING,*  
**SUNDAY NOVEMBER**  
**21ST**  
1:30 PM

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