
Azalea Week and Show in Hammond, Louisiana¹

R. J. Constantin²
Hammond, LA

Mayor Charles McKaskle officially proclaimed the week of March 22-28, 1993 as Azalea Week in Hammond, Louisiana since (1) Hammond is located adjacent to a major nursery stock production area of Louisiana where azaleas are propagated in large quantities, (2) azaleas are grown profusely on both private and public lands in Hammond, and (3) several private formal display gardens dedicated to azaleas are located near Hammond.

On Saturday and Sunday, March 27-28, the Louisiana Chapter of the Azalea Society of America hosted an Azalea Show at the LSU Agricultural Center's Hammond Research Station. The show was designed as an educational display to let people see that many types and hybrids of azalea are available for growing and use in the landscape. Chapter members exhibited many specimens from several hybrid groups of azaleas, as well as seedlings and selections of deciduous azaleas native to the area. A display of locally bred rhododendrons was particularly impressive. Tangipahoa Parish agents from the LSU Agricultural Center Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service held demonstrations on pruning, fertilizing, and proper care of azaleas.

On March 12, a storm hit the nation, causing approximately two inches of snow to fall in the Hammond area. The snow, plus winds of 30-40 mph, caused

severe damage to the azalea blossoms. Temperatures dropped to 23°F the following day. Many blooms on some varieties were completely destroyed; however, some varieties had a few blooms by show time. The show was well attended despite the earlier snow and cold temperatures.

Plans are being made to have the Azalea Week and Azalea Show as an annual event in Hammond. Residents are being asked to plant trees and azaleas in their yards to help beautify their city.

1 Approved for publication by the Director of the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station as manuscript number 93-68-7180.

2 Dr. R. J. Constantin is Professor of Horticulture and Resident Director, Hammond Research Station, Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station, Louisiana State University Agricultural Center, 21549 Old Covington Highway, Hammond, LA 70403. □

Society News

Ben Morrison Chapter
Sue Switzer, *President*

Our last meeting was held on Sunday, July 11, 1993, at 2:00PM at the Switzers' for our annual picnic and pot-luck lunch. This was our annual meeting and the officers for 1993-94 were elected:

President: Dale Flowers
Vice-president: Nuran Miller
Secretary: June Thomas
Treasurer: Sewell Moore

Our next meeting will be held at the Dunkirk Library on September 19, 1993 at 2:00PM.

The Ben Morrison Chapter also had a table at the Homestead Gardens Crape Myrtle Festival on July 24-25. Lots of thanks to: Sue & George Switzer, Jean Cox, David Radcliffe, June Thomas, Margaret Church and Bob & Bee Hobbs for manning the table. Thanks also to William C. Miller III for loaning us his "What's bugging your azaleas" poster. We have been invited back in the fall again to provide information and membership brochures to the public. □

Brookside Gardens Chapter
Bill Johnson, *President*

The June meeting of the Brookside Gardens Chapter was held June 7, 1993 at the Potomac Library. Bill Miller brought photos taken at the recent convention in Dallas for all to see and described a few of the highlights. He also had display posters with photos and a brief writeup on some past azalea hybridizers whom we know by name, but not by the face—Girard, Pennington, Chisholm and Merritt plus others. It was appreciated by all in attendance.

The family of Ryon Page had requested the chapter consider providing some help at the Parklawn Cemetery where Ryon is buried. Carol Allen volunteered to talk to the Administration and see what could be done. Some members indicated that they would donate plants, and it was noted the Northern Virginia Chapter was also interested in donations. Parklawn indicated they would make up a permanent plaque in memory for Ryon.

Barbara Bullock presented a slide show of the azalea collection at the U.S. National Arboretum in winter and spring, prior to the clearing and restoration work along with slides during the work. The toils of Barbara and her volunteers have certainly made a difference and more volunteers would be greatly appreciated.

The annual Plant Auction to be held in early fall at the Arboretum was discussed. It has become a great benefit to both Friends of the National Arboretum (FONA), the chapter and the recipients of plants. The next meeting will be in early fall, a plant/cutting exchange, location to be firmed up in the near future. □

Dallas Chapter
Steven Brainerd, *President*

In June, the Dallas Chapter enjoyed a presentation, "Rhododendrons in Texas", by Keith Johansson. Keith is a member of the Dallas Chapter of the Azalea Society of America and Treasurer of the Ozark Chapter of the Rho-