
Azalea Week and Show in Hammond, Louisiana¹

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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.

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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-

dodendron Society. In October we plan to enjoy a color slide show of England's Exbury Azaleas in their springtime glory.

At the time of this writing, Dallas is suffering an extended drought, the first July in recorded history without any rain. I have been experimenting in my home garden with a pure pine bark planting, which is exposed to wind on the east and west sides and full sun on the north. The pine bark is aged and finely milled, individual pieces able to pass through a 1/4" sieve. Sixty yards of pine bark were placed in beds excavated eighteen inches deep in black clay soils during the 1992 Labor Day weekend. The beds are well drained by physical sloping as well as four-inch perforated PVC piping which was placed in shallow trenches along the entire length of the beds. The azaleas have been fertilized with Ironite exclusively. Water is manually applied through a hose since no automatic sprinkler system is in place. I can report success at this point without any need for peat moss additives. The only azaleas which have been lost are plants of 'Sherwood Red', which were planted in an exposed bed on the south with exposure to sun and wind accelerated between houses. Watering was not necessary from November through May due to rainfall. Watering has been necessary on a two-day interval since water rationing was instituted in mid-July. Azaleas will take dry heat to 103 degrees planted in pure pine bark if given regular watering. The pure pine bark planting provides an initial cost savings for bed preparation. Water requirements are probably higher than if peat moss were present. □

Oconee Chapter
Jim Thornton, *President*

The Oconee Chapter met April 18 in Conyers, GA. Our program included Hugh Caldwell of Doctor's Inlet, Florida, discussing his relationship with Ben Morrison and George Harding. Mr. Caldwell also presented a slide show of Glenn Dales. Ralph Bullard, a notable iris expert, presented "Iris in the Azalea Landscape".

With 27 attending, we raised \$150.00 from plant sales. Plants were donated by Hugh Caldwell, Allison Fuqua, Fred Sorg (a new member) and Jim Harris (who donated a new introduction 'Coronado Red'). A very special thanks to these people!

The chapter's next meeting was held at Dr. Ben Reid's Azalea Farm where members are asked to bring and share their rare and unusual azalea plants.

In addition, the Oconee Chapter will hold its second annual "Azaleas in Bloom" show on May 1 at the Conyers, GA, GoldKist store. The purpose, of course, is to promote public awareness and to recruit new members.

Coming up later in the year, native azaleas (presenter to be announced)

with new member George Sanko presenting "Native Companion Plants".

Our final meeting this year will bring Mary Beasley to the front, along with our annual election of officers. Dates will be announced. □

In Memory

Nancy Reynolds Gartrell died on August 13, 1993 at 99 years of age. Robert D. Gartrell chose the name of his beloved wife when naming the azalea he considered his finest—'Nancy of Robinhill'. Nancy will be fondly remembered not only by family and close friends, but also by many azalea enthusiasts who met her while visiting The Gartrell's Gardens at Robin Hill in Ridgewood, NJ, or Little Robin Hill in Wyckoff, NJ. □

Azalea Calendar

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| October 10 | Executive Committee meeting |
| October 16 | Glenn Dale workday from 9:00AM until 1:00PM. For more information contact Bill Miller (301) 365-0692. |
| October 19 | Dallas Chapter meeting, Highland Park Town Hall at 7:00PM |
| October 30 | Board of Directors meeting tentatively scheduled at the National Arboretum |
| November 1 | Deadline for receiving material (articles, advertisements, and chapter news) for the December issue of THE AZALEAN |
| November 20 | Glenn Dale workday from 9:00AM until 1:00PM. For more information contact Bill Miller (301) 365-0692. |

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| April 28, 29, 30 | ASA Convention and Annual Meeting in Richmond, VA |
| June 18 | A "Palette of Garden Arts" is presented for the public's enjoyment by The Aptuxet Garden Club of Bourne, from 10:00 AM until 5:00 PM. A tour of Cape Cod gardens is combined with "objects d'art" in homes enhanced by floral designs. Morning coffee, as well as, afternoon tea will be served, and unusual gifts are to be offered in our Boutique. Tickets are \$10.00, \$8.00 in advance with a self-addressed stamped envelope, which will benefit Civic Projects and may be purchased by writing P. O. Box 545, Pocasset, MA 02559-0545, or by telephoning (508) 563-2739. |