

in six packs so long.) Anyway, a crack team of azalea potters (Tom Anderson, Ruth and Frank Bryan, Gail and Chan Schmalz and I) was formed, and on April 2 off we went.

We potted about 2,000 azaleas, and we didn't even make a dent. Maybe, hopefully, at our April meeting, we can get up another team and at our cuttings swap, in June, which is going to be at the Hesters anyway, we could go early and stay a little later and do more potting. They would appreciate the help. Think about it!

If you bought the new Encore azaleas last fall, let me know how they fared during the last cold (18 degree F) spell. Three of mine, 'Rouge', 'Embers' and 'Amethyst', got hit pretty hard.

Jim Thornton, Public Relations and Membership

Members' News

Jim Thornton has been on the tour circuit lately, having a great time and hopefully bringing in some new members. Recently, he was invited to speak at both the Rockdale and Newton County Extension Offices to talk about azaleas. The presentation was a slide presentation of various azaleas and gardens. He has been invited back to talk about how to propagate azaleas in June.

If any of you have an occasion to speak or participate in these types of activities, please let us know so we can blow your horn! Besides, we need to let groups know we're available, and we need the visibility.

We just heard that Ben Reid is recovering from open heart surgery...five by-passes. He is doing great and Jim Thornton told him that we look forward to seeing his smiling face at meetings again.

We now have an azalea to name in honor of Ralph Bullard. It's a seedling grown by at-large member of the

ASA and member of the ARS, Earl Sommerville. Earl has promised to take cuttings for us and the local ARS Chapter this summer. We look forward to getting these plants and start sharing. (Don't forget to register that plant with Jay Murray!)

Transplant Nursery, the site of the next meeting, has a web site (http://transplant-nursery.com.trans_main.ntml). It consists of their catalog of bloom time, native azaleas, rhododendron, evergreen azaleas, camellias, and companion plants.

Azalea Society of America Minutes of the Business Meeting Tysons Corner, McLean, Virginia May 2, 1998

The evening started with a social hour and after a delicious dinner, Harry Weiskittel gave the keynote talk about the Marshy Point Nursery and his hybridizing hobby. After a five-minute break, Joe Klimavicz resumed the proceedings and thanked all the garden hosts and chapter workers for their marvelous work. (Secretary's note: many marveled at the planning around D.C. traffic.) He then turned the meeting over to the President, Jim Thornton, for the business meeting. Jim congratulated Joe, his team and the Northern Virginia Chapter for a job well done.

Bob Hobbs announced that there was a tie for the award for best article in **THE AZALEAN** for 1997. The winners were Alice Holland for "How It All Began" and Dr. Kathleen Kron for "Identifying the Native Azaleas".

Bill McIntosh has resigned as the Society Secretary and will be greatly missed. Ruth Bryan was introduced as the new secretary. Art Vance will maintain the Society's data base and the slide library. Charles Owen has stepped down as a director and Maarten van der Giessen has joined the board of directors in Doctor Owen's place. A biography of Maarten follows these minutes.

Bob and Belinda Hobbs are retiring as editor and associate editor of **THE AZALEAN** after ten years of invaluable service. The big job of finding a new editor is in progress. An editorial staff will be formed to work with chapters to solicit articles for **THE AZALEAN**.

Jim stated that the Society needs membership, new direction and new image. Jim also announced a new corporate relationship with Pursell Industries, Inc. makers of STA-GREEN® fertilizer and by doing so can help towards the new direction and new image for the ASA. A recruiting committee has been formed to entice younger adults to become members. Vice President Bill Bode will chair. Joe Klimavicz, Bill Lucas and John Migas will serve as advisers. A welcome package will be re-vamped and sent to chapters to assist in these goals.

There is to be a one-time sale of complete sets of back issues of **THE AZALEAN**. Order forms will appear in a future issue of **THE AZALEAN**.

Maarten van der Giessen gave highlights of the forthcoming Azalea Society Convention to be held in Mobile, AL, April 1-4, 1999.

Ruth Bryan, ASA Secretary

Maarten van der Giessen

Maarten van der Giessen attended Memphis State University from 1976-78, and majored in Chemistry at the University of South Alabama in Mobile, AL from 1979-1984. He worked for Cottage Hill Nursery; Container division in Mobile, AL as Propagation, Production, and finally Assistant Manager from 1985 to 1990. In 1990 he left Cottage Hill to start van der Giessen Nursery, Inc. in Semmes, AL with his father, Peter, where he is currently Vice-President and manager.

Van der Giessen Nursery is a seven-acre greenhouse operation producing a wide range of ornamental liners for

the wholesale trade. Currently, they are producing approximately one and a half million liners and rooted cuttings annually. The nursery leased a 90-acre site in 1997, and is expanding into the container market.

Maarten is an active member of the Azalea Society of America, the American Rhododendron Society, the International Plant Propagators Society, and Past President of the South Alabama Nurserymen's Association. His interest in "alternative" azaleas dates to his work with azaleas at Cottage Hill. He and Peter are actively pursuing ways to introduce new plants into commercial markets at van der Giessen Nursery.

WANTED !

At the convention the Board of Directors authorized several projects for us to work on and we need your help!

The first is to find a replacement Editor for **THE AZALEAN** since Bob and Bee Hobbs will be retiring with the completion of the December issue. So far we've been unable to find someone internally and we're seeking outside help, possibly from a college or university, or maybe another professional editor.

Bill Bode, our Vice President, is heading up the search and would like your input. He can be reached at 504-892-5105 or 235 ROBINHOOD RD., COVINGTON, LA 70133.

In addition to this, Bill is also heading up a new petition to gain new members. Assisting Bill with the Membership Recruitment Committee are Joe Klimavicz, John Magis and Bill Lucas. If you have any ideas, etc., please contact these guys.

About the back issues of **THE AZALEAN**...ASA Director Col. Murray Sheffield (and wife Inez) will

be distributing and collecting your money. Details will come out in the September issue.

Finally, another project I will head up is to revamp our welcome package and application brochure. In addition we plan to develop a pamphlet on the basic azalea culture. Again your input will be greatly appreciated but please hurry, we want to get started like NOW! You can reach me at 884 June Drive, Conyers, GA, (770) 483-1593 (fax same #).

Jim Thornton, President □

Chapter Achievement

Following is a list of Chapter membership numbers as of May 19, 1998.

	Members	
	Total	New
Ben Morrison	33	1
Brookside Gardens	126	10
Dallas	46	5
Louisiana	31	2
Northern Virginia	67	7
Oconee	77	6
Richmond, Virginia	31	11
Tri-State	24	1

Society Honor Roll 1998

Endowment Members

L. Malcolm Clark
Jane Newman
Don Voss

Sustaining Members

William B. McIntosh
Dr. and Mrs. Donald E. Moreland
W. T. Norris, Jr. MD

PRIZE FOR BEST ARTICLE IN THE AZALEAN—1997

Alice Holland
&
Kathleen A. Kron

In 1989, the Board of Governors authorized the editor of **THE AZALEAN** to establish an annual prize for the best article to appear in **THE AZALEAN**. The concept was to acquire through donations, a fund which when invested would provide an annual prize for the best article published in **THE AZALEAN**. Funds were donated by the following chapters to establish the "CHAPTER'S PRIZE":

Tri-State
Richmond, VA
Ben Morrison
Northern Virginia
Brookside Gardens

As stated in the September 1990 issue, the best article each year will be selected by a poll of the membership. The prize will be announced and awarded at the Annual Meeting of the Society.

The prize for Best Article in **THE AZALEAN** in 1997 has been awarded to Alice Holland for her article "How It All Began" which appeared in the December 1997 issue of **THE AZALEAN** and to Dr. Kathleen A. Kron for her article "Identifying the Native Azaleas" which appeared in the September 1997 issue. The editor and staff wish to express a special thanks to these authors for their efforts on behalf of the members of the Azalea Society of America. □