

Update from July 1999. Dr. Keever has obtained cuttings from four main hybrid groups: Robin Hills, Huangs, Holly Springs, and Back Acres. The project will add more hybrids in the future and is focusing on evergreen material initially. The big surprise about the project is how much effort and time is involved in going out to collect, then tag, preserve, and ship the cuttings. [Many ASA members probably agree, from their own experiences.] The project leaders are most appreciative of the tremendous support they have received from Maarten van der Giessen and Charles and Wanda Hanners.

Action from the ASA Board: ASA approved providing any and all support and advice about clonal lines. Anyone with cutting rights can ship cuttings to the substation. The long-term goals of the project mean that there will be research to publish in **THE AZALEAN**, and that the best performing cultivars will be promoted in the trade.

*Dr. Keever has been a teacher of landscape design and researcher at Auburn University for 17 years. Research has focused on plant growth regulation of woody and herbaceous landscape plants, and plant evaluations. Dr. Gilliam teaches nursery management and focuses his research on weed control, water and waste management, and plant evaluations. Both publish regularly in the **Journal of Environmental Horticulture**.*

Other Project Updates

SFA Mast Arboretum Announces The Ruby Mize Azalea Garden

On July 27, 1999, the Stephen F. Austin State University Board of Regents approved renaming the SFA Azalea Garden in honor of Ruby Mize, a long-time resident of Nacogdoches and a keen gardener. Mrs. Dorothy Wisely, of Indianapolis, Indiana, Mrs. Mize's daughter, has

set up a substantial endowment that will sustain growth and development of the Ruby Mize Azalea Garden. She also ensured the health of the second phase of development by giving the SFA Mast Arboretum funds this summer to cover installation of over 2500 feet of irrigation piping and risers. This immediate gift prepares the ground for the Arboretum to build the remaining Native Azalea Trail beds and a Teaching and Evaluation area along the western side of the garden. Both areas will be planted this fall. A public dedication of the Ruby Mize Azalea Garden will be held during its second blooming season, March of 2000.

US National Arboretum Washington, DC

The Henry Mitchell Cultivar Walk was dedicated on May 5, 1999. H. Mitchell was a celebrated garden writer for the *Washington Post*, who passed away in 1993. He wrote a delightful book called *The Essential Earthman*. Funds were raised in 1994 in his memory to place much needed signage into the Azalea Collection. Curator Barbara Bullock has been working to this end since November, 1998. Now six interpretive signs in the garden explain the six largest hybrid groups in the gardens: Glenn Dales, Satsuki, North Tisbury's, Kurumes, Robin Hills, and Kiusianum selections. Eleven sand-blasted redwood signs, with "Mitchell Walk," a carved azalea flower, and an arrow direct visitors through the garden. One large interpretive sign, with a photo of a Glenn Dale azalea, defines the concept of "cultivar group."

The dedication, held in the Frederic P. Lee Garden, was a wonderful affair, attended by 70 friends and family members of Mr. Mitchell. The weather was perfect, after a long, dry, cool spring, and so the azalea blooms were at their peak.

A Special THANK YOU

From North Beach, Maryland

Bee and I (as associate editor and editor) wish to express our thanks to all of those special people, without whom **THE AZALEAN** would not have been of the quality it achieved over the past ten years.

Thank you Don Voss and Jane Newman who read, in the early stages of production, nearly every issue that we edited from January 1989 until March 1999. George Switzer did the same for the first seven years that we were involved. They provided horticultural insight and corrections, as well as spelling, grammatical, and style suggestions without which **THE AZALEAN** would have been much different. They often found problems that we never would have found before going to press. These talented and helpful people even came up with articles when we were in desperate need of them.

We also want to thank Bill Miller. Bill had the last chance at reading each issue before it went to press. Bill was always willing to come up with many articles when we were short for an issue. Bill was always a source of encouragement as well as a sounding board for ideas and problem resolution. The late Dick West also wrote several articles for us at the last minute to fill an issue.

Our printer, Tom Phillips, of Hour Printer in Silver Spring, Maryland, also deserves our thanks. He really did take special pains to make it right, and worked many hours with us, particularly to achieve the proper color balance for the color photographs that appeared in **THE AZALEAN**. He also worked with us to find ways to save costs for the Society and to save time for us as we became not only editors and publishers, but typists and layout experts as well.

We thank them all, as we thank all of the members who supported us with articles, photographs, helpful suggestions, and above all encouragement.

Bob and Bee Hobbs