

President's Letter

William F. Bode — Covington, Louisiana

This September issue of **THE AZALEAN** has traditionally carried an overview of the latest Annual National Convention. So, tradition being served, this is my view.

If this message were to be used as a headline for a metropolitan newspaper, it would be written as **DAZZLING DECIDUOUS MELLOW MOBILE**.

Several Louisiana Chapter members had urged us to choose Mobile as a site for our national meeting, for the following reasons:

1. The concentration of propagation and development of azaleas in the Mobile metro area.

2. The introduction of the Encore series originated by Robert (Buddy) Lee, a longtime member of ASA. The Encore series is propagated and distributed by Flowerwood Nursery, which kindly invited us to visit their enormous plantation at Loxley, Alabama -- just across Mobile Bay.

The tours, logistically, were an old soldier's dream: the transportation

was on time and comfortable, and the food was served on time and was tasty. Those on the tours were received by our hosts as confreres and in some cases old friends. No bands or pom-pom girls -- just heartfelt "Hello how are ya, glad to see ya."

The speakers or presenters were not only knowledgeable, but also refreshing. None of the rehash of old material, ET CETERA! ET CETERA! The beauty of their slide presentations was topped only by onsite viewing of those cultivars in the various gardens and nursery areas. Dr. Aromi and Mr. Dodd presented material on the development of their cultivars, while Dr. Thornton's presentation was directed to the care of deciduous azaleas, particularly in the mid- and deep South.

The general business meeting was devoted to exploration as to how the new websites would function and what their value would be to ASA. L. Malcolm Clark's munificence in including the ASA in income from Clark/Chandler Limited Partnership is most welcome. Following this, the

principal speaker, Mr. Jim Berry of PDSI and a consultant to Flowerwood Nursery, was introduced. His topic was "Commercial Production of Azaleas," which was in reality the "nuts and bolts" of how to bring new azaleas to market. Of particular interest was his description of the battle with the buying public: azaleas don't have to be pink, white, or purple.

The two Board of Directors meetings were productive, with these matters being approved:

1. Use of telephone conference call(s) for board meetings other than at the annual meeting.
2. Establishment of a Research Committee, with Malcolm Clark as Chair.
3. Consideration of formation of a group to explore increased cooperation with the American Rhododendron Society.
4. Establishment of a liaison with Auburn University to help them in forming an azalea research garden.
5. A bittersweet item: Give the Exceptional Service Award to Dr. Robert and Belinda (Bee) Hobbs on their retirement from 10 years as editors of **THE AZALEAN**.

On the Cover:

" 'CHRISTOPHER WREN' (syn. 'Goldball'): large flowers (chrome yellow, HCC 605), blotch yellowish orange, HCC 9). This is a seedling of the plant sold today [1958] as 'Altaclarensis' (syn. 'Aureum Grandiflorum') and is much superior." (REF: *The Azalea Book* by Frederic P. Lee, 1958, p. 176.) Does anyone have a source for this plant?
Photo © Robert K. Barry

Erratum

Captions for the *Rhododendron obtusum* photographs shown in the June issue of **THE AZALEAN** misidentified the plant material. The correct information, from Mr. Harold Greer, who supplied the slide material is:

Page 26, lower left corner is *R. 'Georg Arends'*
Page 26, upper right is *R. kiusianum* var. *kiusianum* 'Hanejiro'
Page 27 photograph is *R. kiusianum* 'Amoenum'

The erroneous attributions printed in the June issue were in no way due to oversights by either Mr. Greer or Mr. Voss.

The Editor