

President's Letter

Robert (Buddy) Lee — Independence, Louisiana

Well, the heat came with a vengeance this past summer. At least the afternoon thunderstorms cooled things off and kept everything green and growing, especially the lawn. After several years of drought, I said that I would never complain about the rain again. I probably will have to eat my words and start complaining just a little. Just when you think that you know everything there is about caring for your azaleas, old "Mother Nature" is always there to test your plants and your patience. Still, I'm amazed how durable most azaleas can be by surviving extreme drought one year and excessive rain the next. Three helpful tips I have found for helping azaleas survive most of these natural hardships: select the right azaleas for your area, select the right location in your yard in which to plant your azaleas, and adequately prepare the bed before planting.

It won't be long before the 2004 convention in Annapolis. Carol Segree, the convention coordinator, and the rest of the Ben Morrison Chapter have been working hard to ensure a well-planned and enjoyable convention. Many different kinds of azaleas have been rooted and will be available at the convention. Bob McWhorter, the chapter president, stated in recent correspondence that everything was going well with the planning of the convention. If you have never attended a national convention, this would be a good one to get you started. The ASA national

conventions have been compared to attending a family reunion, so come join and meet our azalea family. I'm planning on seeing you there. Look for further details about the convention in the upcoming winter edition of *The Azalean*.

Our new Lake Michigan Chapter of the ASA is off to a good start and even has a national convention planned in 2005. John Migas, the chapter president pro-tem, has been planning this convention for the last couple years. An azalea convention in Michigan that will coincide with the Holland Tulip Festival sounds like a winning combination. Best of success to the Lake Michigan Chapter as they take on the tasks of starting a new chapter and planning the 2005 convention. Keep up the good work.

Congratulations! "Selecting and Growing Azaleas," a slide/CD presentation developed by the Oconee Chapter of the ASA and the Georgia Extension Service, won first place in the slide category from the American Society for Horticultural Science. It's wonderful that all of their hard work has been recognized with this national award. "Selecting and Growing Azaleas" is a fantastic educational tool and will have a beneficial impact on azalea growers for a long time.

To all the members of the ASA, thank you for your continued support of all the Society's activities.

Azalea Society of America

The Azalea Society of America, organized December 9, 1977 and incorporated in the District of Columbia, is an educational and scientific non-profit association devoted to the culture, propagation and appreciation of azaleas Subgenera *Tsutsusi* and *Pentanthera* of the genus *Rhododendron* in the Heath family (*Ericaceae*).

Officers for 2003-2004

President — Robert Lee
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Directors

Terms Expire in 2004

Margie Jenkins
Robert Hobbs
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Terms Expire in 2005

Leslie Ann Nanney
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John Migas

Chapter presidents serve as ex-officio directors

Chapters

Brookside Gardens (chartered Aug. 1979) Dr. Charles Evans, <i>Pres.</i>	Ben Morrison (chartered May 1980) Bob McWhorter, <i>Pres.</i>
Northern Virginia (chartered May 1980) Barry Sperling, <i>Pres.</i>	Louisiana (chartered June 1981) James Campbell, <i>Pres.</i>
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Oconee Chapter (chartered Nov. 1991) Allison Fuqua, <i>Pres.</i>	Vaseyi Chapter (chartered June 2001) Ed Collins, <i>Pres.</i>
Lake Michigan Chapter (chartered May 2003) John Migas, <i>Pres. Pro-tem</i>	

Regular membership is open to all interested parties for an annual amount of \$25.00; life-membership for an individual is \$500.00. Members receive *The Azalean* and are eligible for participation in all activities of the Society including those of the chapter with which the member affiliates. For information and a membership application, write to the Membership Committee, Azalea Society of America, 1000 Moody Bridge Road, Cleveland, SC 29635.

Corrections

Ian Donovan, an at-large member from Pembroke, Massachusetts, was inadvertently omitted as co-author of the article, "The Seed is Growing—the Azalea Research Foundation", in the Summer 2003 issue 25(2): 43, 44. Mr. Donovan will be recognized appropriately as an author in the annual index for 2003.