

# President's Letter

Robert (Buddy) Lee — Independence, Louisiana

Well another year has come and gone. I hope everyone had a very productive and successful past year. May the New Year bring you health, prosperity, and many relaxing gardening activities. The holidays are over, and as usual it is time for me to shed a few extra pounds. However, with all these colorful garden catalogs arriving in the mail, it's easier for me to just sit around during my spare time thumbing through them and admire the hottest new plants instead of exercising. Well, at least I have my priorities in the right place.

This past year has been a very successful year for our Society. We now have a new azalea chapter in Alabama, the archive project located at North Carolina State University is off to a great start, and our azalea city committee granted its first azalea certification to the city of Nacogdoches, Texas. Our membership enrollment is on the increase, and our online azalea discussion group continues to be extremely active. Our journal, *The Azalean*, which is the major communication forum for our Society, has had outstanding articles. A big special thanks to all the people that have worked so hard to make all these projects so successful. If any member would like to get involved with any of these activities, you are more than welcome to join in. Just contact any board member or officer, and I am sure they will be able to assist you.

It was truly an honor for me to present to the city of Nacogdoches, Texas, the first azalea city certificate from the Azalea Society of America. Joe Schild and the azalea city committee reviewed all of the documentation and unanimously accepted the application from the city of Nacogdoches. Joe also designed an

impressive plaque that was presented to the city. Barbara Stump and volunteers from Steven F. Austin University and local garden clubs did all the planning and preparing for the actual event. It turned out to be a beautiful day at the Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden, where the presentation was given. The cool weather, the clear blue skies, and the fall-blooming azaleas all helped in creating a perfect setting. This event was well attended and had extensive media coverage. I envision this as the first of many cities that will receive this wonderful distinction. Not only does it help to promote the city and our Society, but it also brings to the public attention the wonderful attributes of our favorite plant, the azalea.

It's hard to believe it, but it is almost time for our 2005 national convention in Michigan. John Migas and the convention committee have been working on this convention for the past couple of years to ensure that all activities run as smoothly as possible. From the plans that I have heard, I am sure this will be a very memorable convention. I'm looking forward to seeing all those blooming azaleas and tulips. This convention is scheduled to coincide with portions of the Holland Michigan Tulip Festival. This will be like getting two blooming festivals for the price of one. An extra day (or more) should be scheduled before or after the convention to give more time to take in all the sights and other activities. Hope you are able to come and join in on the excitement, May 19-22, 2005.

Have a wonderful 2005.

## 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  
**Vice-President** — William McDavit  
**Secretary** — John Brown  
**Treasurer** — Robert Stelloh  
**Immediate Past President** — Joseph E. Schild, Jr.

### Directors

#### Terms Expire in 2005

Leslie Ann Nanney  
Joe Coleman  
John Migas

#### Terms Expire in 2006

Robert Hobbs  
Ron Hooper  
Tom Milner

Chapter presidents serve as ex-officio directors

### Chapters

<b>Brookside Gardens</b> (chartered Aug. 1979) Dr. Charles Evans, <i>Pres.</i>	<b>Ben Morrison</b> (chartered May 1980) Carol Segree, <i>Pres.</i>
<b>Northern Virginia</b> (chartered May 1980) Barry Sperling, <i>Pres.</i>	<b>Louisiana</b> (chartered June 1981) James Campbell, <i>Pres.</i>
<b>Tri-State</b> (chartered Oct. 1981) Robin Hahn, <i>Pres.</i>	<b>Dallas Chapter</b> (chartered May 1989) Eugene Westlake, <i>Vice-Pres.</i>
<b>Oconee Chapter</b> (chartered Nov. 1991) Allison Fuqua, <i>Pres.</i>	<b>Vaseyi Chapter</b> (chartered June 2001) Ed Collins, <i>Pres.</i>
<b>Lake Michigan Chapter</b> (chartered May 2003) John Migas, <i>Pres. Pro-term</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.