

Chapter News

Ben Morrison Chapter

Co-Editors: **Bob Hobbs** —
rwhobbs@mindspring.com

Carol Flowers —dflowers@bellatlantic.net

The chapter held its annual Christmas Party and a business meeting on December 5, 2004. They also discussed planning for chapter programs and projects for 2005. A committee has been set up of **Bob and Rosa McWhorter, Harold Belcher,** and the chapter officers **Carol Segree, Carol Flowers, Dale Flowers,** and **Dave Holmes.** Several ideas are being considered:

- Organizing a trip to Gregory Bald Mountain, with **Don Hyatt,** and **Bill and Gabrielle Scott** helping to coordinate the effort;
- Scheduling a trip to Hillwood Gardens in the fall;
- Arranging tours of private home gardens in the spring; and
- Sponsoring community projects, including The US National Arboretum, Annmarie Gardens, and London Town Gardens.

The chapter is also sponsoring a digital photo contest, for digital images to be taken in 2005 of azaleas as they naturally occur. Images can be submitted in three categories: I) close-up of azalea flower or truss, II) Scenery with one or more azaleas in the landscape, III) Critters-azalea(s)

with animals, birds, or insects. No pictures can include any people. Contact the contest coordinators: **Bob McWhorter** (410-923-6408; mcwho@comcast.net) or **Harold Belcher** (301-773-3006; harold.belcher2@usdoj.gov). Submit photo entries to *both* Bob and Harold as attachments to e-mail. Suggested minimum resolution to print a 5" x 7" digital photo is 800 x 571 pixels, and the minimum for an 8" x 10" photo is 1024 x 819 pixels. Larger files are permitted.

The April 3 meeting featured **Joe Klimavicz** from the Northern Virginia Chapter, who presented "Developing New Azalea Hybrids." Joe has been hybridizing azaleas as a hobby since the late 1980s, assisted by his daughters in recent years, and had many new azaleas to show.

Northern Virginia Chapter

Frances Louer, Newsletter Editor
plouer@msn.com

The February 4th meeting was held at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens in Vienna, Virginia. **Doris Rodriguez,** chief horticulturist at Meadowlark presented "Shade Loving Perennials and Hostas." The botanic garden includes ornamental display gardens and unique native plant collections,

including more than 20 varieties of cherry trees, irises, peonies, native wildflowers, and seasonal blooms. Conservation and plant diversity displays at the visitor center invite guests of all ages to explore and learn about the natural world. She also expressed an interest in adding native azaleas to their collections.

Oconee Chapter

Frank Bryan, Newsletter Editor
Rudie2rudie@aol.com

At the February 27 chapter meeting **Allison Fuqua** presented "Everything You Need to Know about Propagating Azaleas From Seed," and **Frank Bryan** discussed the Aromi hybrids, with slides provided by **Maarten van der Giessen.**

The chapter is engaged in some outreach activities. **Don and Barbara Bloodworth** presented the CD slide program "Selecting and Growing Azaleas" to a garden club in Forsyth County. **Frank Bryan, Al Penland,** and **Jim Thorton** are assisting Extension agent Gary Wade in developing a pamphlet on azaleas that will be distributed by the Cooperating Extension Service (CES) and on the University of Georgia CES Web site: www.extension.caes.uga.edu.

Azalea Research Foundation—It's Still Growing

by Bob Steloh, ASA Treasurer

The Azalea Research Foundation proposed by Dr. August Kehr shortly before he died and now being considered by your board of directors, just grew by \$1025 for a new total of \$3225. This growth is due to a \$1000 gift by Freda Barry in memory of her late husband Robert, and a \$25 gift in his memory from Mary M. Wise.

The purpose of the Azalea Research Foundation is to fund research into azalea problems and other azalea-related topics. To make it a reality, we need a few people to evaluate research proposals and a few other people to attract and invest the money. And it will take a lot more money, since the foundation will be set up to use only the earnings from the investments to fund the research. Please contact Bob Steloh or Buddy Lee if you can help; these are easy yet very important jobs.