

Chapter News

Brookside Gardens

Charlie Evans, President

The Brookside Gardens Chapter met periodically during 2007 at Brookside Gardens in Wheaton, Maryland. In February, **Mike White** discussed the development of the new **George Harding Garden**, followed in April by **Buck Claggett's** talk on growing and hybridizing azaleas. **Bill Miller** reviewed azalea books with us in October, and at our annual meeting in December **Tony Dove** reviewed his experiences with companion plants for azaleas.

The chapter presented its **Frederic P. Lee Commendation** to **Dianne Gregg** at the annual meeting, and officers were elected for 2008 including **Charlie Evans**, president; **Mary Rutley**, vice president; **Roberta Hagen**, corresponding secretary; **Dianne Gregg**, recording secretary; and **Dottie Murphree**, treasurer.

In 2007, the chapter had three successful spring azalea sales: one at the U.S. National Arboretum, one at the Tilden School in Bethesda, Maryland, and one at Brookside Gardens. **Judy Karpen** and **Debbie White** were co-chairs for the plant sales.

The first weekend in May we staged our 28th Annual Azalea Flower Show with **Bill Miller** serving as Show Chairman. It was a standard show held in conjunction with the Potomac Village Garden Club who was responsible for the Artistic Design Division.

In the Horticulture Division, **Yoriko Chin's** azalea spray 'Tina's Whorled' was awarded Best-in-Show. **Bill Miller** won the Sweepstakes Award for winning the most Blue Ribbons; **Dianne Gregg** won the Designers' Choice Award in the Design Division; and **Charlie Evans** won the Education Award for his exhibit on books on azaleas.

▼ Mary Rutley, right, recently presented the 2007 Frederic P. Lee Commendation to Dianne Gregg.



Photo William C. Miller III

In June, **Bobbi McCeney** hosted the chapter picnic at her home garden, and in September we held our annual rare plant auction with **Bill Miller** serving as auctioneer.

Louisiana

Dr. Allen Owings, President

The Louisiana chapter meet on Sunday, February 17, at the LSU AgCenter's Hammond Research Station. Members discussed plans for attending the national convention in Asheville, North Carolina, in May.

Chapter members **Margie Jenkins** and **Regina Bracy** are speakers at the azalea workshop scheduled for March 29 at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas. Jenkins will discuss azalea production and Bracy will provide an overview of the Margie Jenkins Azalea Garden in Hammond.

In April, a spring crawfish boil will be held at **Jim Campbell's** home in Covington. The group also discussed the Pike County Azalea Festival in McComb, Mississippi which takes place the last week of March and first week of April.

Dr. Allen Owings is working with horticulture students at Southeastern Louisiana University to replant portions of the azalea garden at the railroad depot in downtown Hammond. The garden was originally planted in the mid 1990s. **Buddy Lee** announced plans for a plant expedition on the Gregory Bald Trail in the Great Smokey Mountain National Park on June 19. Several members plan to attend.

Northern Virginia

Eve Harrison, President

The chapter Christmas meeting and party was cancelled due to the threat of an impending ice storm, which sadly did not occur. Chapter members froze their culinary offerings until a springtime picnic and meeting could be scheduled.

Chapter members continue to monitor last July's cuttings, lovingly preparing them for the 2009 convention. We were fortunate to obtain a large number of deciduous azaleas to sell at the convention, and the plants have been re-potted to grow before being whisked off to the convention site.

The chapter has been invited to hold its annual auction at Merrifield Garden Center in Fairfax, and, for the second time in the chapter's history, will again offer plants to the public. Last year's sale was extremely successful, and the chapter looks forward to an even larger bidding audience this August. Members found that having lots of goodies to munch and drink added to the festival-like atmosphere and seemed to nurture the bidding excitement.

Rick Bauer was elected Chapter Vice President, and **Rosie Fields** was elected Secretary.

Oconee

Ruth Mellon, Secretary

New officers were elected recently for the Oconee Chapter: **Ed Mellon**, president; **Keri Robinson**, vice president; **Fred Vick**, treasurer; **Ruth Mellon**, secretary; **Frank Bryan**, editor; and **James Thornton**, membership and public relations.

Texas

Barbara Stump, Treasurer

Azalea Trail tours and events have been organized all around East Texas. A few notable activities involving our chapter members and ASA Azalea Cities are:

March 7, 8, and 9—The 73rd Annual Azalea Trail in Houston, Texas, features two public gardens, The River Oaks Garden Club Forum of Civics Gardens and Bayou Bend Gardens as well as five other private gardens. The River Oaks Garden Club organizes this event, and the Web site for the event lists “organic experts” to consult, and the Texas Chapter is recruiting members at the Forum of Civics at the beginning of the trail. Visit <http://riveroaksgardenclub.org/azaleatrail.cfm> for more information.

March 14-April 6—The city of Tyler has many civic events scheduled during azalea season, from art exhibits and a bicycle tour to a flower show. The main tour dates were March 28 and 30, including a candlelight tour and party. Visit <http://www.tylerazaleatrail.com> for details.

March 15-31—Nacogdoches Azalea Trail events included the very popular “Little Princess Tea Party,” a

photography show, and the annual Azalea Symposium. Held at the Agriculture Building at Stephen F. Austin State University on March 29, the theme is “Secrets of Azalea Gardens, Old and New.” It is a chance for azalea-lovers and tourists alike to hear the behind-the-scenes stories of azalea gardens in the South.

Texas Chapter President and Bayou Bend Gardens Curator **Bart Brechter** will present the historic design of Houston’s oldest azalea garden (1926-7) and tell how he has converted it to a totally organic public garden. LSU AgCenter’s Resident Coordinator **Dr. Regina Bracy**, will present the steps she and her staff took to begin developing the new Margie Jenkins Azalea Garden at Hammond, Louisiana, in 2006. **Margie Jenkins** of Amite, Louisiana, past ASA board of directors member and master-propagator, will present ways to propagate evergreen and deciduous azaleas. **Barbara Stump** will reveal the design secrets of the SFA Mast Arboretum Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden during a guided tour.

As was the case with the national ASA convention in 2007 in Nacogdoches, this event was co-sponsored by the Nacogdoches Convention and Visitors Bureau, the SFA Mast Arboretum, and the Texas Chapter of the Azalea Society of America. For more information, call 936-564-7351.

Vaseyi

John Brown, Secretary

The Vaseyi Chapter held its Annual Meeting on November 25, 2007, at the Bullington Horticultural Learning Center. President **Doley Bell** opened the meeting by welcoming the newest member, **Marilyn Grist**. **Glenn O’Sheal** presented the Nominating Committee Report and the membership voted unanimously to elect all candidates. Glenn will fill the unexpired term of Director **Dwayne Clayburn**. **April Sanborn** and **Wes Burlingame** will serve as Directors.

Ed Collins presented a convention report. The hotel is reserved; the tours and buses are set; and the speakers are lined up. The biggest need is volunteer workers. There are jobs open in all areas, including bus captain, Bullington host, props managers, plant sale, chase cars, or assistant to anybody.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned in favor of the covered dish luncheon. As a try-out for the convention, the main dish was barbecue from the caterer selected for Saturday’s convention lunch. By all accounts, we picked a winner with the combination of pulled pork and barbecued chicken. It should be noted that while barbecue was the main dish, it was certainly not the only highlight of the meal. Like last year, the dishes overflowed two tables and each dish was superb in its own way.

Society News

National membership meeting planned

The ASA will host its annual national membership meeting at 8:15 p.m., Saturday, May 3, 2008, at the Holiday Inn Asheville - Biltmore West, 435 Smokey Park Highway, Asheville, North Carolina 28806.

The new ASA officers will be installed during the meeting. (See page 83 of the Winter 2007 issue of *The Azalean* for the Nomination Committee report.) A ballot was included in the Winter 2007 issue of *The Azalean* and must be received by April 1, 2008.

Board of Directors meetings set

The ASA Board of Directors will meet from 1 to 4:30 p.m., Thursday, May 1, 2008, at the Holiday Inn Asheville - Biltmore West, 435 Smokey Park Highway, Asheville, North Carolina 28806.

The Board will receive reports on the Azalea City program, North Carolina State University archives, and membership.

A second Board of Directors meeting will be held from 7:30 to 9 a.m., Sunday, May 4, 2008, providing an opportunity for newly elected officers to discuss any new business.

ASA National Convention
Honor the Greats in Two Thousand Eight
May 1-4, 2008, Asheville, NC
For more information visit <http://www.azaleas.org>