

# The Legacy Project

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At the 2013 convention in Athens, Georgia, two of the speakers spoke of azalea hybrids that were at risk of being lost to future generations due to the lack of a structured means of maintaining information on the hybrids and copies of the cultivars themselves. We had recognized the same problem in the Northern Virginia Chapter of the ASA. In response, we have implemented the Legacy Project as a formal means of maintaining information on hybridizers and their cultivars as well as propagating and disseminating copies of the cultivars to the general public.

The purpose of the Legacy Project is to “Help ensure the continuation of knowledge of azalea hybridizers and their plants and maintain true specimens of their cultivars.” We do this through the use of multi-skilled Legacy Teams, led by a Legacy Lead, who coordinates all of the efforts of the team. Team members with particular skills may actually belong to multiple teams (e.g., someone skilled at plant propagation or creating PowerPoint presentations might perform that task for multiple Legacy Teams.) The suggested team makeup is:

1. Legacy Lead - responsible for coordinating all aspects of the team
2. PowerPoint (or other presentation software) expert –creates presentations
3. Presenters - give talks on the hybrids
4. Photographers - record flowers and plant habit and assist in providing photographs for the database and the presentations
5. Data collectors/historians
6. Data entry personnel
7. Propagators - propagate cuttings
8. Nurserymen - raise rooted cuttings to sale size (they can be members or professional nurseries that offer the cultivars for sale)
9. Gardeners – provide cuttings from cultivars they grow in their gardens

Teams are provided guidelines to follow in implementing the program. All functions might not be performed and some additional functions might be substituted. Some of the output guidelines for the project are:

1. Biographical information on each hybridizer (e.g. education, family, reason for interest in azaleas/hybridization etc.)
2. Plant listings to include, if available (selected data entered on our chapter website):
  - a. Parents
  - b. Bloom time
  - c. Bloom description
  - d. Form
  - e. Color
  - f. Size

- g. Hardiness/performance
  - h. Habit
  - i. A short description on who/what the plant was named after
  - j. Hybridizers’ goals and rejection criteria (e.g., overall hybridization goals, specific characteristics of parent plants they wanted to capture, whether the characteristic was passed to the hybrid etc.)
3. Pictures of all the named (and numbered) varieties, if possible
  4. PowerPoint or other presentation on each hybridizer
  5. Listing of each of the hybridizer’s cultivars in member gardens and propagated for sale to the public in chapter plant sales/auctions
  6. Introduction of the cultivars to public “Legacy Gardens”
  7. Introduction to or knowledge of commercial sources for the cultivars

We have implemented the Legacy Project in the Northern Virginia chapter in the following ways:

**Public Presentations** – Members have prepared and presented briefings on our Legacy hybridizers at conventions and plant society meetings. Briefings on **Bob Stewart’s** hybrids and **Pete Vines’** Holly Spring azaleas were presented at the 2009 ASA Convention hosted by the Northern Virginia Chapter. **Joe Klimavicz** has given multiple presentations on his azaleas, including one to the 2008 ASA Convention in Asheville, North Carolina. Presentations have also been given on **Sandra McDonald’s** hybrids. These presentations help expand the awareness about the hybridizers and their cultivars to ASA members and the public.



The screenshot shows the NVASA Plant Listing website interface. At the top, it says "NVASA PLANT LISTING". Below that is a search bar with "Plant Database" and "Find Group". The main content is a table of cultivars. The table has columns for "Cultivar #", "Breeders", "Group", "Parent(s)", "Bloom Time", "Height", "Years", "Cold Hardiness", "Plant Type", and "Photo(s)".

Cultivar #	Breeders	Group	Parent(s)	Bloom Time	Height	Years	Cold Hardiness	Plant Type	Photo(s)
1	Richard Bauer	Hybrid	White	June	6'	10	USDA Zone 7	Azalea Evergreen	
2	Richard Bauer	Hybrid	White	June	6'	10	USDA Zone 7	Azalea Evergreen	
3	Richard Bauer	Hybrid	White	June	6'	10	USDA Zone 7	Azalea Evergreen	
4	Richard Bauer	Hybrid	White	June	6'	10	USDA Zone 7	Azalea Evergreen	

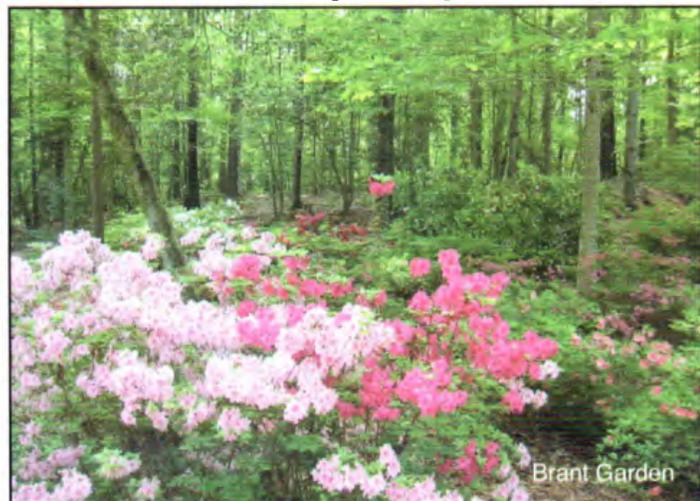
**Plant Information** – When a cultivar is registered, the registration paperwork contains a lot of information on the cultivar. We have created a database for our Legacy cultivars on the Northern Virginia website based on these documents. This database continues to grow and includes information on the cultivars as well as photographs where available. If any other

chapter wants to start a Legacy Project for their hybridizers, we would be happy to host the cultivar information on our site.

**Plant Sales** - A key component of the Legacy Project is to expand the population of the hybrids and to introduce the hybridizer's cultivars to the general public. Several years ago, the Northern Virginia Chapter started a program to propagate azaleas for use in our plant sales and



auctions. To support this goal, we feature cuttings from our Legacy hybrids at our cutting exchange each July. Our members take these cuttings, root them, and raise them to sale size. We also have propagators working as part of Legacy Teams to root and raise the cultivars of the hybridizer sponsored by the team. By propagating within the chapter, not only does this enable us to reduce our cost of goods, but it also enables us to better control the cultivars we have available for sale. While we don't limit ourselves strictly to Legacy hybridizers, we do promote them and, as a result, we're increasing the number and variety of their hybrids among the public at large. At the sales we also have information on the hybridizer and the cultivars available. The Northern Virginia Chapter is a co-sponsor of



the 2016 ASA-ARS Joint Convention in Williamsburg, Virginia. We are already starting work on identifying and propagating cultivars from our Legacy hybridizers to be available at that convention plant sale.

**Legacy Gardens** - While we haven't established criteria yet for what constitutes a Legacy Garden, it will be a garden, private or public, that contains a variety of cultivars from one or more Legacy hybridizers. We look to maintain information on the cultivars in each garden as these will serve as possible sources for cuttings. A number of our members have large private collections of Legacy cultivars. For example, the gardens of **Dave and Leslie Nanney** and **Carolyn and Paul Beck** have a large number of **Bob Stewart** and **Pete Vines** hybrids. **Joe Klimavicz** and the Becks also have many Klimavicz hybrids. The **Louer** garden has one of the best collections of many Legacy hybrids (as well as many other azalea varieties.) **Joe Coleman** of the Oconee Chapter also has a large number of Legacy hybrids in his extensive garden near Atlanta. **Jim**



**Brant**, a Vaseyi Chapter member living in Gloucester, Virginia, has a large number of **Sandra McDonald** hybrids in his garden, most of which were acquired from **Sandra and Ken McDonald** when their Le-Mac Azaleas Nursery was closed. **Jim** and the Middle Atlantic Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society worked closely with the Norfolk Botanical Garden to establish and prepare signage for the McDonald Garden at NBG, which was dedicated earlier this year. This portion of the garden features many of Sandra's beautiful varieties, both named and numbered. James Madison University in Harrisonburg, VA also hosts a number of Sandra's varieties in the Sandra and Kenneth McDonald Azalea and Rhododendron Garden at

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the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum and Botanical Garden.

Another of our chapter members, **Elizabeth Cosby**, has started a Legacy Garden as part of her private garden in Rockville, Virginia. The Cosbys have created a beautiful eleven-acre azalea garden on their rural property near Richmond, Virginia. This year they created two new beds in the garden to feature cultivars of our Legacy hybridizers. Their garden will one day be available to the general public as part of the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Richmond.

**Legacy Nurseries** – This concept is also in its formative stages. The idea is to have Legacy hybrids available to the general public through commercial nurseries. For example, one of our members, **Ronnie Palmer**, offers Holly Springs cultivars through his Azalea Hill Gardens and Nursery in White Hall, Arkansas. Our goal is to have more nurseries carry Legacy cultivars. We will have information about each nursery available for the general public through our website.

We welcome the participation and support of anyone in the ASA to help us with this project and encourage chapters to start their own Legacy Teams to capture information on local hybridizers and to propagate and disseminate their cultivars. Any suggestions or other information that will help us achieve our goals and make this project more meaningful would be appreciated.

**Richard Bauer** is president of the Northern Virginia Chapter of ASA.



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