

Chapter News

Cape Fear Chapter – by Matt Hunter

This past season the Cape Fear Chapter has completed stage one of the landscape renovation of the Azalea Station Post Office in Wilmington, North Carolina. The renovation so far has included planting many donated Encore® Azaleas, several special elm and camellia specimens, and various perennials. We plan to accomplish stages two through four over the coming years by cooperating with several like-minded community organizations (garden clubs, nurseries, and county government).

Our next event is a club social at the New Hanover County Arboretum on May 6 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. This social is open to all members and nonmembers. If you are in our area, please stop by and visit with us!

Central Carolinas – by Chris Wetmore

Upcoming events:

April 18, 8:00 am-10:00 am - Bartlett Arboretum Tour. Greg Paige, Arboretum Curator, will be giving a tour of Bartlett Tree Arboretum in Charlotte, which features a tree research laboratory and 350 rolling acres with several ponds.

April 25- Tour of Harrison Garden in Wingate, North Carolina. Chapter Members **Bob and Eve Harrison** have an extensive collection of evergreen azaleas and have been collecting for many years.

May 2, 7:00 am-1:00 pm - Public plant sale at the Charlotte Regional Farmers Market. This sale helps fund fees for speakers and our scholarship. Volunteers welcome.

May 16, 10:00 am-12:00 pm – Chapter meeting, CPCC (Central Piedmont Community College) Cato Campus. **Bob Head** of Head Ornamentals and Head's Select will give a presentation on plant hybridizing and answer questions.

Northern Virginia – by Barry Sperling

The 2014 season ended in fine style as **Barb and John Kirkwood** invited us into their Great Falls, Vir-

ginia, home for the annual Holiday Social. Everyone brought dishes to share and after the dining and visiting they settled down to business. The new slate of officers was elected with **Rick Bauer** as the new President, **Lars Larson** Vice President, and Secretary **Susan Bauer**. Treasurer **Paul Beck** and Corresponding Secretary and Clipper Editor **Barry Sperling** agreed to continue their roles from the previous year.

Income from plant sales has again allowed us to make significant contributions in three areas: \$2,000 to Green Spring Gardens for a White Horticultural Center intern, \$1,000 to the Friends of the US National Arboretum, and \$500 to the Green Spring Gardens Title I programs.

We are looking forward to an active year again with member garden tours around May 3, the Green Spring Gardens Plant Sale in Springfield May 16, the cutting and plant exchange July 19, and the annual auction on September 26. Feel free to join us for these even if you aren't a chapter member at present!

Reverend John Drayton Chapter – by Linda Wood

Each of our meetings begins with a wonderful meal together. We have some amazing cooks in our chapter, and it is always a treat to meet, eat, and find new recipes!

At our September meeting, President **Tom Johnson** gave a presentation on collecting azalea seeds, as it was the appropriate time of the year to do so.

At our October meeting, the members present shared a little about their connection to azaleas, i.e., how they came to love azaleas and how many or what types they have. It was interesting to learn about our membership and how varied their experience and knowledge is. Several members shared childhood memories of growing up with parents or grandparents who had azaleas.

In November, our speaker was Randy Howie from Hyams Garden Center and Accent Store on James Island. Randy shared his experience in the nursery setting and gave the backstory of what arrives at our local garden centers. We also began the discussion of tak-

ing a spring trip to visit azaleas in bloom outside of Charleston.

Our annual Christmas Party was held in conjunction with the Camellia Society of Charleston at the Magnolia Carriage House. We have many members in common, as the South loves azaleas and camellias!

In January, we had the pleasure of hearing **Ernest Koone** of Lazy K Nursery in Pine Mountain, Georgia, talk to our chapter about native azaleas. Perhaps we will see some of these on our proposed trip to Callaway Gardens. The group voted to send one \$1,000 to the Society to be directed to research.

Texas Chapter – by Barbara Stump

The Texas Chapter held their fall meeting at Nacogdoches County's newest lake, Lake Naconiche, on November 28, 2014. After planting azaleas and redbuds with civic groups (see article on page 93), a brief business meeting was held on site. Members were briefed on the upcoming convention in March 2015 and plant sale status. The following slate of officers for 2015 was proposed and approved:

President - **Mary Beth Hagood**

Vice President - **Bart Brechter**

Secretary - **Sherrie Randall**

Treasurer - **Don Parsons**

Vaseyi Chapter – by Suzanne Medd

On February 22, the Vaseyi Chapter had our first meeting for 2015. **Audrey Stelloh** gave an interactive slide show and led the discussion on deer-resistant evergreen plants for shade. Everyone has had deer eat different plants, so Audrey shared knowledge of which plants are the least likely to get nibbled, munched or devoured. Unfortunately, azaleas fall into that nibbled, munched and devoured category. At this time of year evergreen plants are her favorites, because winter can be so monochromatic with only gray and brown for months. There were over 200 color photos with a plant and nursery listing!

The last meeting was on November 9, 2014 at the Bullington Center in Hendersonville. Members and their guests shared a wonderful meal, then viewed the future Vaseyi Memorial Garden at the Bullington Center and discussed the fencing materials needed. Members voted to spend \$200 for the deer fence and plaque. Several members brought unusual seeds to exchange. **J and Lindy Jackson** brought a tray of beautiful seedlings that are a cross of American and Japanese deciduous azaleas.

Ten reasons to apply organic mulch around your plantings:

Holds moisture in the soil.

Discourages weed growth.

Organic mulch breaks down, adding texture to the soil.

Stops soil from splashing onto foliage.

Moderates fluctuating soil moisture temperature and moisture.

Spotlights plants.

Defines planting beds.

Lessens the impact of footsteps on the soil.

Minimizes erosion.

Creates a uniform, more attractive landscape.

By Connie Cottingham, Athens, Georgia