

Society News and Membership Renewals Due

By Paul Beck, Treasurer—Oak Hill, Virginia

ASA Membership Renewal Reminder

By this time, you should have received either an email dues reminder or a paper reminder via USPS. Your annual dues need to be paid by the end of December if your membership expiration date (as printed on The Azalean wrapper above your address) is 2016. If you have not received a renewal notice, please contact me immediately so that I may determine the reason. Also, if you use email and received a paper reminder, please contact me to provide your email address to save the ASA money.

You may pay your dues by filling out the application on the wrapper and mailing to my address on the form with your check. You may also pay by credit card online by clicking on the **Join Us** link on the ASA website. Finally, if you want to pay by credit card, but do not wish to use PayPal, you may call me directly at 703-860-5676 and I will take your credit card over the phone.

By direction of the ASA board of directors, and in compliance with the by-laws, those members who have not renewed by the end of February will be moved to inactive status, and they will not receive The Azalean or be able to access the restricted areas of the website. Also, those renewing after this date will not receive missed issues of The Azalean.

Please note that dues for our Canadian and overseas members have increased this year, due to significantly higher mailing costs for those members. There is also a new **online-only membership** option available for those of you who do not wish to pay the higher dues.

This year, I have implemented a **subscription** option for paying your dues. To avail yourself of this feature, you must have a PayPal™ account. Once you sign up for the subscription, your PayPal™ account will be automatically billed yearly for your dues. If you do use this method of payment, please be sure to keep your PayPal™ account current with a valid bank account or credit card.

Also this year, I have added the ability for you to make donations to the ASA general or research funds. Monies donated to the **Research Fund** will go 100% toward supporting various research projects. Donations to the **General Fund** will support our continuing operations of the society, and will help to keep our dues where they are. Donations to both funds are fully tax-deductible.

Update on Convention Plant Sale Automation

In the 2016 Fall issue of The Azalean, I offered the use of the automation software and hardware used at the Williamsburg convention to assist future convention plant sales. I am amending that offer to include a much simpler option if you do not wish to expend the effort to put individual tags on all plants and provide descriptions and pictures for the website. This option would have a price sheet with barcodes at the cashier's table, assuming that all plants

of the same size and type are priced the same. The cashier would then scan the sheet the appropriate number of times to record the sale. In this case, the printed receipt would list the generic plant size/type, not the specific cultivar and group as was done at Williamsburg.

Update on Chapter 501(c)(3) Status

There has been an ongoing effort for the last year and a half to obtain 501(c)(3) status for all ASA chapters as subordinate organizations to the ASA. Having that status enables members or non-members and nurseries to donate plants and/or supplies to the chapter and gain an income tax exemption as a charitable organization donation. I will not go into the details, but the IRS has denied our application for a couple of administrative reasons. Since only a few chapters of the ASA wish to have 501(c)(3) status, and the application fee has been reduced to only \$275 per chapter, we have decided to cease pursuing a group exemption and leave it up to the chapters to decide if they wish to have this status. If your chapter contributed money to the group application, those funds will be returned by the end of November. If you do not receive your refund by then, please contact me immediately.

Please note that tax exempt status is not the same as 501(c)(3) status. Tax exempt status is gained by obtaining your own EIN and filing yearly 990-N "postcard" reports. If you have completed these two steps, and your annual gross receipts are below \$50,000, you are exempt from paying income tax. The 501(c)(3) status is obtained by filing a 1023-EZ IRS form, and paying the \$275 "user fee". This is a very brief and easily completed form. The Northern Virginia chapter received its 501(c)(3) status in less than one month using this method.

The Azalean – Some Back Issues Available

Jim Thorton, while sorting through his collection of The Azalean noted that he had several duplicates. He is making the following copies available to anyone who would like to have them:

Summer 2004, 26(1) — 1 copy
Winter 2008, 30(4) — 1 copy
Spring 2009, 31(1) — 1 copy
Summer 2009, 31(2) — 1 copy
Winter 2009, 31(4) — 4 copies
Fall 2010, 32(3) – 7 copies
Winter 2010, 32(4) – 10 copies
Summer 2011, 33(2) – 14 copies
Fall 2011, 33(3) – 1 copy
Winter 2012, 34(4) – 5 copies

Anyone wishing to obtain these copies from Jim, please contact him at his e-mail: jimpatsy@comcast.net