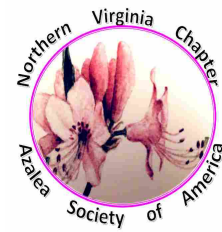


# The Azalea Clipper

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Northern Virginia Chapter Azalea Society of America



## *The Nanneys*

### *Building an Azalea Society*

by Barry Sperling

If Roses grew thornless, then two of the great private azalea collections might never have been created.

**Leslie's** mom, **Frances**, realized the children would have more fun in the yard if the thorny problem of roses was replaced by friendly azaleas. This realization, in the late 1950s at their North Arlington, VA home, ushered in a lifetime of our favorite plants.

**Leslie** married **Dave Nanney** in 1968 and they bought a house with a large back yard, in Annandale, in 1971. Frances provided many azaleas to make the house a home.

**Dave** was poking around Betty's Azalea Ranch in Fairfax when he was introduced to ARS Potomac Valley Chapter President **George Ring**. They were now formally embedded in Rhododendron/Azalea culture.

[[ Continued on p. 3 ]]

**Saturday, September 26 is being considered as the best date for our annual Plant Sale. Unfortunately, as so many other events, the Cutting Exchange this month has been canceled.**



Top-Bot,Left-Rt: Eve Harrison, Larry Martin float through Nanney Garden 2006; Central Early Bed, Sperling Garden 2020; My Mary, Bauer Garden 2020; Nanney Garden 2019 & visitor; Fawn Sperling 2020; Two from Diane Gregg; Bauer driveway 2020

## *Lars' President's Message*

As we head into summer and we are all probably getting a bit bored with the COVID-19 drill, hopefully everyone has taken the opportunity to spend some time in the garden and enjoy some time mask free! Our abundant rains (at least in my northern Virginia area) have certainly made the azaleas and rhododendrons grow! I'm not sure if I have ever had mine

produce so much new growth!

We still have our fall sale tentatively on the schedule and will confirm the event as we get closer and can have a better idea of the challenges we may have to deal with in conducting the event. In the meantime it's an opportunity to start making a "gotta have" list of azaleas you might find at the sale! Please be safe.

## *Nanneys continued*

Moving to a ½ acre in Saratoga in 1976 they became friends with hybridizer **Bob Stewart**, who gave them cuttings. A Nearing Frame **Dave** constructed successfully grew these into the next year.

The **Nanney's** further introduction to well-known breeders continued in 1980 when they met **Frank White** at **Art Vance's** house. Their 5-year-old son made a point of lecturing hybridizer **Pete Vines** (Holly Springs azaleas) on how to take cuttings and the need to join the newly formed ASA.

The **Nanneys** were founding members of the Northern VA chapter of the ASA. **Dave** has been the club's President, Vice President, and Treasurer multiple times, as well as being an ASA Director. **Leslie** has been a Director of the ASA four times, and its Secretary for eight years, also handling the Treasurer post for the local chapter once.

The family moved to a 2 ½ acre wooded plot in West Springfield in 1986, where they brought an accumulation of 500 azaleas in pots from their former residence.

Building the gardens was a joint interest. The present location was built south to north (south is by a sharp curve entering the property

off Tuttle Rd.), cutting out many small trees to increase the light within the forested property. The last area to be planted was the north end in the back yard behind the house, done hurriedly ahead of the 2009 ASA convention tour of their plantings.

**Leslie** organized the plantings by hybridizer. Back Acres and Robin Hills were some of the earliest. She plotted curving paths around the beds, near trees, and calculated space for the groups.

They currently have 110 beds. There are 1975 plants representing 155 hybridizers. The organization naturally supports the thinking of the ASA's Legacy Project. In particular, their collections of Robin Hills, Encores and Pete Vines' Holly Springs are almost complete. A major improvement has been the installation of deer fencing, now through its second winter, which allowed a great display in the spring! Of course, the work never stops. Beds, such as the Gables, are being renovated and the Klimavicz collection spread out.

While the above numbers are amazing, **Frances** and her husband **Phil Louer**, collected 7400 plants, representing 182 hybridizers, at their Haymarket, VA home. [Continued on p.4]

A Rhododendron convention in Cape Cod was the Nanneys introduction to those enjoyable gatherings. Such conventions have always been a high priority, and they try to go to several a year, which makes this year particularly frustrating.

A book could be created from the positive

comments of the people who know the **Nanneys**, but we'll stop here, for now, noting that, as their hybridizer collections reach completion and the plants grow larger, their already impressive garden will become a "must see" for azalea lovers around the world!

### *Carolyn Beck's Thoughts*

It seems like **Leslie** and **Dave Nanney** have always "been there" for us. From the inception of our NV-ASA Chapter in 1980, they have been staunch supporters, serving as officers, helping with chapter events, and supporting our group in many, many ways.

They have hosted some of our speakers from out of town.

Serving in the local and national organizations:

**Dave:** ASA Director      NV-ASA President, Vice President, Treasurer

**Leslie:** ASA Secretary and Director      NV-ASA Treasurer

**Together:** NV-ASA Librarian

We have had an opportunity to enjoy some of the many open gardens that the **Nanneys** have graciously hosted. This is an event not to be missed, as their garden boasts many azaleas representing dozens of hybrid groups, each collection sited together, which helps to facilitate study, evaluation, and data collection, allowing them to confirm identification and provide information for others to use. Finding an azalea garden so well organized and labeled is a rare treat.

After **Leslie's** mother, **Frances Louer**, died in 2013, **Phil Louer** donated all their potted azaleas (over 2000) to our chapter. The **Nanneys** were chief among the people who moved these, provided a home, inventoried, and cared for them until they were placed in one of our plant sales.

Both **Leslie** and **Dave** can be counted on to help with the preparations for and operation of our plant sales and auctions.

One major contribution that I recall in some detail is **Dave's** heroic effort in transporting plants to our 2016 ASA/ARS Convention in Williamsburg. He made 3 trips, each time carrying 400 to 500 plants in their large vehicle. For an added touch, he endured the fragrance of Holly Tone the whole way.

They have provided space and care of chapter azaleas, including several hundred **Holly Springs**, for which they are the Legacy Lead.

Both **Leslie** and **Dave** have volunteered many hours in "Potting Parties", where chapter azaleas have been moved to a larger pot.

Most recently, **Dave** joined in on the fun during our **Klimavicz Legacy Garden** work days in 2019 at Meadowlark Botanical Garden in Vienna,

*Paul Beck's Thoughts*

**Dave Nanney** has been a champion for the new website, touting its features, ease of use, and general usefulness while in the garden trying to identify azaleas. He is constantly extolling its virtues to anyone who is interested.

**Dave and Leslie Nanney** have been a valuable resource to assist with testing new website features, providing valuable feedback about usability, and finding bugs. Most recently, they were an integral part of the testing for the new convention registration web page on the ASA website. As a result, the initial software release has been very successful, and has not had to be updated during its first usage for the, unfortunately canceled, Houston convention.

They have been a tremendous

help with data entry for the azalea database. In addition to becoming a Legacy Lead for the Holly Springs azaleas, **Dave and Leslie** volunteered many hours assisting with updating the online azalea database by entering descriptions from Galle into the website.

In the many tasks performed by chapter members, **Dave & Leslie** are the lifeblood of the chapter.

**Dave** especially has worked to introduce new members at meetings and make them feel welcome, to help out with whatever task needed doing such as setup and teardown for meetings and plant sales, and also to being a regular helper at the Meadowlark **Klimavicz Legacy Garden**

*Rick Bauer's Thoughts*

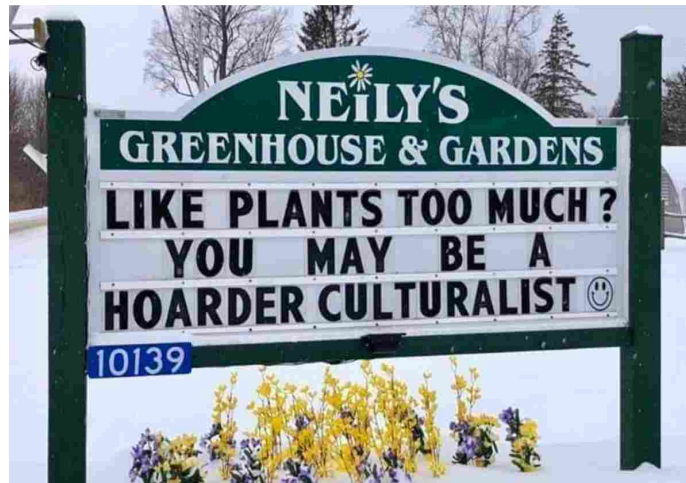
**Dave and Leslie** have been members of the Azalea Society of America and the Northern Virginia Chapter from the earliest days of both organizations. They are extremely knowledgeable on azaleas and have built an extensive garden of different varieties, including a large collection of **Holly Springs** azaleas. They are very generous in opening their garden to visitors. It was as a result of one of these visits that we became members of the society and chapter.

**Dave and Leslie** give freely of their time to support the chapter and the society. Both have served in elective positions. Most recently **Leslie** has served as the Secretary of the Azalea Society of America. **Dave** is especially good at warmly welcoming visitors and other guests at our chapter events. This has, on more than one occasion, resulted in the visitor becoming a member. We've enjoyed sharing garden adventures with them in various parts of the United States as well as Germany and Finland. We are very pleased to know them and to call them friends.

Nanney Open House April 27, 2008. Dan Krabil and Bob Harrison talk to Dave.



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## *Schedule*

{ Things being different this year, the below is tentative, and the meetings are at Kirkwood. }

**September 26** Fall Sale and Auction

**October 25** Fall Meeting with Speaker

**December 6** Holiday Social at the Beck's

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