

The Azalea Clipper

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Northern Virginia Chapter Azalea Society of America



**NEXT
CHAPTER MEETING:**
SATURDAY SEPT 20 1:00 - 4:30

ANNUAL PLANT SALE AND AUCTION

Kirkwood Presbyterian
Church

**1:30 SILENT AUCTION
2:30 LIVE AUCTION**

Volunteers needed to lend a hand 9/19 and 9/20



Debra and Mike White have developed an ideal nursery for azalea and rhododendron lovers. Read about them, and George Harding, on p. 4.



Two Big Events Upcoming

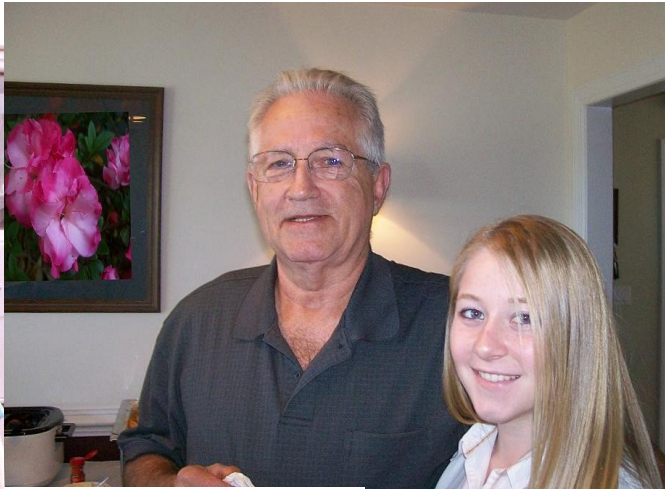
First, the annual *Sale and Auction* is a great way to get the special plants that the Big Box stores and Garden Centers don't have. **Bob Harrison** (left) makes the whole afternoon entertaining! Also, the funds support the color and size of this publication as well as providing contributions to worthy horticultural organizations in this area. **Directions** are on p. 6.

Gardening is a great exercise and we could really use some of the muscles you've developed to set up the area on 9/19 (Friday) and breakdown the remnants on Saturday. Please contact **VP Paul Davis** at padavisjr@aol.com or **703-408-7080** to lighten the load on the other volunteers.

The **second** big event is the joint meeting with the ARS on Saturday, October 11 from 11 am to 3 pm, at the Wildfire Restaurant in Tyson's Galleria. Please make reservations **NOW** as seating is limited and both clubs will be represented, hearing **Harold Greer**, internationally famous nurseryman discussing **Rhododendron Diversity**. Go to www.macars.org/Oct14Registration.html for instructions on dinner options and payments (Surf and Turf or Vegetarian, \$42), or the "Click Here" link near the top/center of www.nv-asa.org.



Top Left: Nancy Swell, George Harding, Joan Lerner



Top Right: Buck Clagett, Elizabeth Ann foreground and on wall

Right: White's Nursery, by Mike White

Top 2 photographers unknown



Cutting Exchange

Left: Jean Beaudry, Don Hyatt, Carolyn Beck

Right: Patsy Meadows, Dan Neckel, Joe Miller, Pati Gabaldoni

Photos courtesy
Lars Larson



President's Message

As summer starts to wind down and fall transplanting season approaches it's a great time to expand your azalea collection with some new specimens. One can never have enough whites to set off your colorful varieties, and if you have plenty of white, it's time to expand the color palette! Our chapter's **7th Annual Public Sale and Auction** offers the opportunity to obtain some wonderful plants from our local hybridizers. The selection is amazing, costs are reasonable (we hate to use the term "bargains"!) and information is available to help find those species you really need or have wanted to add to your garden and

landscape. There are hundreds of plants for sale and special varieties and sizes available in the auctions.

Proceeds from this event are used to fund area garden projects and also initiatives promoting azaleas.

If you haven't attended in the past, please make an effort to attend on **September 20th**.

This event is open to the public so spread the word and bring a friend. The details are found elsewhere in this issue of the Clipper. See you there!

Lars E. Larson

Rather short notice, but: **Green Spring Gardens** is having their **fall plant sale** on **Saturday, September 13th**, from 9 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Numerous local vendors will be participating, including the Potomac Valley Chapter of the ARS. PVC's proceeds will help to cover the cost of bringing **Harold Greer** here to talk at our October 11th joint meeting at the Wildfire Restaurant.

Reminder that the Clipper is a good vehicle for **requesting** plants and cuttings, or **offering** extras to the azalea community. Just send your note to the editor.

Remember that the club has a **library** and a **librarian!** Contact **Dave Nanney** at dnanney@cox.net to rapidly increase your knowledge level! Check the website for a listing.

Don't forget to check into our website where Paul Beck has done professional-level work putting up all of the information about upcoming meetings as well as pictures of plants you may be interested in (and data about them), back copies of the Clipper and more ...

www.nv-asa.org

and the national website

www.azaleas.org

It is currently costing more than \$10 per year per member to print and mail the paper copy of the Clipper. We understand if you are not connected to the internet or have a hard time reading on the computer, but if you would be comfortable reading this after receiving it as a pdf via email we'd appreciate it if you would let us know and allow us to send it to you in that manner. **(AND ... the pictures in the pdf look BETTER than they do on paper!)**

Two Nurseries And A Garden

What's the opposite of the garden section of a big-box store which has only a few varieties of azaleas and a staff uncertain what an azalea is? It's the dedicated nursery run by enthusiasts who look on expanding their selections with plant collecting trips that are closer to a vacation than a chore. The **Hanners**, covered in the last issue of the Clipper, fit that enthusiast mold exactly and now we have 2 more such nurseries to tell you about: **George Harding's** "Copper Beech" and **Mike and Debra White's** "White's Nursery" and these 2 are inextricably linked. Read on:

George Harding moved to Gaithersburg, MD in 1931 and founded "Copper Beech" Nursery on 20 acres. He enjoyed going on collecting trips and took along his grandson, Mike White.

The Public Building and Parks, known today as the National Park Service, hired George in 1933. Later he was made their head of horticulture and often worked on the White House grounds, Jefferson Memorial and other such venues. He worked for several Presidents and was responsible for choosing the National Christmas Tree in the early 1950s.

Harding retired in 1959 at the age of 55 having earned the Distinguished Service Award from the Dept. of the Interior. He took this retirement opportunity to move to Germantown, MD where he continued his nursery on 80 acres.

As **one of the founding members of the ASA** Harding was involved with azaleas and azalea people throughout its formative years. Harding collected over 1500 varieties of azaleas and rhododendrons and continued collecting with Mike all through the east, enjoying the company of fellow collectors and meeting others who shared his passion. This continued until his passing at 86 in 1990.



Three plants that are immediately associated with Harding are: a Robin Hill named after him, a Kurume that George liked that he named 'Harding's Pride' and an R. K. Beattie plant that, the story goes, George named 'Oh My' (which will be available at the live auction!).

White's Nursery was started with a 10' x 4' cold frame, then a 10' x 30' greenhouse and lean-tos. Now there are 6 greenhouses: a 22' x 48' propagating greenhouse and 5 30' x 96' ones for growing and sales. These are currently augmented by 6 cinderblock coldframes, each 6' x 40' with 4 in-ground and 2 above. They have a reliable well-water source to maintain the plants. After all the collecting experiences that he had had Mike decided to start his own, "White's Nursery", next door to George's in 1980. That has continued despite that fact that he and Debra, married 22 years now, have maintained full time jobs at the Post Office and Lockheed-Martin respectively, only retiring recently. Debra handled area plant sales and was surprised to find that she was treated as a celebrity due to her association with Harding. A trip to White's allows one to see their 250 varieties of evergreen azaleas and 50 varieties of deciduous. The rhododendron collection is growing rapidly as many are collected each year and seed is grown, including that provided by the ASA and ARS seed exchanges.

To honor George Harding's memory Mike has obtained property in Laytonsville, MD to create a garden, continuing the one started in Virginia at the AHS, and hopes to have it completed this coming spring. This will be a great destination as it matures through the years.

White's has one of the largest collections of Deciduous azaleas and Mike particularly likes 'Appalachian Gold', Weston's 'Framingham', 'Country Cousins', 'Head's Up' and 'Don's Variegated'. On the Evergreen side he prefers the Robin Hill 'Whitehead', 'Hardy Gardenia', 'Dream' and 'Amelia Rose'.

Debra enjoys 'Nancy of Robinhill' paired with 'Hardy Gardenia'. She's fond of the Satsukis and, even later in the season, in late July she enjoys the fine fragrance of the deciduous 'Pennsylvania'.

The nursery has also been a primary outlet for the hybrids of **Buck Claggett**, who, from his home in Olney, MD, produced many fine registered plants under the "Bowie Mill" designation.

Several members of the NVASA made a special trip in May to enjoy a tour of the nursery and a picnic there, a highlight of the spring!

Check out their website at: www.whites-nursery.com

From Webmaster Paul Beck:

ASA Membership Database Online

The complete ASA membership is now posted online on our [Northern Virginia chapter web site](#). Once you have logged in click on the "ASA Members" link near the top of the left menu list.

A couple of new features have been added to make viewing the full membership easier. There is now a pick list of all the chapters. By default, only one chapter is listed at a time, and that is the chapter to which the logged in member belongs. There is now also a pick list for sections of the alphabet to reduce the output and make it easier to find someone. Once you have made the desired selection click the **Find** button. You may also select **ALL** from one or both pick lists.

Web Site Bug Discovery

Unfortunately, computer bugs seem to have a way of working into all software. As our web site is getting more complex, the chance for bugs increases. In order to get them fixed promptly, if you ever discover an error and get the "The page you were looking for doesn't exist" message displayed, please contact Paul Beck as soon as possible, either by phone or email (preferred). Please make a note of the steps you were making before the bug occurred, and the date and approximate time of the error. This will enable prompt fixing of the problem before others discover it also.

pabeck@gmail.com

Directions to Kirkwood Presbyterian Church

8336 Carrleigh Parkway, Springfield, VA 22152, 703-451-5320

Kirkwood.office@verizon.net

From the East:

Rte **95** exit **169B, Franconia Rd West**, which becomes **Old Keene Mill Rd** (Rte 644) about 3 miles, passing **Irving Middle School**, to a **Right** at a light on **Carrleigh Parkway**
Make a U-turn at **Dabney Avenue**

From the West:

Fairfax County Parkway (Rte 286)
East on **Old Keene Mill Rd** (Rte 644) about **3.5 miles**, passing **Rolling Road** to **Left** at a light on **Carrleigh Parkway** ; Make a U-turn at **Dabney Avenue**

2014

Sept 20 Annual Sale and Auction, Kirkwood Presbyterian Church, Springfield

Oct 11 Joint NV-ASA & PVC Meeting
Wildfire Restaurant, Harold Greer speaking

Oct 26 Executive Board Meeting

December 7 Holiday Social

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