

January 2025 Message to Members

Chapter Members,

Happy New Year. We're ready to start a new year in the chapter and society after a successful 2024. We've got a full program of meetings, speakers, plant sales and Legacy Garden support. At the Azalea Society level, we have a great convention coming up in the Brandywine Valley of Pennsylvania. This is not only reasonably close to a large number of our members, but there are some excellent gardens on the itinerary (and others in the area which can be visited on your own)! This is one you shouldn't miss.

Hopefully, you'll be able to join us in these activities.



Chapter Holiday Social and Annual Meeting



Members enjoy a delicious potluck lunch - photo R. Bauer

The chapter held its annual holiday social and business meeting on 8 December at the Kirkwood Presbyterian Church. We had a large turnout of members who brought delicious dishes to share with other members.

A number of people asked for the recipe for the Pistachio Blondies brought by **Ralph Habegger**. Members also asked for **Susan Hedricks'** Blondie recipe from the October meeting. Both are at the end of this message.

The event was scheduled to start at 1pm. A small number of members were scheduled to arrive at 12pm to set up the room. The number of members who actually showed up early was much higher than expected and we had the room set up by 12:30. Thanks go to all the members who arrived early to help with the setup, and with the subsequent tear down. We also thank the members who attended and shared their favorite dishes with us.

In addition to the social activities, the meeting served as our Annual Meeting. The first item on the agenda was the election of officers. The following members agreed to continue to serve in their current positions:

President – **Barb Kirkwood**

Vice President – **Dave Nanney**

Treasurer – **Paul Beck**

Secretary – **Joanne Neckel**

Paul Beck discussed the chapter's finances. A copy of the report is enclosed at the end of this message. The chapter is in a good financial state with \$33,667.80 cash on hand. The membership then considered the recommended donations for 2024 and approved the following for a total of \$10,000:

\$1,000 Green Springs Title I (subsidizes garden access by low-income children)

\$7,500 Meadowlark Botanical Gardens – Irrigation (to support the Klimavicz Legacy Garden)

\$1,000 ASA General Fund (supports the programs of the national organization)

\$500 Kirkwood Church (in appreciation for them allowing us to meet in their assembly hall)

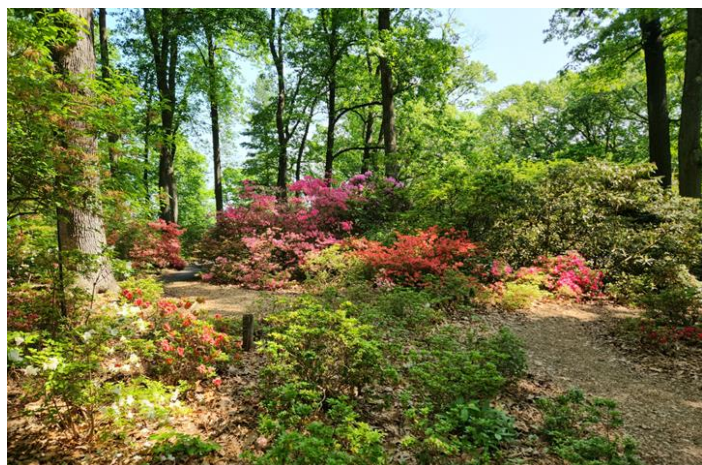
Paul will submit the donations to the designated recipients. We will include a previously approved donation of \$2,500 to Meadowlark for a total of \$10,000 to support the repair of the irrigation system to the Klimavicz Legacy Garden.

Paul also discussed the budget for 2025 which was approved by the members present.

Finally, at the end of the meeting, names were drawn from the hat for the beautiful poinsettia plants decorating the room.

More pictures from the Holiday Social/Annual Meeting are at the end of this message.

2025 ASA National Convention – Brandywine Valley, PA 7-9 May 2025



Holly Springs Legacy Garden Jenkins Arboretum - photo R. Bauer

It's time to make your reservations for the upcoming society convention in Malvern, PA. Our friends at Jenkins Arboretum in Deven, PA graciously offered to sponsor this convention.

For the information of new members, we have had a great relationship with Jenkins over the past few years and have collaborated closely with them to establish a Holly Springs Legacy Garden and also to increase their inventory of Satsuki azaleas.

The co-chairs of the convention, **Steve Wright**, and **Tara Spears** are also members of the Northern Virginia Chapter.

The dates for the convention are May 7-9. Put it on your calendar. There are some beautiful gardens on the agenda including Winterthur, Jenkins, Mt. Cuba, and Chanticleer. You can get more information at this [link](#).

Membership Renewal

It's that time of year again! Many of our chapter members have memberships which expired on 31 December. Those members in that category should have received a message from the society treasurer advising them that they needed to renew their

membership. Additionally, your membership expiration date is on the envelope containing the winter issue of ***The Azalean***.

Please renew your membership as soon as possible. We hope you renew your membership, however if you do not intend on renewing, please contact **Paul Beck** at pabeck@gmail.com so that we don't have to keep bothering you with reminders.

Membership dues are \$30.00 per year with ***The Azalean*** in hard copy, and \$25.00 for online-only access to ***The Azalean***. There are several ways of paying your dues which are shown on the society website at <https://www.azaleas.org/joinus/>. Memberships can easily be renewed by calling our treasurer, **Paul Beck**, at 703-209-2219 and providing a credit card number. You may also mail your membership renewal check, made out to **ASA**, to:

Paul Beck, Treasurer
Azalea Society of America
2963 Fort Lee St
Oak Hill, VA 20171-1812

Win-Win for all! – by Lars Larson

As with many azalea fans, we find it very difficult to toss in the trash any layering branch we find while working on our plants. Same for "volunteer" seedlings that seem to magically appear. While potting these finds and nurturing them is commendable, one is faced with the problem of a growing nursery of plants with no place to put them!

A solution is to donate them to your neighbors if you haven't already worn out your welcome with too many "gifts." Other options are schools, libraries, churches, and golf courses. These organizations normally have limited budgets and are always interested in improving the appearances of their properties.

Recently, when noticing the lack of deer damage to plants at a local golf course, the manager was asked if he was interested in some free azaleas. After coordination with the lady volunteers who maintain the course plantings, over 40 plants were donated to beautify the course areas. In the process, the volunteers and the grounds crew were educated on the planting and care of the plants. Plans are in place to provide another dozen or so next spring. Could be the next Augusta Golf Course look alike!

2025 Calendar of Upcoming Events –

Date	Event	Organization	Location
Sunday 23 March	Spring Meeting with speaker	NV-ASA	Kirkwood Presbyterian
Saturday 19 April- rain 4/26 or 4/27	Meadowlark Azalea Sale	NV-ASA	Meadowlark Botanical Garden
May 7-9	ASA Convention	Jenkins Arboretum	Jenkins Arboretum, Devon, Pennsylvania
June 5 - 8, 2025	ARS Convention	ARS	Nova Scotia, Canada
Sunday 13 July	Cutting Exchange and Member's yards presentations	NV-ASA	Kirkwood Presbyterian

Date	Event	Organization	Location
Saturday 20 September	Plant Sale	NV-ASA	Beck Home
Sunday 2 November	Fall Meeting with speaker Kathy Jentz	NV-ASA	Kirkwood Presbyterian
Sunday 7 December	Holiday Social and Annual Meeting	NV-ASA	Kirkwood Presbyterian

Garden Photos

In past years we have featured photos from members' gardens in both the monthly message and ***The Azalea Clipper***. If you have photos of your garden which you are willing to share, send them to the corresponding editor at rickfbauer@gmail.com.

Other Activities/Notes –

Photos for *The Azalea Clipper*/Facebook – We are looking for pictures of your garden to share with other members on our chapter **Facebook** page and in the ***Clipper***. We are also always looking for articles for ***The Azalea Clipper***. They can be on any azalea related subject (e.g., gardens (public or private), hybridizers, companion plants etc.). Please consider authoring an article. Contact **Rick Bauer** at rickfbauer@gmail.com or 757-771-4446 if you have any questions.

The Azalean – The editor of ***The Azalean*** relies on member submissions of articles of interest to the general **ASA** membership. If you have an article to share, send it to theazalean@gmail.com. Articles should be submitted in Microsoft Word. Illustrations are highly encouraged and should be at least 4 x 6 inches at 300 dpi.

Chapter Holiday Social/Annual Meeting



Members transforming the room – photo R. Bauer



Completed transformation – photo C. Beck



President Barb welcomes attendees and opens the meeting – photo R. Bauer



Members socialize – photo C. Beck



Dave Nanney with his door prize – photo C Beck



Patsy Meadows, Judy Shapleigh, Carol Bruch and Joyce McKenzie – photo C. Beck



Main dishes – photo R. Bauer



Dessert Offerings – photo R. Bauer



Santa John Kirkwood – photo R. Bauer



Bauers with their door prize – photo B. Kirkwood

Pistachio-Coconut Blondies (submitted by Ralph Habegger)

These pistachio-coconut blondies, accented by cinnamon and ground caraway, are inspired by meghli, a celebratory Lebanese rice pudding often made after the birth of a baby. The flavors and chewy texture of these blondies reinvent this beloved dessert.

Storage: Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 1 week or freeze for up to 2 months.

Servings: 24 (makes one 9-by-13-inch slab)

16 tablespoons (2 sticks/227 grams) unsalted butter, melted
1 1/4 cups (275 grams) packed light brown sugar
1/2 cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
2 large eggs, at room temperature
1 large egg yolk, at room temperature
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2 1/4 cups (280 grams) all-purpose flour
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground caraway
1/2 teaspoon fine salt
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1 cup (120 grams) coarsely chopped raw unsalted pistachios, plus 2 tablespoons for optional garnish
1/2 cup (43 grams) shredded unsweetened coconut, plus 2 tablespoons for optional garnish

Directions

Time Icon Active: 30 mins| Total: 1 hour

1. Step 1

Position a rack in the middle of the oven and preheat to 350 degrees. Line a 9-by-13-inch baking pan with a piece of parchment paper large enough for a generous overhang on the long sides. (Alternatively, generously grease the pan with butter, and then coat it well with flour, shaking out any excess.)

2. Step 2

In a large bowl, whisk together the melted butter with the brown and granulated sugars until well combined. Add the eggs, egg yolk and vanilla and whisk until homogeneous. Whisk in the flour, cinnamon, caraway, salt, and baking powder until no dry streaks remain. Using a flexible spatula, fold in the pistachios and coconut until evenly distributed.

3. Step 3

Scrape the batter into the pan, and top with additional pistachios and coconut, if desired. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, or until golden and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

4. Step 4

Transfer the pan to a wire rack and let cool for 10 minutes. Using the parchment, lift the slab out of the pan (if you meet any resistance, gently run a butter knife around the edges). Cut the slab into 24 (about 2-inch) squares and serve.

Easy Blondie Recipe (submitted by Susan Hedrick)

Servings 16

Calories 266 kcal

Author [Nichole](#)

Ingredients

- 1 Cup Unsalted Butter Melted
- 2 Cups Packed Brown Sugar
- 2 Large Eggs, AT ROOM TEMPERATURE
- 2 teaspoons Vanilla Extract
- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ Cup All Purpose Flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp Baking Powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp Salt

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees and spray a 9x9 pan with cooking spray or coat with butter.
2. In a large bowl, mix melted butter and brown sugar. Add in the eggs and vanilla and whisk vigorously until smooth.
3. Add the flour, baking powder, and salt and stir until well incorporated.
4. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and smooth out.
5. Place in the oven to bake for 30 minutes until edges are golden and toothpick comes out mostly clean.
6. Allow to cool completely, and then cut into squares.

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