



Camellia Columns MARCH 2017

A publication of the Virginia Camellia Society
P.O.Box 15574 Chesapeake, Virginia 23328

A Message from the President

Dear VCS Members,

Here we are in 2017, and I want to wish everyone in our society a Happy New Year! As I am writing this, we've just had our first snowstorm of the year and the temperatures haven't been above freezing for three days. The camellia buds are blanketed in snow, and it's hard to believe that in just eight short weeks they'll be in full bloom for our 70th annual show on March 11th. Historically we've been the northernmost area for Camellia cultivation, so battling the cold is a recurring theme here. While snowbound I've been browsing old *American Camellia Yearbook's*, and in the 1946 edition, an article by Mary Bell Glennan, *Camellia Culture in Virginia*, references cancelling the Norfolk Camellia show in 1934 because the temperature was 6 degrees. She then mentions a cold spell almost a hundred years ago, saying, "in January, 1918, Norfolk had a week of just above zero temperatures" but writes her Camellias which she planted in 1912, "came through unhurt". So, as always, the winter will pass, our Camellias will thrive,

and our club has many great events ahead.

Kathy Taylor-Hanson
VCS President

VCS Spring Show

The Spring Show will be held on **March 11, 2017** at the Baker Hall & Holly Room in the Norfolk Botanical Garden. Take advantage to show off your beautiful blooms, buy some new camellias and see the garden.

The plant sale begins at 10:00 AM outside Baker Hall. There will be a large selection of 1 and 3 gallon camellia plants from Bennett's Creek Nursery for sale. This is a great time to purchase a few plants to add to your collection.

Got Blooms??? Everyone is invited to bring camellia blooms to the show. Arrive at Norfolk Botanical Garden between 8:00 AM -10:00 AM to enter your camellia blooms. The show is open to all growers and we encourage novices to bring blooms. Please identify yourself as a novice grower and a member will be happy to show you how to enter a camellia bloom in the show.

Do you have a camellia in bloom that you wish to identify, then bring that bloom too and let our judges help you identify the cultivar. The Camellia Show is open to the public Noon to 4:00 PM on Saturday.

BASIC NOVICE TIPS TO SHOW YOUR CAMELLIA

Before the Show:

- * Disbud. Keep a mixture of buds of various levels of maturity.
- * Pin or trim encroaching leaves or stems away from the bud. Try a clothespin.

For the Show:

* Pick a Show Bloom. Do not be hard on yourself; they are all beautiful. Cut the stem 2" long.

* All leaves (two at most) should be wiped clean with a damp cloth.

* Select a display cup that is Complimentary to bloom size, trim stem to fit the cup. Check for ants.

Tips: Bring a pen or pre-made labels for the entry cards, a knife or pruner to trim stem, a hole puncher (in case the leaf is facing the wrong way - trim off, hole punch and insert thru stem right side up), maybe even a Q-tip to remove pollen.

Trick #1: When transporting, place a grape at the bottom of the flower stem to retain moisture.

The above is an excerpt from **Tips From A Camellia Showman** by Hyman & Evelyn Norsworthy.

Read the article in its entirety via http://www.gulfcoastcamellias.org/tips_from_a_camellia_showman.htm

Material used in this article courtesy of www.gulfcoastcamellia.org

SOUTHERN CHARM

The Norfolk Botanical Garden's Spring Plant Sale 2017 theme is Southern Charm. **May 12-14 from 10am to 5pm.** They will be offering a wide variety of plants from your favorite, to the rare and unusual that thrive in the Coastal Virginia region. If you would like to take home your own piece of Norfolk Botanical Garden, look for the yellow tag that says "Propogated from NBG Collection."

SASANQUA & SAUVIGNON PARTY AT BOB WARD'S

On Saturday November 5, 2016, VCS held its first annual Sasanqua and Sauvignon Party at Bob Ward's house in Ocean View. It was a crisp Fall day and Bob and Sally hosted the party with a great spread of wine, hors D'oeuvres, and Sasanqua blossoms. One of the big hits was Bob's garage; it's small and packed with woodworking tools but every square inch of wall, ceiling, and shelving is packed with colorful memorabilia that Bob has collected over the last fifty years. It's like walking into a time capsule", someone said. Anyone that stepped inside instantly spotted something nostalgic and familiar. Hopefully it was the same with our *Mock Camellia Show and Bloom Recognition Contest*. VCS members brought the blooms of forty-five different cultivars for all to try and identify. Kathy Hanson and Mike Andruczyk set everything up with prizes and a raffle that followed. Sasanquas are challenging, but Bob Black identified the most, Larry Barlow was second, and Toni McKenna took third place. "Maybe our top Judges do have a slight advantage!" Hopefully everyone will brush up on their Sasanquas at our next Fall show. Twenty-five persons attended including a few new members and everyone went home with great plants, prizes, and/or memories. The date for the 2nd Annual Sasanqua & Sauvignon Party is to be determined. Keep an eye for an e-mail blast or the next Newsletter for the upcoming date.

NEW CAMELLIA REGISTERED

Mike Andruczyk reported that last year he registered a new *Camellia japonica* named ANNA CELESTE on behalf of Ann Schwartz-Miller. who found it and named it after her relative.

4TH ANNUAL AIR LAYER SWAP

The 4th Annual Air Layer Swap was held at Bob and Sandy Black's house in Windsor on October 1, 2016. The weather was beautiful and Bob's home in the country was a perfect place to hold the event. Around twenty-five VCS members made the drive to enjoy the camaraderie, wonderful food, and great plants that everyone brought. Most brought Camellias but others brought, *Lycoris radiata*, *edgeworthia*, *acuba*, and *gordlinias*, a relative of camellias and member of the tea family. In addition to the swap each attendee participated in a free raffle so no one went home without a great plant.

International Camellia Society Conservation Working Group Annual Conference 2017

The ICS Conservation Working Group meeting was held in in Baton Rouge February 11-16. Approximately 30 ICS members and tag-alongs, like the Troyers, met in Baton Rouge Louisiana for an extremely busy 6-day conference. Florence Crowder organized trips to several gardens containing heirloom species, often lacking proper identification. We toured the McIlhenny factory (making Tabasco Sauce), on the way to the "Jungle Gardens" which had many venerable varieties, on Avery Island, visited the Burden center in Baton Rouge, where we participated in the dedication of an international camellia display garden started by Florence herself, the Mobile, Alabama Botanical Garden, and Rosedown Plantation, St Francisville LA, along with the Episcopal churchyard in St. Francisville, with several old specimens, and a Union Naval officer's grave, as he was killed there and requested a Masonic burial, which the local Masons agreed to provide. Warm weather meant the azaleas were blooming early, to our delight.

The next ICS convention is in Nantes, France. It will be a delightful trip – check it out on their website and consider taking a wonderful cultural trip among good camellia friends!

by Peggy Troyer

To see all the Camellia show results for the previous 2015-2016 season across the Atlantic Coast and Gulf Conferences:

[ACCS Show Results - 2015-2016](#)

MONTHLY CARE REMINDERS FOR YOUR CAMELLIAS

MARCH

You may begin to prune plants that have stopped blooming, or wait until April. Also a good time to capture your blooms with a photo! And better still, bring your blooms to the Spring Show on March 11, 2017.

APRIL

Prune to control interior growth and plant height, after plant has quit blooming and before new growth begins. Apply an Azalea/Rhododendron/Camellia fertilizer of 16-4-8, or Osmocote® or your favorite organic fertilizer. Follow fertilizer instructions. Check pH of soil. If scale or other insect problems are observed, spray plants with insecticide soap or neem oil. A prime time for air-layering. Also a good time to plant new or indoor over-wintered Camellias, after the last frost (April 15 in our area).

MAY

Also a time for air-layering. Now and through the summer, water if two weeks pass without rain. Mulch plants, away from the trunk, with 2-4 inches of pine

straw . If you want to root new growth cuttings, May through August is the best time to do it.

JUNE

Follow May instructions if you have not already done those.

Materials used in this article courtesy of the Tidewater Camellia Club.

VCS CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2017

Watch for up-dates , cancellations, etc. on our website vacamelliasociety.org or in the VCS newsletter, the garden sections of the VA-Pilot and Daily Press. (Please be sure we have your correct, current email address.)

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FRIDAY, MARCH 10, 2017
1:00 P.M.
SET-UP FOR SPRING SHOW AND PLANT SALE
BAKER HALL & HOLLY ROOM

SATURDAY, MARCH 11, 2017
10:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
VCS SPRING CAMELLIA SHOW AND PLANT SALE
NBG ROSE GARDEN HALL

SATURDAY, APRIL 8, 2017
9:00 A.M. - NOON
VCS AIR LAYER WORKSHOP
Norfolk Botanical Garden

SATURDAY, APRIL 22
9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
SUNDAY, APRIL 23
10:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
ANNUAL HERB & PLANT SALE
Fred Heutte Center

FRIDAY-SUNDAY, MAY 12-14, 2017
10:00 A.M*. - 5:00 P.M.
VCS MAY PLANT SALE
Norfolk Botanical Garden
**9:00 a.m. for NBG members*

TUESDAY, MAY 23, 2017
5:00 PM - 7:00 PM
VCS ANNUAL PICNIC
Picnic Pavilion, Norfolk Botanical Garden

SATURDAY, AUGUST 19, 2017
9:00 A.M. - NOON
VCS AIR LAYER HARVEST
Hofheimer Camellia Garden
Norfolk Botanical Garden

SEPTEMBER DATE & TIME TBA
VIRGINIA BEACH MASTER GARDENERS FALL FESTIVAL
Hampton Roads Agriculture Research & Education Center
1444 Diamond Springs Rd., Virginia Beach 23455

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2017
9:00 A.M. - NOON
VCS AIR LAYER AND PLANT SWAP
Location TBA

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2017
1:00 P.M.
SET-UP FOR FALL SHOW & PLANT SALE
BAKER HALL & HOLLY ROOM

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2017
10:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
VCS FALL CAMELLIA SHOW AND PLANT SALE

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VACANT

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If you would be willing to serve in either of the vacant positions, please contact the VCS President.

From your newsletter editor:

Do you have any VCS stories or history to share or other information that you would like to see included in the newsletter? If so, please email the information to Maria at mgs23455@gmail.com so that we can continue to make this publication an informative and enjoyable resource for our members.



The VCS MISSION STATEMENT

The Purpose/Mission of the Virginia Camellia Society is to learn and to promote the growth and propagation of the beautiful camellia through meetings, workshops, and through the presentation and sponsorships of annual camellia shows. (VCS 2004)