



## **Camellia Columns**

### **JUNE 2014**

A publication of the Virginia Camellia Society  
P.O.Box 6098 Chesapeake, Virginia 23323

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#### **A Message from the President**

Dear VCS Members,

Last July 1, 2013, marked the beginning of my role as VCS President. As I look back over the last eleven months, I see what our membership has accomplished and wish to express my deep gratitude to all members, VCS Officers, VCS Board of Directors and VCS Committee Chairmen. Since 1946, VCS has enjoyed a rich tradition of growing and the propagation of camellias. With your help we can maintain the fine traditions of VCS and look for new ways to expand our presence in the communities of Hampton Roads.

Your ideas regarding how to increase membership, engage in more educational camellia projects, host guest speakers for meetings or workshops are always welcome. If you are a member of other plant societies, garden clubs, master gardeners etc., look for ways Virginia Camellia Society can partner with these groups to increase camellia awareness.

Now that the hot summer days have arrived, keep an eye on your camellias especially any camellias planted in the late spring. During the dry weather make sure they have adequate water. Hopefully, your camellia plants were pruned and thinned as this allows better air circulation and reduces scale problems. Also, when you thin your camellia plants it reduces the number of buds to set and will make

each bloom bigger. Proper camellia care in the spring produces beautiful camellia blooms for fall and winter.

Hope to see all of you at our next event, Camellia Air Layer Harvest Workshop on August 23, 2014, 9:00 AM – Noon, Hofheimer Camellia Garden, Norfolk Botanical Garden. There are over 200 air layers to remove and pot. Bring your gloves and pruners. Refreshments will be served and there will be air layers for sale. This is always a fun event and a great learning opportunity. See you there!

Toni McKenna  
VCS President

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#### **MONTHLY CARE REMINDERS FOR YOUR CAMELLIAS**

We should be wrapped up with pruning. If you prune in June or later you will be cutting off bloom buds for the coming season. There is a saying (with a number of variations) that you never prune come June.

Now, and through the summer, water if two weeks pass without rain. Mulch plants with pine straw 2-4 inches. If you want to root cuttings, May through August is the best time to do it.

As the temperature rises, it becomes not advisable to spray your camellias with oil. Wait until it starts to cool this fall.

In July, fertilize again with 16-4-8, or use Azalea-Camellia fertilizer 4-8-12 and water it in. Check Air-Layers. If damaged and moss is dry, spray with water and re-wrap.

Material used in this article courtesy of the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society Website

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## **AN AMBASSADOR'S LEGACY**

The VCS has been fortunate to have an Ambassador Program in place for over ten years that has been singlehandedly managed by Mr. Bob Ward. For over a decade Bob has air layered his personal camellias and given them away to every new member that joins the VCS and/or the ACS. He once estimated he had given well over 200 camellias away; that's a lot of dedication.

Bob not only air layers and pots them, he tirelessly cares for them for years, then packs them in his car and brings them to every VCS event. The club has given away hundreds of Bob's plants including such classics as Grace Albritton, Grand Slam, White Empress, and Sparkling Burgundy.

I doubt there are any VCS members that don't have one, or more of his wonderful plants in their yard. If you glance at the back of a tag and it has the distinctive RW and a date such as 4-07, you know when Bob propagated it and that it came from his large collection in his Ocean View neighborhood.

Even though Bob is stepping down from the Ambassador program he is still very active in the club and has just joined the Board for another term. Bob's energy and enthusiasm are contagious and an inspiration to other members. The club is looking for volunteers to help keep the program going. Bob air layered over a hundred plants last year so we still have a great inventory. Many thanks to Ambassador Bob for his years of service!

Article submitted by Gary Hanson

## **VCS SPRING WORKSHOP REPORT 2014**

The morning of April 5, 2014, began with temperatures in the sixties, but as the morning progressed and we prepared for our spring workshop in the Hofheimer Camellia Garden, the temperature rapidly plummeted to the low fifties. However, there was some sunshine and no rain. As the time to begin the workshop approached, it began to warm up a little and we ended up with a fairly comfortable day to work. Thirty-eight people were in attendance. Following introductions, Mike Andruczyk gave an erudite discussion of diseases that affect camellias. This generated many questions from the audience validating the need for such a presentation. Next, Doug Simon gave a demonstration of proper pruning of normal sized camellias to improve their health and control their size and shape, while Mike Andruczyk demonstrated the pruning of overgrown camellias. We then divided into two groups, those experienced in air-layering and those inexperienced. They then went out in pairs and put on 211 air-layers that will be removed and potted up at our August 23, 2014 workshop and subsequently sold to raise funds for the support of the Hofheimer Garden. We sold 2 VCS memberships and 1 ACS membership. Our horticulturist Matthew Gobla brought a nice collection of air-layers from last year's workshop and 11 of these were sold for \$15.00 each, providing funds for the Hofheimer Garden. This was once again a highly successful workshop that provided education to the public and support to the Norfolk Botanical Garden, the VCS and the ACS. Many thanks to all who attended and helped to make this possible. We were especially glad to see Jim and Sally Van Gorder who came all the way from Jacksonville, NC and brought their grandson Seth Van Gorder and his wife Ashleigh who live in the area.

Article submitted by Winston Gouldin

**LOOKING FOR ADVICE AND  
GUIDANCE?  
TRY THE VCS CAMELLIA HOT LINE**

Need some advice on how to care for camellias? Some of the VCS experts would be glad to give advice - their contact information is below:

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Larry Barlow  
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Howard Warren  
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Pixie Killebrew  
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Mike Andruczyk  
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**WELCOME INCOMING BOARD MEMBERS**

2018 - Phil Johnson  
2018 - Winston Gouldin  
2018 -Kathy Hanson

**IN APPRECIATION**

Many thanks to Larry Barlow and Gerry Fred for their commitment and service as Board of Directors for the last four years.

**VIRGINIA CAMELLIA SOCIETY  
CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2014  
MARK YOUR CALENDARS TODAY!**

Watch for future revised editions, updates, cancellations etc. on our website [vacamelliasociety.org](http://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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**SATURDAY, AUGUST 23, 2014,  
9:00 AM -- NOON PM  
HANDS-ON WORKSHOP  
NBG HOFHEIMER CAMELLIA GARDEN,  
Learn how to remove air layers and correct  
planting technique. (Rain date Aug. 30,  
2014)**

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2014,  
10:00AM to 3:00PM  
FALL FESTIVAL  
Hampton Roads (AREC). 1444 Diamond  
Springs Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23455**

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2014,  
4:00PM - 7:00PM  
Air Layer Swap and Wine & Cheese Social  
Hosted by Fred & Toni McKenna**

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2014,  
1:00PM -3:00PM  
SET-UP FOR FALL SHOW & PLANT SALE  
NBG BAKER HALL**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2014,  
8:00AM -- 4:00PM  
VCS FALL CAMELLIA SHOW & PLANT SALE  
NBG BAKER HALL**

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2014,  
6:00PM - 9:30PM  
VCS HOLIDAY PARTY  
FRED HUETTE CENTER**

**Additional events will be added as we  
confirm them.**

**All dates are subject to change**  
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**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)**

**ATTENTION BOARD MEMBERS**

VCS Board Meeting  
June 24, 2014, 6:00 PM  
NBG, Camellia Room