

# OCALA CAMELLIA SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



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Editor, Lisa Freeland

Welcome Back!

September 2025

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**Next Club Meeting: 2pm on  
Sunday, September 7, 2025**

**New Location!!**

**Fort King Presbyterian Church  
13 NE 36<sup>th</sup> Ave, Ocala, 34470**



OCS meetings are held the first Sunday of the month at 2pm.

Mark your calendars! Our 2025-26 season: Sept 7, Oct 5, Nov 2, Dec 7, Jan 4, 2026 in prep for Jan 24-25 show (last weekend of Jan; Feb 1, March 1 last meeting of season)

**Snack Volunteers September: Lisa Freeland, Sally Layendecker, and Gwynn Pealer**

**SEPTEMBER GUEST SPEAKER: Mr. John Ash**

Mr. John Ash is an experienced educator and higher education leader with over two decades of service in both K-12 and college settings. Currently serving as the Dean of Business, Technology, and Agricultural Sciences at the College of Central Florida, he brings a dynamic, student-centered approach to academic leadership. John's work focuses on innovative curriculum development, workforce readiness, and creating pathways that support student success and degree completion.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello, fellow camellia lovers,

Another summer season is upon us with lots of rain (good for camellias) and humidity (not so great for camellia caretakers) and plant growth. I'm always amazed at how my yard that looks fairly tidy in mid-May becomes a veritable jungle of ginger, purple queen, crape myrtle, Mexican petunias and general weeds by mid-July. And I don't know about you, but this time of year, I'm not working much in my yard. I just let it grow and will whack at it in late September!



It's been a pleasure working with our club and with our executive board to put together another interesting and inspiring camellia season. Ann Reynold, our new vice-president, has some terrific speakers lined up for our meetings and a couple of potential field trips in the works. We also have our show to put on in January; I hope we got lots of entries and it goes as smoothly as it did this year. We received many compliments as a club about the show thanks to your hard work and willingness to help out.

A couple of business items: please fill out the membership on the back page of this newsletter, fill it in LEGIBLY and bring your 2025-26 dues to our September meeting. That way Jill can update our database efficiently and we can keep everyone in the loop on our club activities. You can print just the one page from this PDF.

Secondly, we have procured a new club meeting place but one that is familiar to all of us. Fort King Presbyterian Church is letting us use their community room, so we have all that space and the professional kitchen to enjoy each other's company. It's also a more centralized location for all and has the advantage of being close to town and restaurants for folks who might want to stay around and have a meal.

We have a terrific team with positive energy and great suggestions for our club. I'm so honored to have their help, experience, and input for the Ocala Camellia Society. Let's have a great 2025-26 camellia season!

*Belea T. Keeney, President*



## Meeting Minutes, March 2, 2025 Ocala Camellia Society by Kathryn Sickling, Club Secretary

Agenda for today: potluck, speaker, business meeting, plant auction and raffle, Intro any visiting guests and new members Potluck until 3pm-ish. Lots of good food and friendship was shared.

**Speaker:** Deborah Engquist. She is a member of the Gainesville Camellia Society and serves on their Board of Directors.

How to air layer key points: Use pliers to get cambium off easily, wear goggles, soak spagnum overnight, shape spagnum into a hot dog bun shape but squeeze out excess water, wrap spagnum around cut with aluminum foil shiny side in, seam should go up and down, use electrical tape at top and half way down but not at bottom and do not stretch the tape. If you do it in April or May, harvest in October. Tri Co Pro keeps deer away.

We were all invited to go to Gainesville meeting the second Sunday in April to learn how to Catch armadillos.

### **Business meeting items:**

- 1- Minutes from previous meeting were approved
- 2- Treasurer's report- Jill, post-show info. Balance January 31. \$13,484.84 and on March 2, 2025 is \$17,668.01

We were asked to pay our membership dues for the upcoming year.

- 3- Decided and approved re donations for year to: ACS/bricks in memory of McKay and Braisted-votes approved this
  - a. \$250 for Madeline for a brick. This can be filled out online and Jill send in a check
  - b. \$250 for a brick for OCS
  - c. \$250 for a brick in memory of Buddy MacKay
  - b. Other donations: Hendon scholarship fund, other ag/garden programs in area and at CFF will be discussed at the board meetings and then taken to members to vote on.
- 4- Braisted sympathy card, passed around. Jill to bring card. Make donation to ACS in memory per above.
- 5- Officers appointments, formal votes
  - a. Vice-president needed; nominations/voting elected Ann Reynolds to do this for one year and then move into position as president. Normally a 2-year commitment but Sally Leyendecker carried out the first year of the term before stepping down.
  - b. Votes for prez, sect'y, treasurer, n'letter editor. Other positions staying the same for another year.

President: Belea Keeney  
Vice-president: Ann Reynold  
Treasurer: Jill Reed  
Secretary: Kathryn Sickling

C. We thanked Sally for all her work over the past year in securing excellent speakers and carrying out the responsibilities of VP. She did a fantastic job.

6- Formal appointment of the board of directors: clarify who is on board and record in minutes.

- a. Bob and Patrick have formally left the board
- b. Ann and Dick Greenwood have left the area, remove from board

Any new members who have interest in being on the board please contact Belea. We would welcome you and your input.

7- Meeting place for next year: show of hands re location preferences: SW, NW, NE, SE. Show of hands revealed preference for SE area.

- a. Anyone w/ a line on new place? N'hood clubhouse, etc.? Sally to see if we could get the room at the Ft. King church where we had our last show. It's a very central location.
- b. BTK to research MCSO, fire station, other locations
- c. Info to come in September newsletter, which will email out in mid-August

8- Field trips. Masee Lane, any news? Nothing yet from Gainesville club re teaming up for trips there or to GA sites.

9- New items from club members/Q&A, general discussion

- a. Club needs to buy a nomenclature book(s) from ACS for future shows. We will buy thru ACS. Jill to order and send payment.

- b. Change show date to Feb to get more local blooms? If this is decided, then we need to notify ACS ASAP so they can get the info onto its website.

- c. We need to get a CC system of our own. In order to do this we have to register as a legit business entity and get an EIN. 501C-3/4/5 registered? Ask an acc't type person- need help with finding forms, fillings them out, someone willing to be semi-permanent club contact. Belea to research and report to BOD over summer.

- d. Judy Vaughn made a motion to buy 2 boxes of nomenclature plant tags to use for tagging and mapping at Taylor's house. Motion approved.

We sent around a list for volunteering to bring snacks. Kathryn Sickling signed up for October 5, 2025. Belea has the list of who signed up.

10- Wrap up, review any action items, remind folks re next meeting early September, close

11- Auction and raffle!

### **Snack Volunteers September:**

**Lisa Freeland, Sally Layendecker, and Gwynn Pealer**

# Camellia Shows in the Southeast 2025-2026 Season

Upcoming camellia shows and show chair contact info is posted at the ACS website here:  
<https://www.americancamellias.com/camellia-shows/upcoming-camellia-shows-2025-2026-season>

## **OCTOBER 2025**

October 11-12, 2025

Middle Georgia Camellia Society, Miller-Murphy-Howard Building, Georgia National Fairgrounds & Agricenter, Perry GA. Show Chair/Contact: Jonanne Beckman  
Judges' Chairperson: Carol Selph & Randolph Maphis

October 17-18, 2025

Mid-Carolina Camellia Society, SC State Fair, Cantey Building, Columbia SC. Show Chair/Contact: Julie & Oderra Small. Judges' Chairperson: Geary Serpas

## **NOVEMBER 2025**

November 8-9, 2025

Wiregrass Camellia Society, Boston Baptist Church, Boston, GA. Show Chair(s)/Contact: Maureen Price & Sandra Jones. Judges' Chairperson: Jerry Selph

November 9, 2025

Auburn-Opelika Men's Camellia Club, Pioneer Park, Loachapoka, AL. Show Chair/Contact: Charles Mitchell. Exhibition Only - Not Judged

November 15, 2025

Virginia Camellia Society, Norfolk Botanical Garden, Norfolk, VA. Show Chair/Contact: Toni McKenna. Judges' Chairperson: Fred McKenna.

## **DECEMBER 2025**

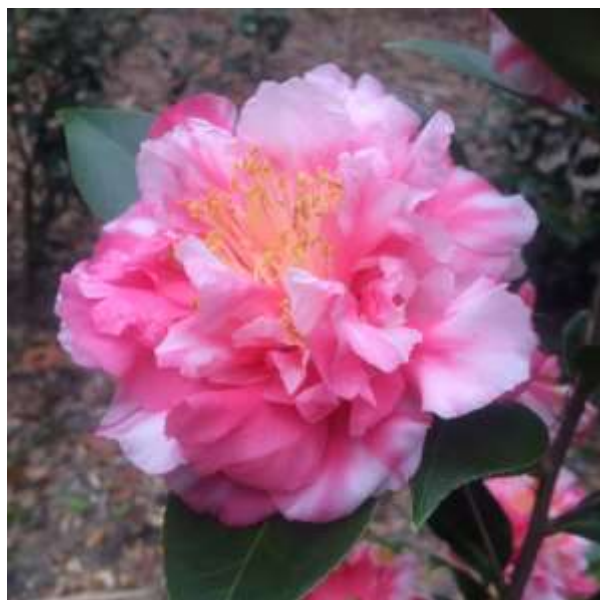
December 6, 2025

Ozone Camellia Club, Slidell City Auditorium, Slidell, LA. Show Chair: Dr. Robert Taylor  
Show Contact: Kay Taylor. Judges' Chairperson: Kay Taylor

December 13, 2025

Pensacola Camellia Club, University of West Florida Conference Center, Pensacola, FL.  
Show Chair: Christi Hankins. Judges' Chairperson: Dr. Mack Thetford

## CAMELLIA CULTURE –FALL/WINTER



**DISBUDDING:** Disbudding is the process of removing all but one bud from the tip of a branch. You should never leave two or more flower buds' side by side if you want big, beautiful flowers. Plants have only so much energy for each bud, and if there are too many, none of the buds may open completely. You may also want to remove interior buds from a branch, as these will also take energy from the terminal bud. Some growers even take single buds from some branch tips so the plant's energy will be directed to even fewer buds. If you have ever wondered how some growers consistently have larger flowers, this is the reason. Don't be shy about removing buds.

**GIBBING:** Gibbing is the process of removing the growth bud next to a flower bud and filling the "cup" with a drop of gibberellic acid. This causes the remaining flower bud to swell and bloom much earlier than it normally would, and in

most cases the flower is much larger. Start gibbing around Labor Day and treat several buds on large bushes at weekly intervals. Don't gib more than one or two buds on small bushes, if at all. You can order a gib on the web; just Google Progibb.

**SPRAYING:** Spider mites and scale insects are still a problem at this time of year, so keep a close eye out for them. Spider mites cause the leaf to appear bronze, particularly along the central rib, and can ruin the look of the foliage. Scale insects can be seen on the lower surface of leaves and result in yellowing and dropping of the leaves. You can spray with Orthene (or other chemical) to control mites. Insecticidal oil (such as Super Fine) kills mites and scales but be sure to coat both sides of the leaves, and do not spray during hot temperatures. Check with local camellia growers for other spraying tips and to find out what they spray with to control these insects.

**COLLECTING AND PLANTING SEEDS:** Some of your camellia seeds have probably already matured, but you can continue to collect and plant fresh seed through September. Place the seeds immediately in moist vermiculite or other soilless mix, and cover with plastic wrap until they sprout, at which time you can plant them in pots.

**PLANTING:** Potted camellias can be planted at any time of the year but remember to water at least twice a week. Be sure to plant them above the soil level to allow for settling. Never plant a camellia at a level lower than it is growing in the pot.

**WATERING:** It is very important to water regularly during any dry periods. Camellias should receive a deep watering (1 inch) once a week. This is true year-round but is more crucial during dry periods.

**FERTILIZING:** Do not fertilize after the end of August or very beginning of September, as you do not want to encourage plant growth at this time of year. You can use any fertilizer up until this time, but if you fertilize after September, you should use only a very low nitrogen fertilizer and fertilize lightly. Be sure to spread the fertilizer out to the drip line.

**Photo credit: Mike Whitman Variegated, courtesy Jill Reed.**



The officers and Executive Committee of the Ocala Camellia Society for 2025-2026 are:

President: Belea Keeney, 919-623-5375  
Vice-Pres. Ann Reynold 954-258-4722  
Secretary: Kathryn Sickling, 352-625-2179  
Treasurer: Jill Reed, 352-591-4343

**Directors:**

Annie & Paul Aierstock, 352-270-9191  
Marge Hendon, 352-625-3510  
Laura Perdomo, 352-624-0116  
Zlata Sabo, 352-237-5537  
Justin Schneider, 352-843-6142



**OCALA CAMELLIA SOCIETY**  
**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2025-2026**

The Ocala Camellia Society is a local society, affiliated with the American Camellia Society, whose members meet the first Sunday of the month, September through March, and presents an annual camellia show during January. Annual dues are \$10 for individuals and \$15 for couples. Dues are collected in September for the camellia season. Please complete the application below for membership in the Ocala Camellia Society.

**OCALA CAMELLIA SOCIETY**

Single Membership	( )	\$10.00
Couple Membership	( )	\$15.00
Corporate Membership	( )	\$50.00
Total Enclosed	\$	_____

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address/City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: please write legibly!! \_\_\_\_\_

Do we have your permission to share your member info with other chapter members? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

**Please make your check payable to OCALA CAMELLIA SOCIETY and give to: Jill Reed, Treasurer. You can mail it to her at: 19800 N Highway 329, Micanopy FL 32667.**