

# *Atlantic Coast Camellias*

**Journal of the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society**

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*Camellia Japonica* 'Raspberry Ripple'

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## *From the Cover*

**Raspberry Ripple** front page photo  
taken by J. D. Thomerson

**Raspberry Ripple Picotee** photo at  
right taken by Randolph Maphis

Raspberry Ripple was registered in 1989 by R. MacDonald of Waiuku, New Zealand as a Very Large, SD.

My Raspberry Ripple blooms like the front cover photo as well as the picotee form at the right and all kinds of other variations.



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***Mark Your Calendars  
ACCS Convention  
October 2 - 3, 2023  
New Location: Savannah, GA***

See Details on Page 9

# 2021 Award of Merit From the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society Mr. Tom Camp

All organizations have people behind the scenes that make things happen without any fanfare. The recipient of this year's award has touched the heart of everyone in the room.

About 20 years ago our recipient was dragged kicking and screaming into the Camellia World. Why would anyone want to go to a Camellia show or meeting when he could be fraternizing with the boys at the Hunt Club?

Once in the "Camellia World" he not only embraced the growing and showing but also became a tireless worker with the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society conventions, setting up and breaking down after events. He can be counted on to act in many capacities at many shows up and down the east coast and is a welcome addition at any show for his versatility. At the ACCS and local society auctions he can always be counted on with the logistics of moving the plants to the auctioneer as well as distributing the sold plants to the buyers.

One thing not behind the scenes is his expertise as our mixologist at the conventions' Friday Night Party for many years.

We are pleased to present the 2021 ACCS Award of Merit to our friend Tom Camp.



*Fred McKenna presents the 2021 ACCS Award of Merit to Tom Camp*

**Past ACCS Award of Merit Recipients:** Annabelle Fetterman, Paul and Marie Dahlen, E. Hulyn Smith, Fred and Clara Hahn, Bill and Mildred Robertson, Richard C. Mims, John E. Newsome, Oliver (Buck) and Tyler Mizell, William Lee Poe, Jr., Rupert E. Drews, Geary and Bonnie Serpas, James and Elaine Smelley, Warren and Cheryl Thompson, Murray S. (Mack) McKinnon, Charles D. (Chuck) Ritter, Richard C. Buggeln

# 2022 Award of Merit From the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society Mr. James D. Dickson III

In recognition of Mr. James Dickson's dedication and leadership to the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society (ACCS), the American Camellia Society (ACS) and the camellia world at large. Always known for his hard work, Jim started his journey with camellias as a young teenager in Hephzibah, Georgia and is now known throughout the Atlantic Coast region and the country for his knowledge and passion.

Seeing the need to support the organizations involved with camellias, Jim Dickson served as President of the Aiken Camellia Society for several years. During his tenure, he

increased membership 50%. Jim was instrumental in the re-development of the Augusta, GA show and served as the ACCS South Carolina State Director for many years.

Jim Dickson ascended through the offices of the ACCS Board to assume the position of ACCS President in 2012 through 2014. He continued to work tirelessly for both the ACCS and ACS and became the President of the American Camellia Society in 2017 to 2019. Here he greatly enhanced both the communication and cooperation between all the regional camellia organizations and ACS. When his President's term was over, Jim continued to serve ACS as President to the American Camellia Society Trust from 2020 to present.

Although Jim Dickson has held numerous regional and national positions, he has continued to be an avid camellia grower, local show supporter, and show judge. He is known to always be willing to mentor new camellia enthusiasts. Jim Dickson's contributions reflect the highest credit upon himself, and the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society.



*Fred McKenna presents the 2022 ACCS Award of Merit to Jim Dickson*

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

by Fred McKenna

*“To improve is to change, to be perfect is to change often.” — Winston Churchill*

**W**e had a very successful convention in Litchfield Beach this past September. The weather was beautiful, the drinks were cold, and the auction was a hit. Seriously, we not only had a great time, but we also addressed several important business decisions. The first of these was the introduction of the new ACS camellia bloom entry cards that American Camellia Society is transitioning to. At the Virginia Camellia Fall show in November, the new color card system proved to be a hit for both the judges and the support teams. There was significantly less confusion and misplacement of blooms by the runners and clerks, and the color system helped the newer members understand how the show was run, the differences between the different classes, and how winning blooms were selected.



**Fred and Toni McKenna**

Another important decision was to make a commitment to move our 2023 fall convention to Savannah, Georgia. A working group led by Marsha Zeagler and members of the Board are exploring the various venues and lodging options to assemble the best package possible at an affordable price. My personal thanks to Marsha and Gene Phillips for all the footwork they have done coordinating the planning efforts. I am excited about the new location, and we should have more details in the coming months. The decision to shift the convention was made for several reasons, chief among them was to entice more ACCS members from Florida and Georgia to attend, which is where a large percentage of our members reside. I would like to set an attendance record in Savannah, and I think with the program being put together, we should easily accomplish this.

I am noticing more and more how important it is for a camellia club to focus caring attention on their clerks. Clerking is the main avenue for a new member to learn about camellias, what constitutes a good bloom and how shows are conducted. I am now attending shows where an individual that I met a couple of years ago as a clerk is now a strong judge and a key supporter to their respective camellia club. We grow our future seed corn through proper training of our clerks. Some clubs have training sessions in advance of a show, ensure they are properly equipped, introduce them by name to the judging team and in general treat them as key members of the team. Compare this to shows where clerks are identified on the spot as the judging is about to start. Often these newly identified clerks clearly do not understand what they are to do. We are losing an opportunity to develop our future by not ensuring our clerks feel appreciated.

We can either turn-on or turn-off someone in our camellia club by how we treat them as clerks.

Toni and I hope each of you had a very Merry Christmas. We look forward to seeing all of you soon.

## ARTICLES ARE NEEDED FOR THE ACCS JOURNAL

Please contact J. D. Thomerson at: [jthomers@valdosta.edu](mailto:jthomers@valdosta.edu)

**Ideas:** Share special projects your camellia club is involved with (help with community camellia gardens, camellia sales to public, etc.) History of your Camellia Society. Successful ways your Camellia Society has recruited or gained new members. Spotlight article on a camellia grower in your area. Articles with photos of public or private camellia gardens in your area. How did you get started growing camellias? Who influenced you and/or was a camellia mentor to you? What are your favorite camellia activities? What are your favorite camellia varieties and why? Camellia propagation, grafting, fertilizing, air-layering, pest control. Your Editor will help all authors with their articles — I just need you to share your knowledge, experiences, and expertise.

## Correction and Explanation to the September 2022 Journal

The photo below of Paul Greenway and myself was 100% good natured joking and kidding. After printing the journal my wife Kay said she hoped nobody interpreted the photo as Paul acting like a jerk. Paul is my good friend and we both had a big laugh over the photo — he is a great guy and would never act in an unkind way.



Paul Greenway explains to me why none of my blooms won an award at the Perry show (this is a joke!)

Queen Bee was a big winner at the 2022 Masee Lane Camellia Show. So much so that your Editor made a goof-up in the Sept. 2022 Journal. Bill and Linda Nichols actually won Best in Show with the Queen Bee bloom shown below right. John Newsome won Best Protected Tray of Three with three Queen Bee blooms at the same show. I guess I was so amazed at those huge pink Queen Bee blooms that I got the award winners backwards.



Camellia Reticulata — Queen Bee  
Best Bloom in Masee Lane Show  
Won by Bill and Linda Nichols



## **BILLBOARD ADVERTISING MASSEE LANE GARDENS**

The American Camellia Society (ACS) installed a billboard sign along I-75 South in Georgia advertising Massee Lane Gardens (MLG) and the ACS. The sign is in place for five months from November, 2022 through March, 2023. The purpose of the billboard is to advertise MLG and ACS and to get potential visitors driving south on I-75 to visit the Gardens. The sign will also publicize MLG and ACS to local people in the Central Georgia area who are not aware of the Gardens.

The billboard is leased for five months from Lamar Advertising and is located south of Byron, Georgia and just north of Exit #142 along I-75 South. The five-month lease for the billboard costs \$5,000 plus \$840 to install the sign for a total cost of \$5,840. Starting in November 2022, when visitors arrive at MLG they will be asked to complete a short survey which includes whether they saw the billboard and if that influenced their decision to visit MLG.

No billboard expenses will be charged to the ACS operating budget. This is an independent project. The ACS is accepting donations to cover the cost of the billboard.

**Make your check payable to "ACS" and mail it to:**

**American Camellia Society  
Attention: Billboard Fund  
100 Massee Lane  
Fort Valley, GA 31030**

**Clearly mark on the check that the donation is for the "Billboard Fund"**

If you have any questions, please contact:

Dennis Hart, ACS Vice President

Email: dlhart98@aol.com Phone or Text: 615-319-4533

# **Mark Your Calendars Now For The 2023 Fall Atlantic Coast Camellia Society Convention**

**October 2-3, 2023 (Monday and Tuesday)  
Embassy Suites by Hilton Savannah Airport  
145 W Mulberry Blvd., Savannah, Ga**

All of the rooms are two-room suites with a separate living room that includes a pull-out queen sofa bed, dining table with chairs, microwave, mini-refrigerator, wet bar and additional television in the living room. The bedroom offers either one king bed or two queen beds. The parking is complimentary as is a free shuttle to and from the airport.



We have been offered a special group rate of \$169.00 plus tax per room, per night for the dates of October 1 - 4, 2023. Rates apply to single and double occupancy (extra person charge is \$10.00 per person, per night for third and fourth person). Rates do not include 13% tax, plus \$5.00 Georgia State Transportation Fee per room, per night which is a total price of \$195.97. The room rates will be extended throughout the week for convention participants who choose to extend their stay to explore Savannah.

All rates include a full hot breakfast buffet and fresh, cooked-to-order omelets each morning. We will have our own personal dining room just for convention participants at the breakfast site. The hotel also offers complimentary beverages and light snacks each evening during the manager's reception.

Because our convention meeting days have been changed to a Monday and Tuesday our schedule will reflect that change. Our former schedule for Friday will now take place on Monday and our former Saturday schedule will now take place on Tuesday. On Monday, there will be a board meeting at 10:30 am and a judges' reaccreditation class from 1 - 4 pm. Monday evening a low country boil will be held at the Coastal Georgia Botanical Gardens.

Tuesday's events will begin after breakfast with mimosas and bloody Marys followed by THE AUCTION. After a break for lunch, there will be two speaker sessions. The convention will culminate with the banquet Tuesday evening.

*Conference and Hotel Registration information will be emailed and placed on the ACCS Website in future months. Many thanks to Marsha Zeagler who worked long hours to find the perfect hotel to meet our convention needs.*

# Daddy: What's Your Favorite Plant

## *Year Around Fun with Camellias*

by J. D. Thomerson

**A**bout a year ago while my daughter Katie and I were looking around our yard she asked me “Daddy, what’s your favorite plant?” I thought a few seconds and said “Katie, I don’t really have one – I like just about all plants.” Then I proceeded to name my favorites: hydrangeas, citrus, native azaleas, gingers, Japanese maples, daylilies and probably whatever else I saw blooming that day in my yard. Somewhere in the list I did include camellias. I remember Katie asking me “Isn’t camellia’s your favorite.” I thought a couple of seconds and said “No, not really.” So Katie said, “But don’t you have way more camellias than any other plant?” Well, Katie was definitely right about that – I have several hundred camellias in our yard and even bought an adjacent rental property just because it had a very large back yard where I could plant another hundred or so camellias.



**Citrus: Satsuma ‘Owari’**

My mind started to think really fast about why this was the case. It quickly dawned on me that the reason I have so many camellias and spend so much time with them compared to all the other plants in my yard is because camellias are not just a plant I grow to make my yard look nice and pretty but it is a hobby. I really like hydrangeas and have a nice collection of various varieties but I cannot say that it is a hobby. Mark Crawford has got me all excited about citrus and I have planted many varieties and I really enjoy eating the fruit and giving bags full to our friends and neighbors – but, it is not really a hobby. The same is true of Japanese maples, gingers, native azaleas, and daylilies – I enjoy collecting these plants and looking for new varieties and I like each of these plants just as much as I like camellias. But, none of these plants can I consider a hobby.



**Hydrangea: ‘Waterfall’**



**Ginger: ‘Kahili’**



**Daylily: ‘Aztec Red’**



**Kay's Annuals Around Our Mailbox**

other folks that are addicted to this hobby. You can continually be planning what you will be doing next month and the month to follow. For example: you can make all kinds of lists about what plants you will be grafting in January & February; lists of what varieties you want to air-layer come April and May; lists of which plants you want to get cuttings to root during June and July. My wife finds these various lists all over the house – I know she probably throws many away but I just make new ones.

In addition to the above activities I always look forward to collecting seeds come September and October and getting them planted. Then it is time to begin gibbing for early blooms because it will not be long until the early camellia shows will be held. During September our local camellia club begins to meet once a month or more and this is always fun. There is just always something to be doing with camellias to keep me active, get my mind off of the troubles of the day, and get me out and about visiting with other camellia nuts.

There are so many camellia activities throughout the year that I thought it would be valuable to create a month by month camellia calendar of events for everyone. So, here goes:

### ***Year Long Fun With Camellias***

**January:** Make plans (and lists) and get ready for grafting season. Enjoy the peak of camellia bloom season and attend various nearby camellia shows. This is also a time to hybridize camellias – I have never actually done this (I let the bees do my work) but I would like to learn exactly how to do the hand pollinations. Perhaps someone knowledgeable will write a detailed article (hint, hint, and please, please) and send to me so I can publish it in an upcoming ACCS Journal. Also, this would be a great topic for a camellia presentation.

**February:** The peak of grafting season – perhaps my favorite time of the year. I really enjoy grafting during the cool days of February. There are some good grafting demos on the ACS website. As soon as plants quit blooming it is time to do some serious pruning to your large plants. Seeds planted last fall should be



**J. D.'s Raised Grafting Bed**

sprouted and growing roots. I pinch the end of the long tap root on the seedlings to make the roots branch out and plant each seedling in a quart pot.

**March:** Time to clean up old mulch, pine straw, old blooms, etc., and put out nice new mulch. Finish pruning bushes and fertilize the plants. Begin planning (making lists) of the camellias you want to air layer later in the month and in April/May. If you rooted camellia cuttings last summer they should be well rooted now and ready to be planted in a bigger pot. I like to use a quart or ½ gallon size pot to begin with but most nursery's use a one gallon size.



**Sprouted Camellia Seed**

**April:** The month I enjoy air layering (it is usually really nice outside.) I usually begin to spray for scale and mites during April and May before either get an upper hand on me. For scale, I use a Summer Oil (you can add a miticide like abemectin if mites tend to also be a problem) and spray on all my smaller plants that I can coat all lower and upper leaf surfaces. For very large plants that are impossible to cover the undersides of all the leaves I use a systemic spray (you can still buy Dimethoate the active ingredient in the no longer available Cygon brand at many farm supply stores). Newer products (such as Safari and others) are great systemics that works against both mites and scales. They are expensive products but you only use a very small amount so over long time frames they are actually a good deal. If I have root bound plants in pots I bump them up to a bigger size pot if not already completed in March.



**Camellia Air Layer**

**May:** Continue to make air layers. Water as needed all the camellias that have only been planted less than two years and that are not already firmly established. This is a continual situation, but in Valdosta I seem to have to water the most during the months of April and May and then again around October & November. But, every year is slightly different – don't let recently planted camellias get dry.

**June:** Prepare list and locations of all the plants that you want to root. Most japonica's can be rooted easily. I have used old fish aquariums to make mini terrariums since I don't have a mist system. There are many other ways to root camellias and club members will be happy to share. Get everything prepared so you can stick the cuttings immediately upon gathering them.

**July:** Probably the best month to actual root camellia cuttings. July is so miserably hot in Valdosta that it is a great month to occasionally stay indoors and make all kinds of other camellia wish lists. Also, perhaps make nice name tags that you can put on your plants to identify the varieties and update your camellia inventory records.



**Rooted Camellia**

**August:** Late this month you can begin identifying camellia seed pods that sometimes begin to open or that will open later in September. Also, you can begin disbudding some of the early blooming varieties so that you get bigger and better blooms. I usually begin gibbing some camellia blooms in early to mid August to get really early blooms for the Georgia and South Carolina National Fair shows held in mid October.

**September:** Check those air layers you made in early spring. If they feel hard as a baseball they are probably ready to be harvested and potted up. Continue to gib a few blooms every week or so to get blooms sooner and over an extended period of time. Most camellia clubs resume meetings in September and experienced growers often bring some gib to share with other club members. Plant those camellia seeds – if you have never done this it is extremely easy – just ask if you want some instructions.



Camellia Pods and Seeds

**October:** Remember that it can get dry during October and the various mites love dry weather. Spray ultra-fine oil along with a miticide as a precaution if you see the first hint of mite damage. Those pesky mites can ravage camellia leaves and turn them bronze and grayish color in just a few days. Inspect for scale especially in the shady areas and limbs close to the ground. Air layers not already harvested should probably be ready although some varieties take a lot longer than others. Enjoy the many sasanqua camellias that are sure to put on a great show around town. Attend the early camellia shows and enjoy the cooler weather.

**November:** A great time to plant new camellias. Visit a nursery in your area and pick out some new varieties. Planting now will give the plants time to get better established before the brutal hot season returns. There are camellia shows to attend this month. Gibbed blooms will be opening periodically depending on when you applied the gib – remember, most camellias blooms open up about six weeks after they are gibbed. Remember to water – about 90% or more of a camellia bloom is water and water makes them larger and more vibrant in color.

**December:** December is another good month to get all your camellia wish lists ready – especially for the upcoming grafting season that is not but a month or two away. Buy someone a camellia plant as a Christmas gift and tell them you will help them plant it and give them camellia care instructions. Buy a gardening friend a membership gift to the ACS or ACCS Journal or both – once they receive the journals for the year hopefully they will be hooked. December is still a great time to plant in our region.



Perhaps you would like to learn more about some of the camellia activities discussed above. If so, attend your local area camellia club and ask questions – don't be shy. I have actually joined two camellia clubs (Wiregrass and Tallahassee) and discovered that several other camellia junkies around the southeast do this as well. I know all camellia clubs would welcome occasional visitors from other clubs and what a great way to get to know other camellia addicts.

# Scenes From the 2022 Atlantic Coast Camellia Conference

*A Fabulous Time Was Had by All*



Three Beautiful "Brenda's"



There's a Party at the Beach!



Friday Night Party



Presenter: Gene Phillips



Presenter: Tommy Alden



Saturday Night Banquet



It's Dinner Time at the Friday Evening Social



Matthew and Kirstin Israel



Bob and Gail Reese



Miles Beach and John Newsome



Fred McKenna and Fred Jones



Kay Thomerson

Sincere apologies are extended to several ACCS attendees in which I failed to take a photo. I will do better next year and make sure I get your picture.



Jim and Caroline Dickson



Everyone's Ready for the Auction!



Tommy and Brenda Alden



Bob and Sandy Black



Billy Ray and Maureen Price



Tom and Peggy Camp



John and Sonya Fields



Paul and Corinthia Greenway



Jim DeReuil & Kristin Bennett



Howard and Mary Rhodes



Fred and Sandra Jones



William and Sandee Khoury



Miles and Brenda Beach



Mack and Ann McKinnon



Dennis and Lyn Hart



Fred and Toni McKenna



Paul and Kathy Cloessner



Richard and Betty Gail Buggeln



Gene Phillips and Marsha Zeagler



Jim and Jan Pruckler



David and Anna Sheets



Barry and June Buchele



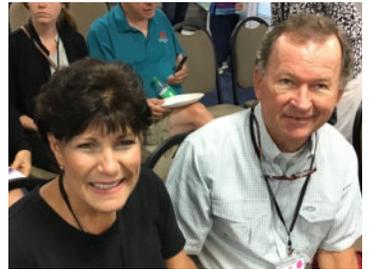
Ginger Johnson & Peggy McGuirk



Monty and Robin Cross



Ron and Elizabeth Wolfe



Philip Thomas & Teri McCathern



Ross, Cathy, and Mary Kubeny



Jerry and Carol Selph



David and Sandra Williams



Jo Creel



Annelle Lauder



Ron Stevens



Alan Loper



John Newsome

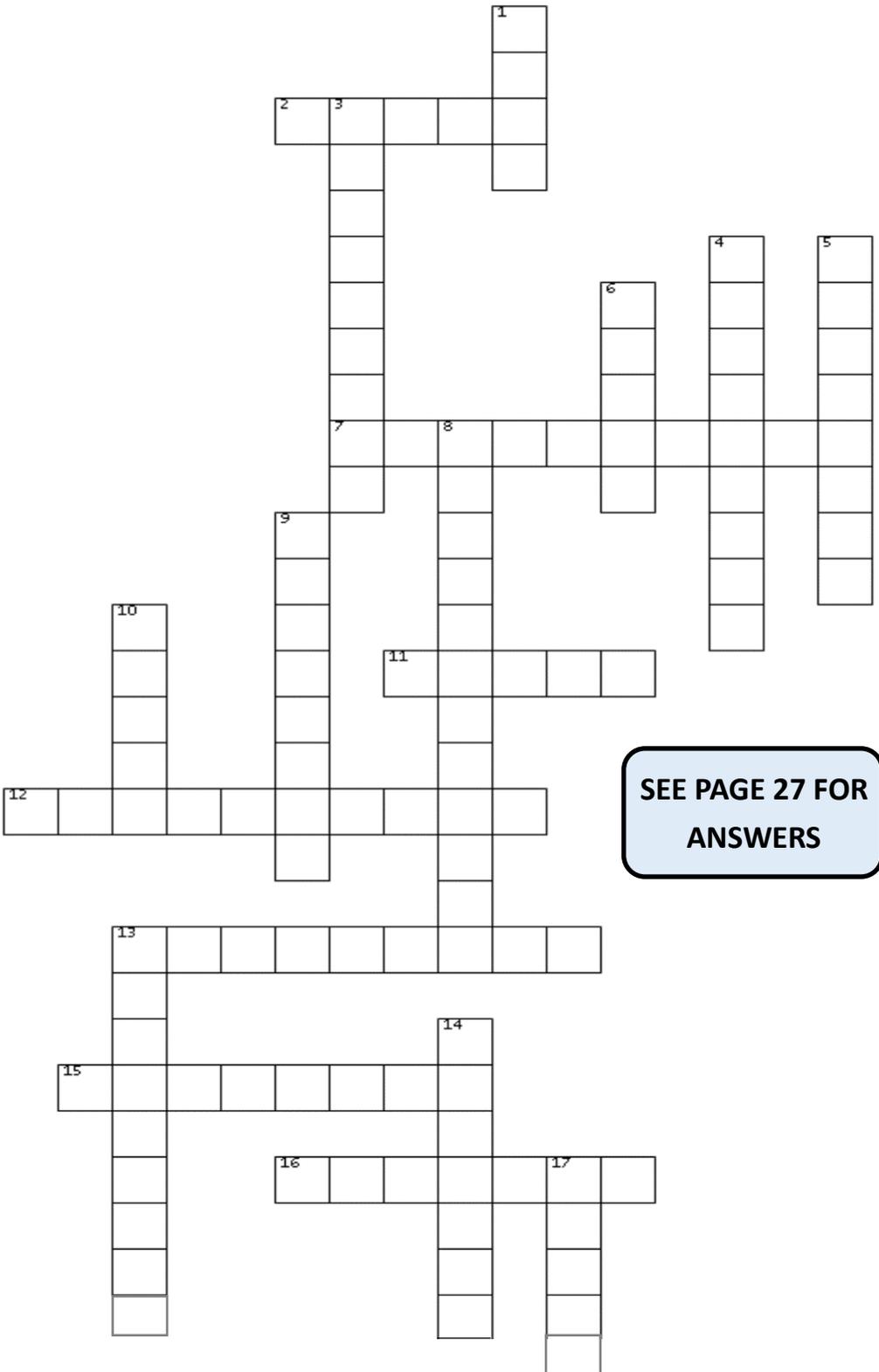
# Camellia Crossword Puzzle

## ACROSS

2. A method of joining a scion of a special, rare, or hard to root/grow variety so the scion variety has better and/or faster growth.
7. This is the name for the table that excellent blooms that judges feel merit being carefully considered for awards are placed during the judging of a camellia show.
11. These sucking pests of camellias typically live on the undersides of leaves and can often be noticed by white specs or cottony looking structures.
12. These are typically the big huge ruffled petal camellia species that are grown mainly by serious camellia growers.
13. An important job on a camellia show day where volunteers put flowers entered by growers on the proper tables so they can be easily viewed and judged.
15. The most common and recognized species of camellia.
16. The common name for a fungus called *Glomerella Cingulate* that grows well where weather conditions are hot and humid as typical in the southeast.

## DOWN

1. This pest can multiply by the millions within days during hot/dry weather and turn camellia leaves an ugly bronze color by sucking out plant juices.
3. A plant, sometimes just a stump, which already has an established, healthy root system, onto which a cutting from plant is grafted.
4. Crossing the pollen of one variety to the pistil of another variety to create a new seed variety.
5. A fall mass blooming camellia variety that is best suited as a landscape variety.
6. A deep rounded bloom full of petals but that shows stamens intermixed between the petals.
8. A book that lists all the registered camellia varieties with bloom descriptions, sizes, seed and pollen parents if known, originator's name, and other info about the bloom.
9. A type of unmilled, long-strand peat moss that is typically used when making camellia air layers.
10. A branch that has a different bloom of leaf characteristics from the rest of the plant.
13. When the stamens and pistils of the flower are transformed into petals in the center of a camellia bloom.
14. The dark green layer of plant tissue right below the bark where most of the plant nutrients and water flow and new plant tissue is developed.
17. An important job on a camellia show day where volunteers help camellia judges -- they move blooms to the contention table among several other duties.



**SEE PAGE 27 FOR  
ANSWERS**

# “How to Get that Camellia Bloom to the Head Table”

by Fred and Sandra Jones

Sandra and Fred Jones first entered three blooms at a Valdosta show in 2008 but did not get any winners. The next year, they tried again and entered a ‘Kagirohi’ that was a beautiful flawless bloom along with a couple of others but results were the same, still no stickers! Sandra noticed several visits by groups of judges would look at it and shake their heads! She didn’t know why. It was then she decided they needed to become judges so they could learn how to enter blooms. After taking the novice judge course from Howard Rhodes, she realized that her beautiful ‘Kagirohi’ bloom had received no recognition because she had left a beautiful round bud on the stem!



**Note from the Editor:** Since that first failure at the Valdosta Shows the Jones have continually moved up the award winning leaderboard. Fred and Sandra have won numerous Gold and Silver Sweepstakes and Best in Show awards since 2008. Their first Best in Show was won at the Georgia National Fair show with a solid Bobbie Fain in



Two Best in Show Blooms of the Jones: Left: Hulyn Smith & Right: Marilyn Maphis



Ferris Wheel



Polaris

2014. Another Best in Show was won at the Masee Lane show in 2015 with a *'Black Magic'* they grew from their older camellia garden called "Camzalea". Their most prized Best in Show was at the 2020 Aiken Show when their *'Ferris Wheel'* won Best in Show among unprotected blooms. The winners in Pensacola, FL in 2019 also stand out. *'Holy Pure'* won best unprotected bloom in the show, *'Emma Gaeta'* variegated won best very large reticulata, *'Hulyn Smith'* won best large reticulata, and *'Joe Nuccio'* and *'Freedom Bell'* also won their divisions. The above award winners are just a small sampling of the early success the Jones's have had at camellia shows. During the 2021/2022 bloom season the Jones's were number ONE on the award point system for outdoor growers in the southeast. **With this success in mind, I asked Fred and Sandra to share with all of us "How to Get that Camellia Bloom to the Head Table."** Their suggestions begin on the next page.



Paul Haskee Var.



Valentine Day

## Selecting and Securing Wining Varieties

At shows Sandra and Fred look for varieties that appeal to them but also ones that get to the head table. Sandra also reviews the ACS and the ACCS reports of the most frequent show winners from various regions. They feel it is important to have several varieties of each size (Very Large, Large, Medium, Small, and Miniature) and category (Japonica, Non-Retic Hybrid, Reticulata, and Sasanqua.) If all you enter is a lot of large and medium size japonicas then you are limiting yourself to only two



**Holy Pure**

award categories. Often, at shows there are few entries in the medium reticulata, miniature, or hybrid categories and having blooms to enter in these classes greatly increase your odds of winning an award.

Fred and Sandra also visit growers throughout the Southeast to obtain different varieties. Fred has grafted many current camellia varieties at Camzalea and still grafts occasionally but due to back problems this has become rare and Sandra cannot graft because of limited use of her hands. Randolph Maphis now provides them many rare plants that must be grafted to perform well. Sandra often calls and orders from Nuccio's Nursery in California and purchases plants from County Line and Loch Laurel nurseries. When Vernon Howell was living, they made several trips to Lucedale, MS to purchase his grafted camellias. Camellia auctions at conventions and clubs are also where Fred and Sandra find many of their desirable plants. Sandra usually does the bidding and Fred tries to stop her from going too high yet encourages her to bid on more plants.

## Caring for and Growing Prize Winning Camellias

**Fertilizing.** Sandra noticed that most growers had their own fertilizer mix and they all varied. Sandra's father grew cotton and operated a cotton gin that he and fellow farmers owned. When reading about fertilizing, all the old books and articles recommended cotton seed meal — so did the growers in California! Fred knew of a plant in Quitman, GA which ground cotton seed meal. He contacted them and they



**Black Knight Var.**

prepared a special mix with no salt added for Sandra's camellias. Sandra fertilizes twice a year with cotton seed meal to develop good color, growth, and future blooms.

**Watering.** Sandra has learned that during the summer and blooming season watering at least twice a week to the point the ground is saturated is essential to have big beautiful blooms. She had to fire Fred from this job because he tried to calculate how much they needed based on the amount

each emitter sprayed on each plant and she had plants that died. (Rumor is that Fred is going to court to appeal, but so far Sandra is winning.)

**Pruning and Disbudding.** Larger older camellias respond very well to pruning in early spring and Fred and Sandra prune larger bushes severely. In late summer and early fall, as soon as flower buds are distinguishable, they disbud. Special attention is paid to remove multiple buds that are found in a clump at the terminal end of branches. Small and miniature varieties are especially prone to this. Tons of buds make for lots of small flowers and often flowers that never actually open.

**Gibberlic Acid.** Sandra uses Gibberellic Acid diluted 50/50 with water that has Strike Zone added. Strike Zone DF is a "sticking agent" that improves the adherence of the Gibberellic Acid solution and can be purchased from Helena Chemicals. A teaspoon is added to four ounces of water and shaken well. For three days this mixture is shaken several times a day. On day four, four ounces of gibb is added. This gibb mix is stored in the refrigerator and will be good for a couple of years! Sandra calls it gibb that works! They begin gibbing as early as late August and September for early shows such as the Georgia National Fair in Perry, GA. Then, continue to gibb a few buds on plants each week to ten days until the end of December. Without gibbing you will have no blooms for the fall shows.

## Show-Week Preparations

Fred and Sandra jointly decide which shows they will attend considering logistics and travel distance. Time



**Fred and Sandra Work Together  
Entering Blooms at the 2022 Perry Show**



**Sandra Collecting Blooms**



**What a Beautiful Basket of Blooms**

and experience have taught Sandra that winning blooms need to be picked just before reaching their peak. Most will continue to open in the cooler. Leaving them on the plant too long causes dark stamens as does picking them when they are wet. It is better to pick too early than too late. There are times she will pick blooms up to ten days before a show.

During show season Sandra takes her basket out every morning to check and pick blooms. After picking several, she places the stems in a Flora Life solution prepared with warm water for at least twenty minutes. Before placing the blooms in individual cups, she cuts the stems at an angle allowing for better absorption making

sure to leave enough stem to be recut two more times. Next she sprays each bloom with Clear Life spray, trims the stems at an angle again and puts them in a two ounce portion cup with the Flora Life solution. Fred drills holes in the cup tops. Often Sandra leaves one or two leaves on a bloom because they help her move the blooms more easily without damaging them. These are placed into a plastic tub with fiber fill. She selects leaves for each bloom in a tub and puts them in a sandwich bag. She then adds ethylene blocking packets to each tub. Fred records the tub number and the flowers that are in each tub and fills out most of the show exhibition cards. The blooms are then placed in a freezer-less refrigerator at forty degrees, optimal temperature to store blooms, and not opened until they are unpacked at a show.

## Getting the Blooms to the Show

When time to travel to a show Fred packs the boxes in the coolers and the coolers in the truck. They used to carry around 150 blooms to a show; now they are limiting the number to around 100. Once at a show, they work together to enter their blooms. Sandra lays out her essential tools; Q-tips, scissors, pruning shears, needle-nose tweezers, and a small brush. She collects the containers, water, and trays for entering while Fred brings in the blooms. Fred unloads the blooms, one box at a time, and Sandra removes them from the two ounce portion cups, grooms them, and puts them in the exhibition containers and places



**Two Ounce Portion Cup**

them on the tray with the proper entry card. Sandra is careful to recut the stems one more time to allow the blooms to “drink” while they are on the contention table. If a bloom has a few black stamens, she uses needle nose tweezers to remove them. Q-tips are handy for removing pollen from petals, and the small brush can be used to tease a bloom to open more. Sandra arranges the blooms in the cups supplied by the show. She has learned that one of the most important details to presenting the blooms is selecting the proper size cup. If a cup is too large, the bloom will sink into it and collapse the petals. She adds leaves at the 10 o’clock or two o’clock position. The bloom is turned to present its best side. Fred is responsible for turning the trays in for placement and replenishing supplies.



**Plastic Tub with Fiber Fill**

When entering blooms for a tray of three, Sandra always thinks of it as entering three identical triplets. The color, markings, size and even the leaves should be as close a match as possible. All the blooms need to be good quality blooms. When entering trays of five different blooms there should be a good balance. Sandra likes to place the most eye catching bloom in the center. Remember darker colors bring balance to the bottom of the tray. Sandra has learned to check her trays before the judging to make sure they are still in their intended places. This is especially true in shows where the blooms are removed from the trays.

### **Guidance for Persons New to the Show Circuit**

The most important thing for people just beginning to show blooms is to realize that practice makes perfect and to be proud of small accomplishments. Sandra and Fred remember how excited they were when they finally got a blue sticker or two! Then, one made it to the contention table. Those steps were celebrated! They learned to just keep trying.

One other piece of advice they have for beginners is to take the novice judge course and become



**Flower Storage Refrigerator**



**Ethylene Blocking Packets**



**Sandra Sprays Bloom with Clear Life**

involved. The more blooms they show and see, the more progress they will make becoming winners!

## **Sandra and Fred's Most Memorable Award Winners**

As mentioned earlier, Sandra and Fred won their first Best in Show award at the Georgia National Fair show in 2014 with a solid Bobbie Fain! In 2018, Sandra sent one bloom to the Georgia National Fair show because Hurricane Michael had just come through and destroyed their beach house and Sandra's son David's home. She had picked a Jim Smelley bloom about a week before and had it in the refrigerator. She called her dear friend, Nancibeth Shealy and asked her to enter it. It won Best in Show. This past October 15, 2022 they won Best in Show again at the GA National Fair show with Ray Gentry Peony Variegated.

In January, 2016, Sandra and Fred won Best Bloom in the Tallahassee, FL show with Holy Pure, and three other times with this bloom. Frank Houser and Frank Houser variegated have also been consistent winners for them. Lauren Tudor frequently wins best very large japonica along with Edna Bass variegated. Magic City won Best in Show in Columbus, GA in 2018. This was a special win because their good friends Tommy and Brenda Alden won Best in Show for protected at the same show. Winning is good, but sharing a win with good friends is priceless!



**Fiber Fill between Petals Helps Keep Shape**

Black Knight variegated often wins Best Large Hybrid and Freedom Bell will win Best Small Hybrid. Sandra and Fred have had several Best in Show Whites

with Melissa Ann and Julia C. Taylor. They have even won Best Ville de Nantes a couple of times.

## Thank You to Mentors

Sandra and Fred have had the benefit of some advice from many top camellia growers. Carol and Jerry Selph showed Sandra how to pack blooms and even shared supplies to get them started. Chuck Ritter graciously shared his method with them during a visit to his garden. But, there is one other camellia great who had a huge influence on Sandra.

During a February show at Masee Lane, Buck Mizzell caught Sandra's attention as he was putting his blooms in so she backed up to a door and watched intently. Buck lost a couple of fingers due to a farming accident on one of his hands. He would take half opened blooms, stick his thumbs in and give the bloom a quick snap. Magically, the bloom would open! He would deftly place the bloom in the cup, adjust the leaves, and have a winning bloom! Sandra decided that even though her right hand had its own limitations, if Buck could do that, so could she. He has been a constant inspiration ever since. So, Buck and Sandra have both proven one can still show winning blooms even without two hands that work!



### CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS BELOW:

(UPSIDE DOWN ON PURPOSE TO HELP YOU NOT CHEAT)

ACROSS: 2. graft 7. contention 11. scale 12. reticulata 13. placement 15. japonica  
16. dieback  
DOWN: 1. mite 3. rootstock 4. hybridize 5. sasangua 6. peony 8. nomenclature  
9. sphagnum 10. sport 13. petaloid 14. cambium 17. clerk

# STRIPED CAMELLIAS PHOTO GALLERY

By J. D. Thomerson

Most camellia growers and admirers really enjoy striped camellias. They offer much pop and whimsy and are just fun. Often striped camellias have unique names such as Ferris Wheel, Clown, Splash, and Happy Birthday. Striped camellias are different than virus induced camellias. Striped camellias are born the way they look due to their genetics — not by a virus of any kind. The photo gallery that follows spotlights some of the best striped camellias being grown in the southeast. I like striped camellias so well that I think there should be a “Best Striped Camellia” award given at camellia shows.



**Laura's Beauty**



**Anita**



**Betty Foy Sanders**



**Lauren Tudor**



**Astra Nova**



**Bella Romana**



**Irene**



**Ferris Wheel**



**Princess Masako**



**Jimmy Carter**



**Splash**



**Kay Berridge**



**Clown**



**Herbert Earl Gatch**



**Happy Birthday**



**Dinh Swanson**

## **State Director's Report for Maryland, Northern Virginia & DC August 2022 — Submitted by Richard Mohr**

- 1.) The Camellia Society of the Potomac Valley has resumed activities after the two year COVID 19 pandemic when most if not all events were cancelled.
- 2.) We had our first show and sale in two years at Brookside Gardens in Wheaton, MD on March 26, 2022 with 311 blooms exhibited, 200 attendees and 18 exhibitors.
- 3.) We picked up 13 new members at the Brookside show and 7 new members at our annual Green Spring Garden Camellia Sale, Alexandria, VA in May. That makes a total of 20 active or returning members and 20 new members for a total of 40 paid members.
- 5.) An annual picnic was held at David and Lenka Lundsten's home in McLean, VA in May.
- 6.) We hope to have a Christmas Holiday Buffet in December at Green Spring Gardens, if we can get reservations.
- 7.) Our next Camellia Show is scheduled on April 1, 2023 at Brookside Gardens.

## **Virginia State Director's Report — September 2022 Submitted by Toni McKenna / Bob Black**

Virginia Camellia Society bounced back from the COVID-19 pandemic in late 2021 and early 2022. Our group activities were smaller in numbers and thus we held our events at the nearby American Camellia Society Trail Gardens. Instead of camellia shows, we hosted camellia exhibits outdoors at both the Norfolk Botanical Garden and Chesapeake Arboretum.

In July of 2021 we hosted our first Propagating Camellias from Cuttings Workshop. Bob Black, our instructor, shared important tips on selecting camellias, the right camellia species, and the correct procedure for proper cuttings. Additional topics covered were the perfect time to propagate camellias cuttings, the rooting media, rooting environment options, and rooting hormone. This was one of our most successful workshops in recent memory based on attendance. This workshop was so successful we conducted another one in July of 2022.

In November of 2021, we hosted our annual Fall Camellia Show at Norfolk Botanical Garden and our Spring Camellia Show in March, 2022. The shows were well attended, and our bloom count was up for both shows from the previous year. The best part of VCS Camellia shows are the North Carolina Exhibitors.

In addition to camellia shows, workshops, talking camellias in the trail gardens, the 2022 camellia season is providing new opportunities. Our new president, Marietta Madden, has entered office with a boost of energy. We are reaching out to camellia

growers in the Richmond area and scheduling workshops at the Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens, Richmond, VA. Plans are in progress for several mutual projects with the Master Gardeners of both Chesapeake and Virginia Beach. Additionally, we have started working with Garden Clubs who oversee the planting and maintenance of local city gardens.

Our fall show and plant sale is on the ACS/ACCS calendar, currently scheduled for November 5, 2022 and we are planning for the spring show to be in March, 2023. We look forward to the upcoming season.

## **State Director's Report from North Carolina — August 2022**

### **Submitted by John R. Fields and Bob Fox**

Fall 2021 was just like any other fall camellia season in North Carolina as the long-awaited season began with the ACCS convention at Litchfield Beach, SC. The Clubs were beginning to meet and planning their shows with great enthusiasm. The hope was that there would be no COVID restrictions and/or cancellations of the NC show schedule and both Fayetteville and the Tidewater Camellia Club in Wilmington, were planning with that intention in mind.

The sasanquas and hybrids were flourishing and many were out gibbing the japonicas in preparation for their floral displays and potential show schedule. The Fayetteville Camellia Society Fall Plant Sale, October 24, 2021, was held at Ross and Cathy Kubeny's Garden. The Tidewater Camellia Club held workshops at the Arboretum and at Oakdale Cemetery which is a historic site and continued to prepare for their annual show.

The season was blessed with good weather and ample rain. There were no large tropical storms nor blizzards to ruin the blooms in Eastern NC. What was turning out to be an ideal year for show blooms was soon hijacked by COVID. The spread of a new COVID strand among several of the important judges and planners that help execute the Fayetteville show caused the club to cancel their March 5 & 6, 2022 – 75th Annual Camellia Show. This historic show will take place in 2023 and the club has already begun the planning and securing the location. Mark your calendars for the 75th Annual Camellia Show on March 4-5, 2023 at Cape Fear Botanical Garden, Rt 301, Fayetteville.

With the news of Fayetteville club's cancellation, the NC camellia enthusiast still had hope that the Tidewater Camellia Club would host their show on Saturday, February 26, 2022.

The Tidewater Camellia Club celebrated its Annual Camellia Festival & Show Event at the New Hanover County Arboretum, 6206 Oleander Drive, Wilmington, NC. The event was an overwhelming success and many of the participants were excited to see a return to sharing our blooms with other people. Camellia exhibitors from all over the Southeastern United States displayed hundreds of blooms for evaluation by American Camellia Society Judges.

Festival Events began at noon on Saturday, February 26, and included camellia care presentations, hands-on workshops, Arboretum Garden tours, floral displays by local clubs, plus New Hanover County School's Camellia Art Displays.

Tidewater's Camellia Sale began at 10:00 A.M. and was supposed to last until 3:00 P.M. However, the demand was so high that many of the plants were gone within 30 minutes.

Both the Tidewater and Fayetteville Clubs are excited about the upcoming year and look forward to sharing their beautiful blooms.

## **State Directors Report for South Georgia — September 2022**

### **Submitted by Sandra Jones**

#### **Middle Georgia Camellia Society (with Tommy Alden)**

Middle Georgia Camellia Society kicked off their year September 8, 2022 with a membership drive and refresher instructions on gibbing. They were unable to hold some meetings in 2021 but have had monthly meetings in 2022. They have planned their calendar and look forward to a very busy year.

Middle Georgia is hosting the national American Camellia Society convention to be held the last week of February. They are meeting frequently and will have the exact dates soon. In conjunction with the convention, the Middle Georgia Camellia Society will hold their show at Masee Lane between February 24th and 26th.

The last weekend in January, Middle Georgia will hold a workshop at Masee Lane with sessions on grafting, pruning, prepping blooms for shows, waxing camellias, planting, etc., that will kick off the Festival of Camellias held at Masee Lane the entire month of February. They work closely in conjunction with the ACS personnel to make all this happen.

The club also has a work day in April at Masee Lane to help prune and care for the camellias in the Sun Trial garden. This garden was created to determine which varieties of Japonicas can withstand full sun. The Middle Georgia Camellia Society truly is an outstanding club.

#### **Chattahoochee Valley Camellia Society (with Cameron Bean)**

Chattahoochee Valley Camellia Society has two meetings scheduled, one this fall and another early winter. They are assisting the Middle Georgia Camellia Society in planning the national ACS Convention. They will host guided tours of both the Sam M. Wellborn Camellia Garden at the Columbus Botanical Garden and the Old Town Camellia Garden.

During the convention tours they plan to offer gibbing workshops for guests and will have gibb to purchase. There will also be guides for both gardens to answer questions and share information about the many different camellia varieties and features of the

gardens. These two gardens have the largest inventory of any of the other gardens on the ACS American Garden Trail. There are over eight hundred at the Sam M. Wellborn Camellia Garden at the Columbus Botanical Garden and twelve hundred at the Old Town Camellia Garden.

Chattahoochee Valley Camellia Society is looking forward to their 2023 show scheduled for March 4th and 5th. Their shows were canceled the past two years due to COVID. Chattahoochee Valley is up and running!

### **Coastal Georgia Camellia Society (with Gene Phillips)**

The Coastal Georgia Camellia Society continues to hold monthly meetings and reports their attendance is improving although still below preCOVID numbers. Although they remained active, their club membership dropped significantly. They hope this year will help them grow back to 200 members.

Coastal Georgia Camellia Society will hold its annual Camellia Festival on Saturday, January 28, 2023 at Coastal Georgia Botanical Gardens. They will host a luncheon to raise money for their society. Dr. Brenda Litchfield will be their guest speaker as she shares about her trip to visit Professor Gao Jiying in China. The club will also have a camellia exhibition that same day on the veranda of the Andrews's Building at CDBG. They plan to offer guided tours of the Judge Arthur Solomon Camellia Trail as well.

Coastal Georgia Camellia Society remains an active and vibrant organization. Gene Phillips and Marsha Zeagler have moved to Sylvania where they continue to grow camellias and other plants. With Gene as the president of this organization, it will no doubt reach its goals.

### **Wiregrass Camellia Society**

Wiregrass continued to hold monthly meetings last year and had a club picnic at Fred and Sandra Jones' Gathering Place May 21, 2022 with approximately 62 in attendance. Meetings for the coming season will kick off September 11, 2022 at the Brooks County Museum and Cultural Center. Dates have been set for the year and a list of potential educational programs have been created.

Wiregrass Camellia Society continues to support the Quitman Garden Club for their ACS sanctioned show the first week in February. That show will be held Saturday and Sunday, February 5 & 6, 2023. They also assist in maintaining the Betty Sheffield Memorial Garden at the Brooks County Museum and Cultural Center. Many of the Wiregrass members are members of both organizations.

After Nancibeth Shealy and Sandra Jones began working with Pebble Hill Plantation, outside of Thomasville, GA to identify untagged camellias, they were approached with the idea of holding a camellia show at this outstanding 20th century sporting estate. Wiregrass Camellia Society and Pebble Hill Plantation will host this show February 18-19, 2023. The club sponsored show previously held in Boston, GA in November has been canceled.

## ACCS STATE DIRECTORS

State	Name	Term
Florida	Chuck Ritter	2019-2022
Florida	Howard Rhodes	2019-2022
Georgia	John Newsome	2022-2023
Georgia	Sandra Jones	2022-2023
Maryland	Richard Mohr	2022-2023
North Carolina	John Fields	2022-2023
North Carolina	Bob Fox	2022-2023
South Carolina	Paul Cloessner	2019-2022
South Carolina	David Elliot	2019-2022
Virginia	Bob Black	2019-2022
Virginia	Toni McKenna	2019-2022
At Large	Jim Campbell	2019-2022

### Join NOW! — The Atlantic Coast Camellia Society

A membership entitles you to a journal published in January, May, and September and full access to ACCS Website. To join, send your check and membership info below to:

**ACCS, Fred C. Jones  
2056 Dunn Road  
Moultrie, GA 31768**

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**Membership Form**

**ACCS Annual Dues, Good for 1 Year from Date of Payment**

**Single or Double \$25.00**

**Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City, State, Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone # (include Area Code):** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-Mail:** \_\_\_\_\_



**Camellia Japonica "Raspberry Ripple"**  
**Grown and Photographed by J. D. Thomerson**