



It is difficult to believe another Camellia season is upon us! Plant sales have started with some early purchases over the Labor Day weekend. The inventory list with photos is up on the website for your viewing and the plants are looking great. When I moved last October's air layered potted plants into the sales inventory at the Shade house, a passerby stopped to purchase our plants that very day.

Our club storage shed is finally completed! Thank you to the many people who contributed to this project! From where we started in 2017 when Paul Bruno investigated how and where we could put a building to what stands there today is remarkable. The hurdles of permits, septic, property boundaries and inspections gave us many headaches and delays, but it has all paid off and resulted in an outstanding storage facility for the Club's belongings. No other club owns property, a Shade House to hold our potted camellias for future sales, a cargo van for transporting plants, and now a Storage Club House.

A big safety factor was the improvement of getting off Pine Forest road and onto our property. The relocation of the gate was arranged by Alan McMillan, and now provides room to exit the road safely towards the entrance. We also have an, eye catching sign out front on the fence displaying our name and address for ease in finding our location.

I am excited for you to see the changes and work completed from; Debbie Brown stained cabinetry for our kitchenette to John Mate's construction of skyline, flooring, sink, and bathroom. What you can't see is Bill Lyford installed our electrical and water line. This is an air conditioned building which not only protects our belongings but provides a place to cool down on the hot days when I have been working out there. When T. Morris passed Christi Hankins and Mack Thetford collected PCC belongs and started to add shelving and containers of supplies. Additional shelving was needed and Lauren Mate, Louise Seitz and Debbie Brown went through our belongings to remove and repack these supplies. The end result was monumental and far exceeds my expectations.

We owe so much to Thelka Morris for making this possible. I will address her generosity over the years in future messages. - Trumin Brown - President

## Upcoming Events ....

**Tuesday Sept. 21st** – General Meeting at The Garden Center, 6:30pm social, 7pm Program: Paul Bruno will cover '**Preparing for Camellia Season**', along with a review of 'gibbing' and bottles of gib for members. You will need to 'gib' to have your camellias ready to produce blooms to enter at our December 11th show. We have freebies for you tonight, Nomenclature books along with other printed materials for you to take home.

**Tuesday Oct. 19th** – General meeting at The Garden Center, 6:30pm social, 7pm Program: Greg Taylor, '**Harvesting and Potting Air-Layers with Gib Demonstrations**'. You will need to 'gib' 7 weeks prior to our show date to have your camellias ready to produce blooms so you can enter at our December 11th show.

**Friday Oct. 22nd** – [UWF Camellia Garden](#) **Work Day** starting at 9:00am to 11:00am. We will be harvesting air layers, gibbing and general cleaning of the garden. Please bring your gloves, and yard waste containers to pick up branches

**Saturday Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup>** – ALL HANDS NEEDED! **This is a very BIG and Important Work Day at [Shade House](#) starting at 9:00am.** We will be potting our harvested air layers, spraying camellias, transferring plants from the right side to the left side of the shade house, fertilizing, and general clean up. Please bring your gloves and water bottles.

**We appreciate all of our members and leave it to your discretion to wear a mask at our meetings. Seating will be spread out for you to select where you prefer to sit. Stay well and safe.**

What a great crowd! We had 62 members and friends attend our banquet at V. Paul on August 17<sup>th</sup>. James Frazier provided the invocation and our host, Paul Bruno, directed tables of guest to the buffet lines. President Trumin Brown announced Lauren Mate as our 'Person of the Year' who handled the difficulties of the Covid decisions for the Club. (Lauren and John Mate missed the banquet to attend birthday celebrations with the grandchildren who live out of town.)

Judge Garrett put on his robe for the swearing in of the officers and board members.



We had a silent auction of paintings done by the late T. Morris with proceeds of \$550 going to the T. Morris Scholarship fund.



Skip Vogelsang provided comical salesmanship material to assist Dick Hooton & John Davy with the auction.





## Here are a few of the Happy Auction Winners;

Black Magic went to Oscar Woody with Paula Wade.



Raspberry Sherbet left with Doug and Bonnie Mroch,



Soon to be registered by John Davy, 'T's Rose' went to Lee Vanderpool and another to Richard Freeman.



**Your officers and board of volunteers take an oath to serve the Pensacola Camellia Club each season which consists of the following pledges;**

**Faithfully fulfill you duties as an officer or director as described in the Pensacola Camellia Club's By-Laws.**

**Attend all club general membership meetings and all board meetings, as well as fully participate in club's workdays, shows and activities, whenever possible.**

**Will be respectful, thoughtful and succinct in all board and club discussions, and perform committee work promptly and diligently.**

**Will promote the Pensacola Camellia Club, strive to strengthen and grow its membership and energetically support the purposes of the club.**

Kristin Bennett won the bidding on Nuccio's Junior Prom.



## **So much fun!** By Kristin Bennett

The banquet at V. Paul's was my first camellia banquet. Everyone was so welcoming and nice! Louise made such a great effort to introduce me to as many people as possible. I was told by more than one person the Pensacola Camellia Club was the best club around because of the wealth of knowledge of the members but also the comradery and genuine desire of the members to help one another grow and thrive in their camellia obsessions.

My sweet beau, Jim DeReuil, was out of town and could not attend, so I brought my friend, Barbara Little. As the auction started going, I looked over what was available, tried to recall if Jim already had the plants that were being auctioned and finally sent him a picture of the program to see if he was interested in any of the plants. He had not responded, I was getting caught up in the excitement and made my first bid....I don't recall the plant...I do recall Skip laughing saying "you should have seen your friend's face when you made that bid!" I also recall great relief when someone else outbid me!

Then came Junior Prom. I thought how much Jim (and I!) would like that one...even if he already had it...because, can you have too many camellias? I already knew the bidding shock point so was comfortable as I continued raising my hand for Junior Prom. As the bidding continued, I still hadn't heard from Jim. Then, at the exact moment I heard "SOLD" Jim's text message came in..."how about Junior Prom?" I replied "too late." I was looking forward to how pleasantly surprised he was going to be when he saw his gift -I won Junior Prom. And indeed, pleasantly surprised he was.



Will we be blessed with a Junior Prom flower this season? I am confident we will because Skip assured me Junior Prom grows like a weed with blooms bigger than a pie plate. And because there are only two available, it is likely to win every show! So we look forward to the December Pensacola Camellia Club show at which I plan to take home my first show medal for Junior Prom.

## **Website is Open 24/7 - Louise Seitz News Editor**

I have the pleasure of being the first contact for the Club's information due to inquiries on our website. There are two basic requests we receive; the first is "HELP, we are new to this or my camellia has a problem." I let them explain the issues then request an address and contact information for our experts, (Dick, Skip, or Paul). Whoever lives nearest to the callers address gets to assist them. The second request is, "I wish to purchase camellias". I direct them back to the website to review our 'Camellias For Sale' and click on "Inventory" to view photos of what we have in stock. Some of the callers think we have a store front with daily hours or are open 24/7. No, but we do drop what we are doing to accommodate requests.

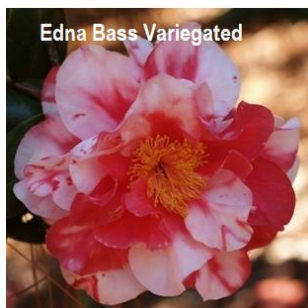
It was Christmas week, no really December 24<sup>th</sup> when I had a call from a thoughtful husband wanting to purchase a camellia for his wife. Some of us get inspiration when the pressure is on, but I have always heard men wait to the last minute to shop. In the spirit of the season, I told him where we were located and he was willing to venture north of I-10 for this gift. We met and instead of going with one plant after walking through the shade house selection two plants were selected along with membership for his wife. It is always a pleasure to bring others into the camellia family.

Another caller was Tommy and Judy Weems. They reached out to the Pensacola Camellia Club via our website and their desire for special camellias. Again, I explained that we have our inventory online with photos, so they could review our camellia selection and we would put them aside for their purchase. Sure enough they reviewed and called back with a list of 10 camellias that they would purchase at the Palafox Market the following Saturday. They asked for directions, they explained they would be driving from Andalusia, Alabama and would meet us at 8:30am on Saturday at the market. That is a 90 mile ride one way for camellia plants. Sure enough, they promptly arrived and the plants moved from the van to their truck. That was their first trip. They called back with another extensive list of desired plants to purchase at the camellia show, and again at Palafox Market, plus an additional trip directly to the Shade House to meet Trumin for more camellias. According to Tommy they had 100 camellias planted on their property.



As I look for articles for the newsletter I reached out to the Weems for an update on their many camellia purchases. There was no reply to my email so I called Tommy at the beginning of September to ask how they were doing and if they would provide a story. Surprise, they moved! There was a need to be closer to family so off to Spring Hill, Louisiana. Tommy mentioned that they had planted all of the camellias under pine trees and that did add to the value of selling their property. He mentioned that the young family that bought the property is excited for the coming camellia blooming season. Of the 100 camellias, they did manage to uproot 10 camellias that moved with them and are replanted at their new home. Tommy explained that they had a 'grand time working with Pensacola Camellia members and plan to visit again'. I reminded him that our show is always the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in December, maybe will see you them then. Since they are members, they look forward to what we are doing via the newsletter and the website.

Oh, did you want to know which camellias moved with them? Two Edna Bass Variegated, Cherry Jubilees, Frank Houser, two Frank Houser variegated, Ray Gentry, Ray Gentry variegated, Chief Arnold and Jimmy Carter. (Disclaimer, Tommy did not vote for him).



## Fall care for your camellias

At our previous sales events at the Garden Center or Palafox Market we bring tall health camellia plants covered with multiple buds that attracted buyers. I recall Paul Bruno or Alan McMillan would tell the buyers that they should remove some of



excess buds which allow the plant to focus its energy on fewer flowers and helps the bloom to fully open. There was one lady that asked, 'Please remove them for me, but wait I can't watch' and turned her back. Sounds funny but to newer buyers or members the idea of removing buds that would produce flowers is hard to do. Seriously, you just spent the summer months caring for your camellia plants; watered, fertilized, weeded and replenished the mulch so it would have blooms.

To reiterate that disbudding concept go to the Gulf Coast Camellian Journal there you will find Art Landry of Baton Rouge series of 'In the Garden' articles. ***He stated, start disbudding as soon as the flower buds are easily noticeable from the growth buds. Carefully pinch off all but one flower bud on each stem to help get better and larger blooms. While disbudding, bring along your clippers and trim off any weak or dead branches as you go along.***



*Remove buds A,B and C to leave terminal bud.*

However, if you have **sasanqua camellias**, which are prized for their profusion of flowers, do not disbud. Below, the definition of profusely flower blooms at the late T. Morris home.





## Pests, Dangers, and an Unusual Guest in Our Camellia Garden

- By- Lauren Mate

Here on the Gulf Coast of Florida we have had a really hot, humid, and rainy summer and maintaining our camellia garden has been a challenge. With all our liquid sunshine, the weeds are growing higher and seem to multiply exponentially overnight. Working outside can only be done in short spurts of time in the early morning or later afternoon when the temperature has cooled to the high 80s. But as you work in your garden, it is important to be mindful of the pests and natural dangers that linger.

Snakes! In Pensacola, we have many types of snakes that like to hide out in the weeds from garter, black, and cottonmouth/water moccasins. Since the Mate camellia garden is close to a pond, John and I have to be very careful of snakes. Though they are usually shy and slither away, the poisonous ones need special handling, or a more finite solution, to ensure your safety. We are always on the look out!



Fire ants. This pest is certainly more prevalent than snakes and mounds pop up incessantly. Be mindful of where you are stepping, before you put your foot down, and always wear shoes and gloves to help protect yourself from their nasty stings. Fire ants thrive in the loose, sand soil in our area. If you do get stung, ice the affected area immediately and then apply caladryl or a hydrocortisone cream to ease the stinging and subsequent itching. It works!

Tree branches. I recommend never weeding or even walking on a windy day if your garden is shaded by large trees. You just never know when a large branch will let loose and fall. John and I do a walk-about after the passing of every windy storm front, and never fail to pick up large branches. We usually are fortunate to not have any major



damage. However as the photo shows, branches can fall vertically like missiles and a direct hit on a gardener's head would not be good. The same goes for magnolia pods! Green magnolia seed pod that could easily cause a nasty knot on the head. Here is John checking for loose branches. He has a hard time prying this one loose.

Whiskey. When you live in the country, you never can really predict what you may run across in your garden. When I say "Whiskey", I don't mean a whiskey still, but an actual young 650 lb. longhorn bull. Imagine my surprise while making a pass through our garden one July morning when I sighted "Whiskey" leisurely eating without a care in the world. (Fortunately, bulls do not favor munching on camellias, but prefer the weeds and grass and show their thanks by dropping fertilizer here and there.) I quickly went back to the house and informed John we had a "problem" in our garden. Fortunately, John had dealt with "Whiskey" aka "Houdini" before and knew exactly what to do. He picked up a feed bucket containing range cubes from the neighbor's house to entice Whiskey back to his pasture. "I had to work fast to get him through the gate as the other six bulls had noticed the feed bucket and were heading across the pasture towards me at a run. Being highly motivated, I tossed the cubes on the ground and closed the gate just in time." John further quipped, "My encounter with Whiskey and fixing the situation was easier than getting the squirrels to stop chewing the name tags off of the camellia plants."



Whiskey making a pass through the Mate Camellia Garden. Australian Shepherd puppy tries to herd him back home. Whiskey/Houdini on a previous escape. Range cubes are in the red bucket.

I bet many of you have stories yourself and we would love to read them and by all means share your advice on how to stop those pesky squirrels.