

The Pensacola Camellia

October 2014



Newsletter of the Pensacola Camellia Club—established 1937
PensacolaCamelliaClub.com

President's Message

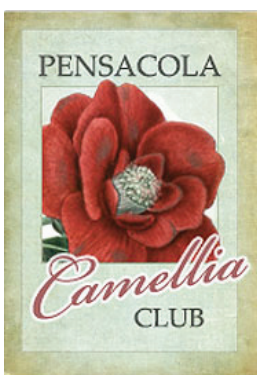
On behalf of the Board of Directors and myself, I welcome you to the 2014 /15 Pensacola Camellia Club (PCC) New Season! I am very excited about the great year we have in front of us.

I have heard that it is hard to know where you are going if you are not clear on where you have been in the past. With this in mind I want to briefly recap our accomplishments from the last 12 months. The biggest item from last year was our very successful hosting of the American Camellia Society's National Convention. I have heard nothing but positive comments about our City and the PCC in regards to National Convention that was held here in Pensacola last December. Thank You to the organizing committee and all PCC members for the great job. We continue to grow our membership base and I am very happy about this. I continue to ask all "PCC Camellians" to help recruit new members. I would like to reach our goal of 300 members by January 25, 2015. If each current member brings in just 2 new members we will exceed our membership goal. Like the beautiful "Winter Rose", (Camellia) our club must stay green and growing. We are currently at approx. 240 members. Our UWF Garden continues to be a terrific project, thanks Skip..... We have made great strides at our Shade house adding Electricity and we are making plans for raised beds, a new Storage building, irrigation, and major repairs to the shade house, WOW! Many thanks to our beloved "T" Morris and to Colonel Hooton..... We purchased a new / used Camellia Cargo Van for the Club..... In addition our Outreach programs like our community show for locals and novice growers continues to be successful..... So you can see we have had a successful and busy past 12 months and, as stated above, the upcoming year will pick up on these past successes.

We have great programs on slate this year and we kicked off our September meeting with a terrific presentation on rooting cuttings. This program was presented by our own horticulturalist Dr. Mack Thetford. I am looking forward to the Blooming season that is just about 30 days in front of us. If you have not tried to "Gib" your blooms this could be the year to give it a try. Please try to attend our meetings 6:30 pm on the third Tuesday of each Month at the Pensacola Garden Center (located on 9th Ave, just a mile north of Cervantes).

I thank you for allowing me to serve as your President and look forward to seeing you all with great Blooms!!

--- Best Regards, Paul Bruno



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- Dante Kahn
- Alan McMillan
- Dick Sloan
- Jerri Smith
- Dr. Mack Thetford

October 21st Camellia Club Program: **Heritage Camellias At McIlhenny Gardens**

Who: Pensacola Camellia Club presents

What: James Campbell, American Camellia Society President-elect, will talk about heritage camellias at McIlhenny Gardens, Avery Island, LA

When: Tuesday October 21, 6:30 p.m.

Where: Garden Center, 1850 N. 9th Ave.

Details: Free. Public cordially invited. Social/refreshment time 6:30. Program at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. James Campbell of Covington, LA will discuss the project of identifying the heritage camellias at the McIlhenny Gardens (think Tabasco Sauce) at Avery Island, LA. This is an ongoing project of the American Camellia Society (ACS). Many of the older camellias in the McIlhenny gardens were imported from Europe in the late 1800s. Although camellias are native to China and Japan, many of the camellias arriving early in the U. S. came through Europe.

Mr. Campbell, a retired architect, is president-elect of the American Camellia Society. He has been a camellia hobbyist for over forty years. His collection has grown to over twelve hundred varieties. He has traveled with the International Camellia Society to China, Switzerland, Italy and Germany. He is regular correspondent with Dr. Gao Jiyin, China's leading camellia expert. They have exchanged camellia scions (camellia cuttings for grafting). Some of Mr. Campbell's photos have been published in Dr. Jiyin's new Chinese camellia book.



James Campbell, center with arm raised, at McIlhenny Gardens, Avery Island, LA.
Photo courtesy Mr. Campbell.



PCC workday at UWF Garden - standing, from left: Alvin Williams, Pierre Kaufke, Norman Vickers, Rita Perling, George Knight, Skip Vogelsang, Tom Henderson, Dick and Enid Sloan, Dennis Kohli, Reza Vafae, and Dante Kahn. Kneeling from left: Paul Bruno, Sandee Houston and Roger Vinson. Photo by Dick Hooton.



New camellia planting, from left, Dick Sloan, Skip Vogelsang & George Knight. Photo by N. Vickers.



LeAnna Brennan shows off successful air layer initiated last April. Photo by N. Vickers.



September 16, 2014 PCC membership meeting. Photo by Norman Vickers.

Camellia Lingo 101 and the Plain Talk Camellia Encyclopedia

By: J. D. Thomerson

My good friend Mark Crawford, owner of Loch Laurel Nursery, is a plant pathologist and chemical guru who often speaks in a language I just don't understand. He will sometimes use the scientific name for a plant instead of the common name that I know. When I ask him what chemical I should spray on my plant to kill some type of bug or fungus problem my head begins to spin with all the strange and confusing chemical names he lists. I usually respond by asking him if I can buy the product at Home Depot or Lowes and what is the name brand on the bottle. Usually, he will say "Oh no, homeowners can't buy it – it is \$100 an ounce, but I have some and I will share with you." Or put another way, if I'll help him in his nursery one morning he will put the one or two drops of this magic potion in my two gallon pump up sprayer and it will solve my problem. It is an arrangement that works really well but I do have to stop him occasionally and ask him to speak English. I just don't think I will ever have the "smarts" to learn this scientific lingo like Mark. He often kids me about how I try and pronounce the few chemical names I actually do know.

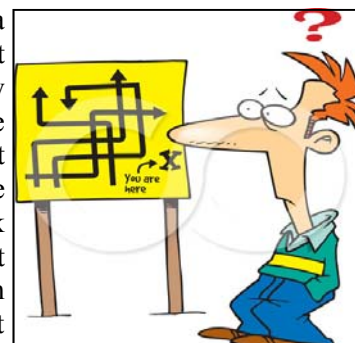


Well, what does this have to do with camellias? I am glad you asked – let me explain. When I first got involved with camellias I was a total beginner that knew little if anything but I was lucky enough to get to hang around camellia experts like Hulyn Smith, Randolph Maphis, and Mark Crawford. Well, believe me I was often lost as could be listening to some of their conversations. Hulyn would say something about a certain camellia bloom being a "Dog's Butt" or the cambium layer on some sasanqua being too small and Mark would talk about a particular Japonica that has twice the number of chromosomes as normal. Randolph would ask Mark if he would get him some gibberellic acid and what fungicide he should use on his scions. They would all fuss about dieback and cankers and Hulyn really hated something called a "Red Spider." I might be remembering some of the above wrong because at the time I did not have a clue what they were even talking about.



What does a dog's butt have to do with camellias?

Have you ever been in a conversation and been so lost that you didn't even know how to ask a question? I am sure you have heard the saying that "It is better to keep quiet and be thought a fool than to speak and remove all doubt." That was my situation early on with camellias and still is somewhat today but Mark and Randolph and others know me well enough now that I just ask questions and don't worry about them thinking I'm a fool. And, believe it or not, I have actually learned enough about camellias the past seven or eight years to actually understand many of these conversations and actually join in on some of them.



As I have shared before I am a teacher by profession so it is natural for me to want to educate others. So, I want to share all the basic camellia terminology or "lingo" I have learned with those reading this article. I will call this lesson or course "Camellia Lingo 101" and like all good teachers I will give you a test at the end so read and study carefully. I know that many of you already know way more than I do about camellias but hopefully you will enjoy reading this information. Perhaps someone would be willing to write a "Camellia Lingo 102" course for a future article.

OK – Here Goes!

PLEASE NOTE: These are not official definitions -- they come from the "**Thomerson Plain Talk Encyclopedia.**"

Air-Layer: A method of rooting a camellia branch while it is still attached to the living bush. It involves removing about a one inch ring of bark around a branch exposing the cambium layer -- wrapping a tennis ball size amount of damp sphagnum moss around this exposed area and sealing with plastic wrap and/or tin foil. About six months later the exposed area will have formed callus and roots and the branch can be removed and potted up or planted.



A Dog's Butt: An ugly looking camellia bloom.

Callus: Healthy new plant tissue that heals a wound on a camellia branch or scion. Callus is a good thing especially when grafting – it means the callus is joining the scion to the rootstock.

Node: The tiny bud-like growth at the base of the leaf junction with the stem -- sometimes called an “eye.”



Hopefully, someone will develop a cure for Camellia Petal Blight

Petal Blight: Caused by the fungus *Ciborinia camelliae* which is a disease affecting the bloom of the camellia. Symptoms include brown spots on the petals which begin as small brown specks but enlarge rapidly during warm weather periods typically beginning in late December or early January in the southeast. A gray fuzzy growth may be observed at

the base of the flower where it attaches to the stem. Eventually the fungus invades to the flower base where a hard, black structure called a sclerotium forms. It is important to pick up all old camellia blooms because this sclerotium can lie dormant on, or in, the soil for one to five years or more and then become active again and can infect future blooms. Unfortunately there is no cure for petal blight – sanitation of old blooms is the only current advice. Unfortunately, the fungus can travel for up to a mile or more in the air so we need to encourage nearby neighbors to pick up old blooms as well.

Scale: There are many types of scales that infest plants but Tea Scales are the ones that bother the camellia plant the most. Scales typically live on the undersides of leaves and can often be noticed by white specs or cottony looking structures. However, since they live on the underside of the leaf they often go unnoticed until you see a yellow splotching on the upper leaf surfaces caused by the sucking insects underneath. The whole plant may appear unhealthy, and the leaves drop prematurely. Scales seem to occur in shady moist locations especially on branches close to the ground. Pruning lower branches and thinning out the middle of the plant helps prevent scale. A good covering of the undersides of infected leaves with an Ultra-Fine or Summer Oil spray smothers the scale and is the typical recommended cure and prevention.



Ultra-Fine Oil sprayed on the undersides of leaves will control scale

Spider Mite: A tiny little bug that is not really a spider and can't be seen by my poor old eyes but it sucks the plant juices out of a camellia leaf making them look dull and bronzy looking. They typically live on the underside of the leaf and



Spider mites cause leaves to turn an ugly bronzy color — smother and kill them with Ultra-Fine Oil

attacks during hot dry weather when their populations can grow by the millions within just a few days. Spider mites seem to attack plants located in sunnier and dry locations and for some reasons certain varieties get them more than others. Repeated sprays of Ultra-Fine/Summer Oil prevents and kills the various life cycle stages of this nasty little pest. They do make miticide pesticide but this kills off the good bugs that eat the spider mites as well as the mites so in the long run you might not be gaining an advantage.

Rootstock: A plant, sometimes just a stump, which already has an established, healthy root system, onto which a cutting (scion) from another plant is grafted. Typically plants that are strong growers but have inferior flowers are used for rootstocks so the healthy root system can then support a pretty bloom. Many people use various sasanquas as rootstocks as they are less prone to root rot. A very vigorous japonica variety named Kumagai Nagoya is currently all the rave for using as rootstock.

Grafting: A method of joining a scion of a special, rare, or hard to root/grow camellia variety to a vigorous growing rootstock variety so the scion variety has better and/or faster growth.

Cleft Graft: A method of grafting in which the entire top of a rootstock plant is cut off about 3 or 4 inches above the soil line (I call this chopping off the rootstocks head.) Then about a one inch slit is made right down the middle center of the trunk of the rootstock so that a scion can be placed in the slit in the stock or stump in such a manner that its bark evenly joins that of the stock. The cleft graft is the most common method of grafting camellias in the southeast.



A cleft graft with two scions

Scion: A camellia cutting typically of two to six leaves and at least one growth bud (or eye) that is used to insert into another camellia plant by one of several grafting methods. There are several beautiful camellia varieties, such as Ville de Nantes, that just do not grow on their own roots very well and do best if a scion is grafted onto a vigorous rootstock.



Approach Graft: A method of grafting that does not require the top of the rootstock plant to be chopped off until the union of the desired plant has callused with the rootstock. An approach graft is made by scrapping off a 1 or 2 inch section of bark on both the rootstock plant and a branch of the desired variety and then matching these two exposed areas together and taping up securely for about six months. After the two varieties have callused together the top of the rootstock plant can be chopped off and you have a successful graft. A big advantage of this method is that the rootstock does not have to have its head chopped off until you know a successful union has taken place. This ensures that they rootstock does not die during the grafting process. Also, the desired new variety that is being grafted on the rootstock does not have to be cut either (it keeps its roots until the union is made.) The approach graft typically has a very high success rate but it does take longer than the cleft graft. However, it is nice to know that even if the graft is not successful both the rootstock and desired variety will still be alive growing on their own roots. A limitation of the approach graft is if the two plants are not in pots you have to get a potted variety of one of the two and place next to a planted variety of the other.

Graft Chimera: In a few rare occasions when grafting the rootstock and scion variety combine together when callusing at the junction of the scion and rootstock and contains tissues of both plants. The new growing plant is neither the rootstock nor the scion variety but actually an entirely new plant with characteristics of both. The variety Helen Bower is a popular chimera variety that was formed when Dr. J. V. Knapp was grafted on a Mathotiana Variegated rootstock.

Massee Lane: The headquarters of the American Camellia Society located in Fort Valley, GA (see photo below.) They are open to the public to tour the camellia gardens as well as the location of the offices that operate the ACS.



ACS: American Camellia Society

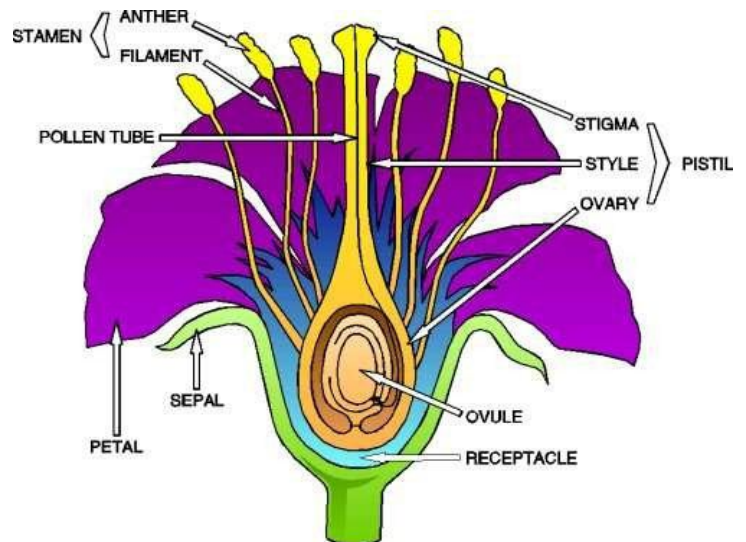
Hen Do/Pig Do/Man Do: Natural fertilizers as a result of Chicken, Pig, or Human waste (as the case may be.)

Emasculate: To remove unopened camellia petals and stamens/anthers so the pollen of a different variety can be placed on the pistil of a bloom to make sure the plant is pollinated by the hybridizer's choice. Side note: as a man this just sounds horrible.

Cambium: 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.

Pith: The center area of the branch (typically white in color.)

Stamen, Anther, Filament, Pistil, ect.: All very important male and female parts of a camellia bloom (see photo below.) Understanding the roles of each of these flower parts is vital in hybridizing camellias.



Hybridizing: Crossing the pollen of one variety to the pistil of another variety to create a new seed variety.

Gibberellic Acid: A chemical that can be applied adjacent to a camellia bloom bud by twisting out either a nearby leaf bud or flower bud and putting one small drop of chemical in the small created cavity.

Sasanqua – A fall mass blooming camellia variety that is best suited as a landscape variety. Flowers are typically much smaller than reticulata and most japonica blooms but is just loaded with blooms. Blooms typically only last a day or two and shatter and fall to the ground making a carpet of petals.

Reticulata: These are typically the big huge ruffled petal varieties that are grown mainly by serious camellia growers and normally only seen at camellia shows. Most reticulata varieties (in my opinion) are ugly bushes but have incredible looking blooms. They are harder to grow (they often are attacked by dieback) than japonica or sasanquas. Some

reticulata varieties are quite cold sensitive and need to be grown in a greenhouse while others do quite well outdoors.

Japonica: The most common and recognized species of camellia. The Japonica camellias typically bloom naturally from December thru February in the Southeast and have bloom sizes ranging from miniature 2.5 inches or smaller up to 6 inches or larger. Japonicas have all kinds of various colors and/or variegation and come in several different shapes and forms.

Die Back/Cankers: A fungus called *Glomerella cingulate* that grows well where weather conditions are hot and humid as typical in the southeast. Symptoms of the disease are seen as cankers (sunken spots on the stem that looks like the outer bark has been scraped off). The first plant symptom usually observed is wilting and death of small, current season twigs. Reticulata varieties seem to be most susceptible to this fungus. If cankers form on the main trunk of the plant, this disease may eventually cause the death of the entire plant



Dieback is hard to control but various fungicides definitely help.

Nomenclature Book: A listing of all the registered camellia varieties with bloom descriptions, sizes, seed and pollen parents if known, originator's name, and other info about the bloom. It is published every few years by the Southern California Camellia Society and is used as the official guidebook for Camellia Shows.

Mutant/Sport: Is a branch that has a different bloom or leaf characteristics from the rest of the plant. A sport and a mutant are the same thing. If the sport stays true (keeps the same characteristics) for several years and is desirable it can be propagated and named and registered as a new variety.

Sphagnum Moss: A type of unmilled, long-strand peat moss that is typically used when making camellia air layers. This



type of sphagnum moss looks much like the southern Spanish moss found growing in trees. It is what is often found as a growing medium for orchids. Do not use the

decayed peat moss product that is used as a soil amendment that is powder like in texture and is sold as a soil amendment when performing air layers.

ACCS: Atlantic Coast Camellia Society

GCCS: Gulf Coast Camellia Society

Placement: An important job on a camellia show day where volunteers place flowers entered by growers on the proper tables so they can be easily viewed and judged.

Clerk: An important job on a camellia show day where volunteers help camellia judges. Clerks move blooms to the contention table and/or head table as requested by the judges; place first, second, and third place ribbons on blooms, and help tabulate votes.



Head Table: The winner's table that displays the blooms that win an award at a camellia show.

Contention Table: Excellent blooms that judges feel merit being carefully considered for awards. A table set up to compare the best of the best and make final decisions for which blooms should win awards and be moved to the Head Table.

Blind Eye: A leaf growth bud that is very small and somewhat hard to see unless you look closely.

Soil PH: Is an indication of the acidity or alkalinity of soil. Camellias thrive with a soil PH that is just slightly on the acidic side of the scale. The scale ranges from 0 to 14, with 7 being neutral. A pH below 7 is acidic and above 7 is alkaline. Camellias like a PH somewhere in the 5.5 to 7.0 range.

Terminal Bud: The tip of a camellia stem containing the top growth bud.



Virus: Is not necessarily a bad thing with camellias. Camellia variegation is caused by several different types of viruses that do not hurt the plant and causes blooms and/or leaves to be splotted white. The virus actually destroys color (in blotches) on either leaves or flowers. Flowers show varying degrees of white,

sometimes in beautiful patterns, while leaves show a yellow or white mottling. The virus may be transmitted through cuttings and grafting of non-infected scions onto virus-infected stock. Often this is done intentionally to get variegated blooms. Interesting facts about this camellia virus: the virus is not transmitted through seed; all seedlings are virus-free; once the virus is present in a plant it becomes systemic and may not be removed. There are a few varieties that have a genetic variegation that is not caused by this virus such as Herme and Lady Vansittart.



Notice the many petaloids in the center as well as the unique color of many camellia hybrids.

Petaloid: When the stamens and pistils of the flower are transformed into petals in the center of a camellia bloom and do not look typical.

Non-Retic Hybrid: The cross of two or more camellia species as long as there is no Reticulata parentage in the cross. Many of the non-retic hybrids are known for unique iridescent or glowing colors.

Single: A bloom with one row of not more than eight petals that shows all the stamens in the middle of the bloom.

Semi-Double: A bloom with two or more rows of petals and prominent stamens in the middle.

Peony: A deep rounded bloom full of petals but that shows stamens intermixed between the petals.

Anemone: One or more rows of large outer petals lying flat with the center a mass of intermingled petaloids and stamens.

Rose Form Double: A bloom that resembles the typical rose with many rows of petals but when fully opened does show stamens in the middle.

Formal Double: A bloom full of rows of petals that never open to show any stamens.

Tea Plant: Yes, tea is made from a camellia leaf. Camellia sinensis is the species of plant whose leaves and leaf buds are used to produce the popular beverage.

Camellian: A camellia nut that is addicted to growing camellias.



There you go -- the official “**Thomerson Plain Talk Camellia Dictionary**” is now published. If you were a good student and read all of the opening paragraphs you know that it is now test time. Oh no, test time! If you’re like most students that I teach you are asking, begging, or saying something like: “Do we have to take a test – can’t you just give us all 100’s – we have been really nice lately”; “Can we take it next Monday so I can study over the weekend”; “Can we take an open book test?”; “If we all promise to do extra good on our homework can we skip this test?; and I can think of many other similar requests.

Well, considering the fact that growing camellias is supposed to be a fun hobby I guess a test is not a good idea. Also, I would hate for word to spread that folks like Mark Crawford and Jerry Selph failed my test and had to take a remedial course in Camellia Lingo 101.

The article above was provided for reprint courtesy of Tommy Smith of the Valdosta Camellia & Garden Club.

Membership Meeting
6:30 Tuesday, October 21st - Garden Center

Pensacola Camellia Club Workday

Skip Vogelsang and Dick Hooton are asking you to help with the upcoming workday - Saturday, October 25, 9-11 a.m. at the Shade House. Bring gloves and rake (also if possible, bypass pruners) to help clean the shade house. Harvested air layers for those who participated in the spring air layering project.

A Camellia Calendar of Love

John Edwards (1915-2007), a Pensacola native and member of the Pensacola Camellia Club since 1937, left the growers of camellias a Camellia Calendar that represents 'tender and loving care' attitude. John loved camellias and expressed that love through his comment, "You can be down, you can be ill, but just go out there (his greenhouse) and see what God has created. It's marvelous! I'd say this is the best therapy that ever was."

January – Water well before freeze if extremely dry. Plant new varieties; transplant older plants and complete potting program. Continue 'gibbing' if you have suitable buds. Compete in, and visit, Camellia Shows.

February – Time to begin your grafting program. Prune dead wood. Pickup and destroy fallen blooms.* Compete in, and visit, Camellia Shows.

March – Complete grafting program. Fertilize. Complete your pruning program and cut back large plants. Pickup and destroy fallen blooms.* Compete in, and visit, Camellia Shows.

April – Complete fertilization. Time to propagate by air layering plants. Spray (after danger of frost). Pickup and destroy fallen blooms.*

May – Complete spraying of plants.

June – Water if too dry.

July – Water if too dry. Begin propagation from cuttings. Light application of fertilizer (low in nitrogen content). Summer grafting.

August – Water if too dry. Apply light application of fertilizer. Complete your cutting propagation.

September – Plant camellia seeds. Air layer plants should be ready to pot. Spray if needed. Begin disbudding and 'gibbing' programs.

October – Complete disbudding of plants, and continue to pot air layer plants. Mulch for winter months. Continue 'gibbing' program.

November – Water if too dry. Plant new varieties. Transplant or repot plants. Continue 'gibbing' program.

December – Water if too dry, especially before a freeze. Continue planting program. Continue 'gibbing' program. Pickup and destroy fallen blooms.*

The attention given to your plants expresses your love for them.

*(Fallen blooms create spores that cause petal blight.)

-- Adapted from John Edwards' camellia calendar by Gordon E. Eade.
Appeared in PENSACOLA H&G , November 2007, p.72.

From the PCC webmaster, Bill Lyford:

Why should PCC members go to the website? There are ideas for camellia care, photographs of PCC activities and history of the organization beginning in 1937. Besides, one can access previous newsletters and see photos of Pensacola varieties. Most members know that there have been over 100 varieties originating from this club. Also, there are direct links to the American Camellia Society website. If ACS has done it better, then we link to their website rather than try to duplicate the effort.

For those who receive the newsletter by e-mail, click [here](#) to go to PCC website. Click [here](#) to go to ACS website.

Pensacola Camellia Club (PCC) Statement Of Purpose

1. To Foster And Maintain An Interest In Camellias And Their Culture
2. To Promote The Study Of Camellias
3. To Provide An Opportunity For Their Exhibition And Appreciation
4. To Aid And Assist In The Standardization Of Camellia Nomenclature
5. To Recognize Those Individuals Who Have Enhanced The Camellia In Our Society

PENSACOLA CAMELLIA CLUB FOUNDATION

The Pensacola Camellia Club Foundation provides financial support for the activities of the Pensacola Camellia Club. For example, this year, because we are hosting the American Camellia Society convention, the cost of putting on our annual Camellia Show (including the facility rental, prizes and awards, tables rental, meals for out-of-town judges, and similar expenses) will exceed \$5,000. In years past, our club members had to solicit funds for the Show from local businesses and financial supporters. That was difficult, time consuming, and distasteful to most of our members. Now, thanks in large part to the Foundation's financial support, we no longer have to worry about financing our annual show and can devote our full attention to the show itself. Our Club greatly benefits from having our Foundation.

The Foundation always needs and welcomes your donations and memorial gifts. It is both exempt from federal income taxation, as a 501(c)(3) organization, and qualified to receive charitable contributions and bequests which are tax deductible for federal income, estate, and gift tax purposes.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT ONE OF THE FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBERS.

/s/ Roger Vinson, Chair
Jack O'Donnell
Richard Hooton
Chuck Fosha
Skip Vogelsang, Trustees