



President Message - Greg Taylor

Certain varieties of camellias can be challenging to grow and may become sick or die. Fortunately, most camellias are easier to cultivate. Attending your local camellia club can provide insight into which varieties are more manageable and which ones might be more difficult. It is common for camellia growers to occasionally lose a plant, and even experienced growers have faced this issue. For instance, Hulyn Smith has noted that some camellias simply do not survive, suggesting that it is best to move on and plant another one. Knowing that experienced growers like Hulyn Smith, Randolph Maphis, Jerry and Carol Selph, and Mark Crawford have also encountered such challenges can be reassuring.

Camellias are beautiful plants, but they do need some extra care during cold weather. Here are some tips to help your camellias thrive through the winter:

1. **Choose the Right Variety:** Select a camellia variety that is suited to your region and can tolerate cold temperatures.
2. **Protect the Roots:** Mulch around the base of the plant with organic materials like pine needles, straw, or bark chips to insulate the roots.
3. **Watering:** Water your camellia thoroughly before the first hard freeze. Moist soil helps protect the roots.
4. **Shelter from Wind:** Place your camellia in a location that is protected from harsh, cold winds.
5. **Avoid Fertilizing Late:** Do not fertilize late in the summer or fall, as this can cause new growth that is vulnerable to winter damage.
6. **Move Potted Camellias Indoors:** If you have potted camellias, consider moving them to a greenhouse, garage, or other sheltered area during the winter.

By taking these steps, you can help ensure your camellias stay healthy and vibrant even in cold weather.

We moved about 100 potted camellias into my greenhouse, made of  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch PVC pipe (Melinda calls it a "hoop" house). Another dozen camellias were covered with Frost Covers. Despite snow crushing the hoop house underneath 6 inches of snow, all plants survived well. I scraped off 2 inches of snow twice before taking a nap; two hours later, it collapsed. We were able to restore it on Thursday once it warmed up, and removed some camellias Saturday morning. We have enough blooms for a show.

Interestingly, blooms on lower branches fared well even without protection, likely due to ground heat preventing freezing. The top of Drama Girl had burnt brown blooms, but the bloom near the ground is show-ready.



## Don't Worry Camellias Are Tough Plants – by John Davy

My observations from Northwest Florida, which is everyone North of Interstate I-10 who experienced ten days of the big chill plus 9 inches of snow. Disclaimer: this is not scientific just an observation in the garden.

1. Almost all varieties in my yard will survive the freeze.
2. Almost all of the blooms showing color or beginning to open are now brown and will abort, there are some exceptions.
3. Plants in heavy shade did better than plants in full sun.
4. Established plants generally did better than plant planted in the last couple of years.
5. Generally speaking, plants in full flower and plants with expanding flower buds have more damage than early blooming and late blooming varieties.



Going forward...

1. Most of the damaged foliage will drop at the spring growth flush.
2. Do not prune damaged plants until growth begins in 6-8 weeks.
3. Make sure that plants do not become dry.
4. Camellias are survivors, most will survive. Many will have beautiful blooms within 2-3 weeks.
5. If you have not fertilized your camellias in the past, this spring is a good time to start. Healthy plants survive harsh weather conditions better than unhealthy plants. Practice moderation in your fertilizer applications. Excessive fertilizer can cause further damage to your plants.



Happy growing!

## Learning Made Fun with Paul Bruno - by Louise Seitz

Camellia Clubs throughout the Gulf Coast generally host similar events within their clubs. These activities range from monthly meetings, annual shows, camellia propagation by grafting or air-layering, potting air-layers, educational programs to the public along with camellia plant sales at various activities to support our clubs.

Many of you reading this have been fortunate to attend dinner at V. Paul's Italian Ristorante where you would find restaurateur and club member Paul Bruno's camellias decorating the tables. Back in 2021 those camellias attracted the attention of a ladies garden club member who discovered the owner, was an avid camellia grower. She asked Paul to be the presenter for their next meeting. Better yet, have the meeting at V. Paul's, therefore the ladies could stay for dinner and enjoy their evening.

That was the start of our new annual event titled, **'Salute to Camellias, the Winter Rose.'** That's salute as in the Italian style of 'raise a glass.' There is another connection, wines are red, pink, or white, should be simple to match your camellia bloom to your glass of wine. We schedule this for a Wednesday Happy Hour event to have some fun with those blooms. Alan McMillan found Imura, a K. Sawada white, semi double which matched his glass of Chardonnay.



Paul's preparations cover every aspect of Camellia culture. He had samples of; potting soil mixture, soil test, importance of pH in soil, fertilizer, clean tools with alcohol before pruning, Neem Oil to treat various camellia diseases, along with a demo of how to graft. He decorated two tables filled with various camellia blooms from his yard to cover camellia form, size, and color. The evening is well attended by members and friends enjoying Paul's knowledge of camellia history, growth and care. After the demonstration the guests continued the joyful camaraderie with a fine dinner among new friends at V. Paul's.

Member Tila Minshew found her match to her glass and kindly replied to my request for her insight to the event which follows.

Hi, Louise,

Thank you for the lovely photo of me and the delightful, dark, Italian wine and the Black Magic camellia bloom. It was such a fun, and educational evening. I, so, enjoyed re-acquainting with my 'camellia buds!'

As for my story, about how I joined the Pensacola Camellia Club.....my friend, Terri, and I went to the camellia show over a year ago at the Jean & Paul Amos studios at PSC. Terri and I fell in love with the elegance and beauty of the blooms, bought a couple of plants, she claimed a lovely 'Marilyn Levin' and I decided on a 'Lady Laura.' We, then, planned to go to the 'Meet and Greet' at V. Paul's, where we joined the club and began our journey to better our knowledge of camellias, their history, care and various species. We joined in several events out at the UWF camellia garden and enjoyed the camaraderie of our fellow enthusiasts. I look forward to our monthly meetings and special events.



The "Winter Rose" is a season, I thoroughly enjoy!

Thanks to you and all the camellia club members for enhancing my life.

Hila Minshew - 2nd year member



### Show Winners- Congratulations to Our Members!

January 11<sup>th</sup> Tallahassee Show - Skip Vogelsang had a wonderful time winning 'Best in Show' with his 'Ferris Wheel' along with at 6 other awards that day.

January 18<sup>th</sup> Mobile Show - Pensacola Club members won 22 awards in various categories. Congrats to our Club winners, Paul Bruno, Jim & Kristin DeReuil, Richard Freeman, Christi Hankins, Cindy McDonald, Brianna Murdock, Greg and Andrea Taylor, and Mack Thetford.

February 1<sup>st</sup> Gulfport MS Show - our members won 10 awards, congratulations to George & Jane Davis, Greg Taylor, Andrea Taylor, and Skip Vogelsang.

Good Luck at the next show!



**Saturday Feb 8<sup>th</sup>** The Annual Camellia Festival at Eden Gardens State Park located at 181 Eden Garden Road, Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459, from 10am-2pm. More information is on page 7 and there website. <http://www.friendsofedengardens.com/>.

**Retired Employees Association**  
UNIVERSITY OF WEST FLORIDA

The UWF Retired Employees Association cordially invites you to join us for our annual event

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**COCOA & CAMELLIAS**

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**Friday, February 14, 2025, 10:00 to 11:30am at the UWF Camellia Garden**

Enjoy refreshments while strolling through the garden at a time of year when many of the flower varieties are in their full glory.

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The Camellia Garden was created as an enduring gift to celebrate the University's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2007. It was established in partnership between the UWF Retired Employees Association and the Pensacola Camellia Club to showcase heritage varieties that were propagated and registered in Pensacola.

**Friday Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>** – Join Us for ‘Cocoa & Camellias’ at UWF Camellia Garden, 1000 University Pkwy at 10am. The UWF Retired Employees Association and Pensacola Camellia Club members come together to celebrate the Garden with UWF President, Martha Saunders.

**Saturday Feb. 15<sup>th</sup>** – Pensacola Camellia Club at [Palafox Market](#) selling camellias and promoting upcoming events. If you can help between 8:30am -2:00pm please contact Louise at 850-780-0410. Please bring a chair, dress for the weather and we will greet the shoppers with camellias and smiles!



**Learn to Graft Camellias**

**Saturday Feb. 15<sup>th</sup>** at 9am John Davy will supply the scions for grafts at Panhandle Growers, Inc. located at Southridge Road in Milton (Allentown, FL 32570) Pull into the property make a right turn and drive to the south toward the grass parking area just west of the soil mix area. Bring knife, hammer, marker for labels, spray bottle for fungicide, gloves, anything you want to eat or drink, chair and a good attitude for a fun time of camaraderie.

**Learn to Graft Camellias 2<sup>nd</sup> chance**

**Monday Feb. 17<sup>th</sup>** at 9am join us at the Shade House (3279 Pine Forest, Cantonment) to graft on our raised beds. You can view ‘Raised Bed and Assembly Line Grafting’ on ACS’s website under instructional videos or enter the title on YouTube to watch Randolph Maphis grafting instructions.

**Tuesday Feb. 18th – General Meeting** Program: George and Jane Davis- ‘The History of the Davis Nursery.’ Location: [Garden Center](#), 6:30pm for social, 7:00 pm program.

- At 7pm the Nominating Committee will present and accept nominees for the slate of officers and board members. At the February meeting we will vote on the slate. Here are their suggestions for Officers and Board to serve for the 2025-2026 season.

Officers: President – Mack Thetford,

1st Vice President - Show Chairperson, Christi Hankins,

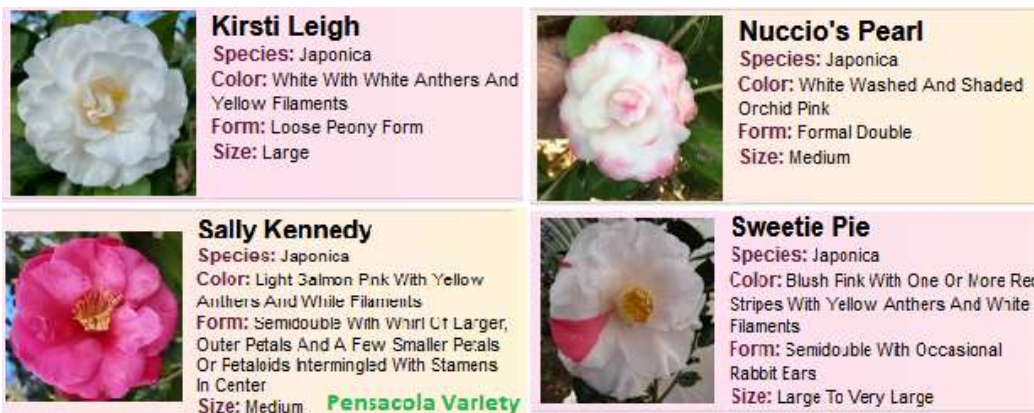
2nd Vice President - Programs, John Davy

3rd Vice President - Membership, Rebecca Sherman

Treasurer – Laura Anderson, Secretary –Kristin DeReuil, Past Pres – Greg Taylor,

Board of Directors: Brittini Alves, Jane Benson, Paul Bruno, Brianna Murdock, Carolyn Pulford, Louise Seitz, & Sandra Sherman

- At the meeting, we would like to **WELCOME our 36 NEW MEMBERS** by asking them to wear the **Red** outlined name tag so our members know to greet you and introduce themselves. A new member is anyone that joined in Aug. 2024 – Aug. of 2025. New members, by attending the meeting your name will be included in a ‘**New Members ONLY chance**’ for a camellia plant. We also have a camellia plant chances for everyone to participate, tickets are a \$1.00 per chance or \$5.00 for 6 chances. See Lee Vanderpool to purchase, the proceeds support our club meetings.



- Please pay your 2025 membership dues of \$10 by check or cash tonight. Becky Sherman, VP of Membership will accept your money and review your contact information to keep you informed of club events. If you have questions for Becky about your membership you can reach her at 850-428-8297. If you're not attending the meeting please mail your payment to Pensacola Camellia Club P.O. Box 707 Pensacola, FL, 32591 or go to our website and pay online for \$11.

**Saturday Feb. 22th – [UWF Camellia Garden](#)**

**Work Day** starting at 10:00am to 12:00pm. We will be doing any necessary clean up before the garden tours. Please bring your gloves and water bottles.

**Sunday Feb. 23rd – Pensacola Camellia Club will welcome the public to our [UWF Camellia](#)**

**[Garden Tour](#)**, provide air layering and pruning demonstrations, and have plants available for sale starting at Noon to 4:00 pm. For more information about the UWF Camellia Garden

Tours go to Activities, [UWF Camellia Garden &](#)

[Tours](#) on our website. Will need your help greeting and escorting visitors through the garden please come and help at this fun event.



**Friday Mar. 7<sup>th</sup>** - We will be setting up tables for our Community Show at the downtown library, 239 Spring Street starting at 3pm. Trumin will need help at the Shade House at 1pm loading all of our show supplies for this event along with plants sales. Your assistant at either or both locations is appreciated. There will be signup sheets at the February meeting so you can help with refreshments, bloom prep, judging and plant sales or contact Trumin at 850-375-4541 if you can help.

**Saturday Mar. 8<sup>th</sup>** - Pensacola Camellia Club to host **Annual Community Camellia Show and Plant Sale** at the downtown Public Library on 239 [Spring](#) St, Pensacola, FL. All new members are encouraged to bring your blooms along with your neighbors to compete for prizes in various categories. Bloom enters starts at 9am follow by judging at 11:30am. No need to know the name of the blooms our senior members will try to identify them with you.



**Tuesday Mar. 18th** – Annual Banquet at V. Paul’s Italian Ristorante, 29 Palafox Place, Pensacola, Florida. Cash bar will open at 5:30pm with Happy Hour prices on alcohol, wine and beer, followed by dinner at 6:30pm. You do not have to be a member to attend; all family and friends are welcome to this celebration. Paul has generously waved the setup fees for the club and we will be paying \$46/per person that includes gratuity. Please make payment to: Pensacola Camellia Club and mailed to P.O. Box 707, Pensacola, FL 32591. Reservations should be in by March 12th. If you attend the meeting on Feb 18th and plan to attend please see Louise Seitz with your payment and save a stamp. You can also pay by credit card for \$48/ per person which includes card fees on our website under ‘Get Involved’ or click **Banquet**.