

# Coushatta

# Camellia

## February 2010 Newsletter

P.O. Box 1655, Conroe, TX 77305

# Society



GREETINGS, CAMELLIA LOVERS!

We've had a long, tough winter this year, but SURELY the cold weather can't last much longer! When the gardening bug hits you, don't forget to make a stop at **Container Grown Nursery**, **Henderson Feed and Supply**, and **New Earth Soils and Compost**. Of course, **Margaritas & Peppers** would be the perfect spot to meet friends when you are ready to take a break!

### GARDEN TOUR 2010

*by Bill McCranor and Randy McDaniel*

St. Valentine's Day weekend saw our society's Thirteenth Annual Open Camellia Garden Tour come and go. Our beloved winter bloomer has been taking a lot of hits from Mother Nature here lately and tour weekend was no exception. Dick and Sarah Eidem were forced to withdraw their garden from the tour because of soggy conditions caused by heavy rains earlier that week.

However, the remaining eight gardens on the tour took up the slack and there were a very large number of excellent blooms for all to see and enjoy. The plants that were blooming were magnificent, and interest was displayed by those who came out for the tour. Randy has pledged to identify one of the "unknowns" his daughter fell in love with at our home.

Despite the cooler temperatures which kept some people away, plant sales at each of the gardens went rather well; and I expect the final tally to be about 60 plants sold. Granted, public turnout was less than expected, but all in all, I think this year's tour was a success.

I would like to seize this opportunity to thank all those who helped to make it that way: The owners of all the gardens for all their hard work in making them beautiful, all the volunteers who worked so hard at the welcome tables, the people who did such a great job planning and making the brochures and fliers, those who worked to get the word out, whether passing out literature or contacting the various media sources, the people who went to get the plants we sold, and last but not least, the Camellia Society as a whole, for all of your support.

### Upcoming Events

**February 27 .....** Texas Camellia Show  
Set-up: Feb. 26, 2pm - West Hill Mall,  
Community Center Room, Huntsville  
Show: Feb. 27 - Open 7 am,  
Brunch 10:30 am; Judging 11:30 am

**March 2 .....** March meeting  
6:30 p.m. - social  
7:00 p.m. - program  
"Highlights of Progress at Massey Lane"  
Speaker: Douglas Rhuen  
ACS Horticulturist  
First Christian Church Parlor  
3500 N Loop 336 W, Conroe

**March 25, 26, 27 ...** Mercer March Mart  
Volunteers needed to help  
with plant sale, sign up at March meeting

**April 6 .....** April End of Year Dinner  
**6:30 p.m.** - Villa Italia  
603 N. Thompson, Conroe  
RSVP Diane Dyer - (936) 321-6685  
Renee Bilyeu - (936) 760-6744



## Support Our Sponsors!

### APRIL END OF YEAR PARTY WITH AN OLD FRIEND - APRIL 6

Renee, Ruby, Maxine and Diane checked out a restaurant for the end of the year party. It's Villa Italia, an old restaurant with a new face, located in a lovely historic house at 603 N. Thompson at Cochran in downtown Conroe.

The menu will be: Green Salad, choice of:

- (1). Red snapper rolled around asparagus with chopped tomatoes, garlic in a light wine sauce with Italian herbs with a small side of pasta,
- (2). Chicken breast with fresh mushrooms in a creamy brandy sauce also with a side of pasta,
- (3). Angel hair pasta sauteed with spinach, capers, tomatoes and Shrimp in an alfredo mushroom sauce.

There will be cheesecake for dessert with coffee or tea.

The cost of dinner is \$24.00 per person or \$48.00 per couple tax and tip included. There will be a cash bar with wine for \$5.00 per glass or soft drinks for \$2.50 each.

It will not be necessary to decide ahead of time what you want to eat, orders will be taken at the tables, IT WILL be necessary to make reservations and pay ahead of time, however. Checks may be made out to CCS and paid at the March meeting or before the end of March by mail.

Renee will have more information at the March meeting and will answer any questions about the menu.

See Map at right for location of Villa Italia, at 'A'.

## MERCER NEWS

by Dennis Bilyeu

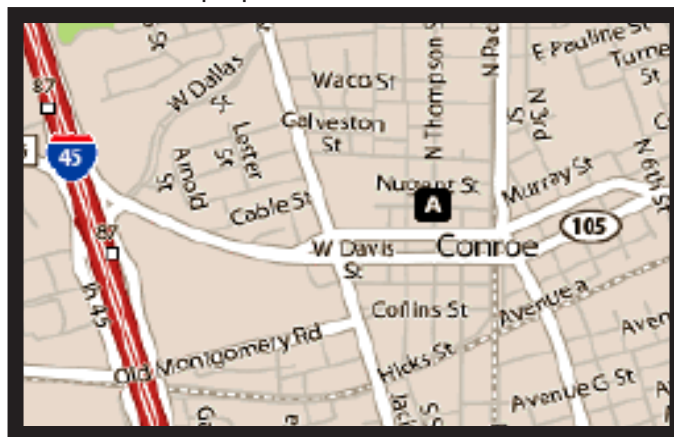


Tommy Weeks and I brought about 150 blooms to Mercer this past Thursday to be used for the Thelma Mercer Garden dedication ceremonies. The people at Mercer were very appreciative. Randy McDaniel and I collaborated on putting labels on blooms, with our CCS website on each of the cups holding the blooms. At the conclusion of the ceremonies participants are encouraged to take blooms home with them and they will have our website address on the cup if they are interested in finding out more about Camellias.

Mercer March Mart will take place on March 25, 26, and 27 (Thurs, Fri, Sat). We would like to have three volunteers helping sell Camellias at all times. I hope to have more specifics at our March meeting. We will have a sign-up sheet at the March meeting for volunteers.

We will need much more than three members volunteer for Thursday so we can always cover Camellia sales while also going to buy other plants. Volunteers will need to be at Mercer by 6:30 am Thursday (the member only part of the sale) as the sale starts at 7 am and I believe concludes at 4 pm. I will also be taking a head count of CCS members that are also members of Mercer who plan on buying plants on Thursday. I am hoping we can get these members to volunteer some time selling Camellias so others can go buy plants.

The Third Annual **TEXAS CAMELLIA SHOW** will be held Saturday, February 27, in Huntsville, Texas at West Hill Mall Community Room. Exhibitors may begin preparations using the entrance at the West side of the Mall at 7:00 am. Public viewing will be from 1:00 to 4:00 pm. The Mall is located one block west of I 45 using exit 116. Exhibitors from the area will have hundreds of blooms designated by name for viewing. The public is encouraged to come and see these beautiful blooms in person, and learn why the Camellia is fast becoming the star landscape plant in the Southwest.



## Happy Birthday!



|                   |                   |                    |
|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| <b>February</b>   | Edie Tong         |                    |
| Dudley Boudreaux  | Elizabeth Vanrooy |                    |
| Mary Feece        | Vern Vanrooy      | Bob Koehl          |
| Marlene Hamm      |                   | George             |
| Vicky Hawkins     | <b>March</b>      | Shackelford        |
| Susan McDaniel    | A. G. Cardona     | Carolyn Tynan      |
| Claudette Shelfer | Rosamay Davis     | Elizabeth Williams |

## Welcome new members!

Welcome to our newest members, who joined during the Garden Tour. Please add the following information to your yearbooks.

**Betsy Hunter** (husband Bill), 13892 Longwood Dr., Willis, TX 77318; betsy@cebridge.net  
(H) (936) 856-5838 Birthday: December

**Ashwin & Lyn Shah** 14825 Libra Ct., Willia, TX 77318; alsshah@hotmail.com; (H) 281-250-6775  
Birthdays: Ash-October, Lyn-July

### NOW IS THE TIME FOR ALL GOOD MEMBERS TO PAY THEIR DUES!

Treasurer Diane Dyer is ready to collect your dues for 2010-2011. Make your payment (\$10 single, \$15 joint) at the March meeting and save postage. Thanks to all you members who have already paid dues - we appreciate you!

Just joined in **January** or **February**? We're glad to have you! You need not pay dues until next year at this time.

Consider becoming a "Friend of CCS" this year. Your donation of \$25 will be recognized in the yearbook.

Is there a program you'd like to see or give? We would like to have your ideas! Thanks to all our members who have provided such wonderful programs this year!

**Please help our Treasurer close out the books for this year!** Diane asks that everyone who has receipts for reimbursement turn them in at the March meeting or by the end of month.

**new earth**  
SOILS & COMPOST

936-756-4846  
(F) 936-756-8594  
(C) 936-443-8789  
12286 Hwy 105 East  
Conroe, Texas 77306  
www.newearthcompost.com

**Container Grown Nursery**

GROWERS OF QUALITY ORNAMENTAL PLANTS

16159 Rabon Chapel Road  
Montgomery, Texas 77316  
936-588-3779

### Coushatta Camellia Society Newsletter

*Published monthly, August through March, for members of the Coushatta Camellia Society*

President ..... Dick Eidem

Editor &

Writer ..... Judy Weidner

- GARDEN & LAWN SUPPLIES
- WEED & BRUSH KILLER
- FERTILIZER
- INSECTICIDES
- PET FOOD & SUPPLIES
- HORSE & POULTRY SUPPLIES
- BEEKEEPER SUPPLIES



SINCE 1970

**936-756-2423**

101 E. DAVIS • CONROE

### HENDERSON FEED & SUPPLY

"CONROE'S COMPLETE - ONE STOP FARM - RANCH - GARDEN CENTER"



MON - FRI  
7:30 AM to 6:00 PM  
SAT 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM

MAJOR CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED



## March Tips for the Camellia Gardener

by Dennis Bilyeu

### Planting

This is the last month before next fall that I recommend planting Camellias in the ground. If you elect to plant in March it is very important that you water this plant at least twice a week (three times a week if you have sandy soil) through the summer months and well into the cooler fall months. Plants put in the ground in the optimal planting months of October, November and December should continue to be watered once a week through the summer months.

### Fertilizing

Repeat February recommended use of cottonseed meal and add:

- An equal volume of 8-8-8 commercial fertilizer, and
- A small amount (about 20% of the cotton seed meal volume) of wood ash (let me know if you need some)

For those who prefer avoiding commercial fertilizers, application of a compost tea every two or three weeks is a great alternative. Google 'compost tea' on the Internet for recipes and instructions for making your own compost tea, or purchase at Lowes.

### Pruning

See the February recommendation. If your growth buds are starting to push (are showing the light green color of new growth) this will be the last good time for pruning your plant this year.

### Spraying

See the February recommendations. If you are planning to bring blooms to the Huntsville Show, delay spraying your plants until after the Show. Some of the recommended chemicals can burn or discolor your blooms. The exception to this recommendation of delaying your spraying is the case of having an open wound where die-back fungus could enter your plant and eventually kill it. An open wound can be caused by many things, some of which are: leaf drop, which is when your plant naturally drops its leaves and it creates an open wound that allows die back to enter; scuffs or scratches caused by tools, falling limbs, etc.; and pruning. Leaf drop is probably the single

largest cause of die-back infection and one that is most often overlooked by the Camellia Gardener. Camellias typically start dropping leaves just before growing season, which is now, so be watching for it and take the preventive action recommended in the February Newsletter.

### Propagation

See the February recommendation on grafting. Grafting can be done through the month of March, but this is the last good month of the year I recommend grafting. Check those air layers that are still on the mother plants and if not ready to cut, re-soak the sphagnum moss with the recommended root activator and water solution. Then re-wrap the air layer with cellophane and aluminum foil. If ready to cut (has sufficient root development), cut and soak in a root activator solution for at least two days before potting. After potting, spray foliage and soil with compost tea (see fertilizer comments). Identify blooms on plants you would like to propagate by tying a piece of surveyor tape on the branch. These will be branches you will want to air layer in April to clone that bloom into a new plant.

### Mulching

March is a good month to remove old mulch (which likely contains old blooms or parts of blooms that are infected with petal blight) and dispose of it. Burying this mulch under at least 3" of soil is a good method of disposal. Add new mulch around your plants. The best mulch is pine straw. Not quite as good is pine bark mulch and less desirable is oak leaf mulch. Any kind of wood or leaf mulch is better than no mulch at all. I recommend waiting until your plants have finished blooming before replacing the mulch. Do your mulching before the fertilizing and be sure to water the fertilizer and mulch thoroughly. This sequence helps jump start the decomposition of the mulch into nutrients for your plants. The compost tea fertilizer works very well here because it also contains all the good bacteria needed for this decomposition process.

Do not hesitate to call me if you have any questions -- Dennis

## Coushatta Camellia Society

P.O. Box 1655

Conroe, TX 77305