

Oregon Camellia Society

Sept/November Newsletter 2024



President's Message

Last September I gave a talk about Camellia Azalea (Changii) hybridization. At the conclusion of the talk, Kathy moved that the club purchase three camellias for trial in our area. The motion was accepted and Kathy promised to purchase the camellias which are a cross between C. Japonica Daikagura and C. Azalea. She actually purchased four plants. One for herself and three for the club. At the April meeting at her home and garden, talented gardener, grafter, and OCS member Alan Taft grafted two scions from Kathy's plant onto a C. Japonica seedling understock. Alan reports that the grafts did not take, and he believes they were done too late in the season.

The club's three camellias were distributed to Collier Brown and Brady Sheets. Collier took two of them and surprised us at the November pre-holiday luncheon by bringing one of the plants to the lunch with a large bloom on it. He planted one of the plants in the ground, and kept the other one in his greenhouse. Given the extreme weather we suffered last winter, the one planted in the ground was killed by the long term freezing temperatures, the snow, the ice, and the gorge winds. After all, this hybridization took place in southern China where the C. Azalea is accustomed to many high humidity days over 100 degrees. The hybridizers claimed cold hardiness for their hybrids without any proof, which I pointed out as a suspicious claim in my talk. The plant that spent the winter in Collier's greenhouse is alive and may have a little new growth. Brady kept the plant under his care in his sunlight basement during the winter and moved it to the shade house afterwards. He reports that it has new growth on at least three branches and one branch has what he believed to be a flower bud on it, but turned out to be a growth bud. Kathy planted her plant in front of a south facing rock wall in an attempt to give in a warmer sunlit environment than being planted elsewhere. It looked pretty good when we were there in April, but now is showing some damage to the foliage. To my eye it looks like it may have sun damage in the browning in the center of the leaves and cold damage to the tips of the leaves. Perhaps her plant will give some substantiation to the cold hardiness claims of the hybridizers if it lives and prospers.

The latest "The Camellia Journal" from the American Camellia Society has an article on C. Azalea hybrid introductions. It lists recently registered hybrids including those covered in my talk last year. The additional American registered hybrids come from Brad King in California, Pat Johnson in Georgia, and Gene Phillips in Georgia. Brad King registered King's Lynn which is a cross with Tama Peacock and has a faint white picotee edge. Pat Johnson registered chance seedlings Mark C and William Khoury which are being propagated at Loch Laurel Nursery but do not show up in their search, so apparently are not for sale yet. Gene Phillips registered Gene's Autumn Fire which is a cross with Royal Velvet.

Farewells and valedictions,

Garland

Meeting Schedule

September Meeting

September 28 1:30-3:30
Holgate Library 7905 SE Holgate Blvd, Portland

The meeting will be in this new built branch library in the large community room 2A. This meeting will be a week later than usual as the speaker, Garland, will be out of town on the usual date. The talk will be the Higo camellia talk that Garland gave at the Japanese Garden last March.

October Open Board Meeting

October 19, time and place TBA

SAVE THE DATE

Scappoose and St. Helens Garden Clubs will be hosting the Pioneer District Garden Clubs Fall Luncheon (“FALL IN THE COUNTRY”) on October 17, 2024, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m.

The cost of the luncheon is \$25.00 per person which includes:

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.: Pastries/Fruit/Coffee/Tea

12:00 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.: Catered Lunch

The luncheon will be held at St. Wenceslaus Catholic Church, 51555 SW Old Portland Road, Scappoose, Oregon 97056

If you wish to attend, mail a \$25.00 check to Martha Ragland, 4115 SE 33rd Place, Portland, Oregon 97202. (503-239-6542; mragland@efn.org)

Note: REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 7, 2024

November Luncheon

November 16 beginning at noon at Pho Van 82nd at 1919 SE 82nd Ave. We plan to repeat at this location where we met last year. However, if this plan doesn't gel, we will send an update by email.

May Luncheon

Our May luncheon was held at the Home Town Taste restaurant chosen by Grace Bailey. The food was fabulous and Grace chose a variety of amazing dishes for us all to share. She also paid for the lunch for everyone which was incredibly generous. Pardon if I don't report on our exact discussions as that was May and I'm vague on last week let alone three months ago. Save to say it was a lovely lunch with good conversation.

JULY PICNIC REPORT

We had a lovely outdoor picnic in a fir grove beside Jewel Walters' Oregon City home on July 27. The weather was perfect and the food excellent. There was time to eat and talk, and time to stroll Jewel's yard, which offers many nooks and serendipitous surprises as it slopes downhill to a natural pond.

Our annual members-only plant auction followed, where we sold about twenty plants. We brought in \$230.00 in plant sales and \$110.00 in membership renewals.

Which is a reminder to all. We allow new members who joined from March 2024 onward to have their initial dues apply through June 30 of 2025. For those who need to pay dues for the upcoming year, please send your dues (\$10.00 per year for an individual, \$15.00 per year for a family) to Martha Ragland, 4115 SE 33rd Place, Portland, Oregon, 97202.

If you're not sure where you stand, email me at mragland@efn.org or call me at 503-239-6542. Thanks!

Note from The Editor

After many years of trying to teach folks at the plant sale how to correctly prune their camellias I turned my hand to our own overgrown camellias this week in an attempt to practice what I preach. It is nice that we have enough large camellias that required cleaning up. (Collier Don't read the next two sentences or you'll cry) So far I have done mostly bulk clean up, with a small 6" chainsaw. Yes chainsaw. A lot of what I did was cleaning out winter damage and trimming up branches so I can mow and weed under them. We have had a lot of sudden heavy snow falls the last two years that has not been kind to the camellias. I'm hoping if I open them up they won't hold as much snow and not be as crushed. They all need more precise pruning with clippers when the heat and other projects give me the time to keep working on them.

