



# Gainesville Camellia Society

Affiliated with the American Camellia Society

*Editor: Anna Langford*

*March 2025*

## *President's Message*

Greetings!

As we enter the end of the blooming season, some of the varieties have been the best we have ever seen. New growth is starting to emerge, meaning it's time for fertilizing, pruning, and spraying for scale & red spider.

If you have any plants left in containers, it's time to get them in the ground if they're well rooted. If not, make sure they are well taken care of over the summer and then plant in the fall.

Kanapaha Spring Festival is 3/22 & 3/23. If you are volunteering, after your time slot be sure to check out the vendor booths.

Looking forward to seeing everyone Sunday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, at 2 pm. Note that our meeting date for next month has been changed to April 13<sup>th</sup> to avoid conflicting with Easter Sunday.

***Jay Ellis, President***



*Gigantea*

## *Minutes for GCS Meeting February 16, 2024*

GCS President Jay Ellis opened the meeting at 2:10 p.m. and welcomed new member Leeann Shearouse. Leeann just moved to our area and will be opening a tropical and garden nursery business in Alachua specializing in Camellias and Azaleas. She made her last camellia purchase at Nuccio's nursery in California the day before the fire. She told us that Tom Nuccio is now living in a nursing home and Jim Nuccio is living with his wife. All of their buildings burned down and there will be no more mail order sales, only sales from the remaining stock at their California site.



*Charlean, variegated*



*Nuccio's Gem*

### Old Business

A motion was made and seconded to accept the January 2025 meeting minutes and passed.

### New Business

Treasurer's Report by Merry Reid.

Checking account   \$10,208

Savings account \$14,335

Total                   \$24,543

A motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasurer's report and passed. Charles Simon reminded everyone that we sequester \$14,000 to put on the next Camellia Show and Plant Sale, and we have another \$2,000 in recurring expenses for the meeting room rental and Camellia Garden upkeep.

This leaves us \$8,500 for our sustained philanthropic giving to Wilmot Botanical Gardens, Kanapaha Botanical Gardens, UF-IFAS ornamental horticulture students, the American Camellia Society and Grow Hub.

John Swanson sent around a signup sheet for booth-bunnies at the Kanapaha Spring Plant Sale. The sale will take place the weekend of March 23-24, 2025. Our information table will be inside the main building. Charles Simon said he will donate a “Garden Party” camellia plant in a five gallon pot for the raffle.



*Dixie Knight Supreme*



*Lady Vansittart*

Jay Ellis announced the results from the nominating committee for next year’s slate of officers and Board members.

**OFFICERS**

- |                |                                       |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| Debbie Ellis   | President                             |
| Charles Simon  | First Vice President (show chair)     |
| Wally Bellgard | Second Vice President (program chair) |
| Secretary      | Cat Spurgeon                          |
| Treasurer      | Merry Reid                            |

**BOARD MEMBERS**

- |                     |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Jay Ellis           | Deborah Engquist |
| Ron (Steve) Stevens | Jill Reed        |
| Rick Davis          | Phil Lekicht     |
| Irma Velez          | Carter Brenneman |
| Jerry Hogsette      |                  |



Officers and Board Members serve for two years. Charles Simon said that these are basically voluntary positions and that any member who has been with the GCS for one full season or more can be nominated to these positions before elections are held next month.

### Educational Program

Ms. Sally Layendecker, Vice President of the Ocala Camellia Society, was our guest lecturer. Sally is a Master Gardener and retired school teacher. Her talk was on “Everything camellia” and was filled with a wealth of information, starting with the story of the beginning of the use of the camellia leaves to make tea in ancient China. She gave a summary of the history of the spread of tea (*Camellia Sinensis*) cultivation around the world and the simultaneous spread of other more beautiful *Camellia* cultivars.



*Sweet Emily Kate*



*Mabel Bryant Strawberry*

She described the diseases and pests of camellias and referred members to the website of the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF-IFAS), which has detailed descriptions of each problem and treatment protocols.

She detailed some of the history and uses of camellias in fashion, religion and literature, as well as some of the symbolism. For example, white camellias are considered bad luck or death in Japan. Pink camellias are for friends and red camellias mean love.

Sally brought handouts on camellia identification, flower waxing, the IFAS article on pests, diseases and treatments, and a feeding program called the “Ultimate Camellia Diet”. This program includes nine suggested “foods” applied at appropriate times throughout the year and is reprinted below.

- A. Apply high-grade granular acid food
- B. Stern's Miracle-Gro Muracid
- C. Apply super-phosphate to soil now
- D. Apply generous amount of Black Kow cow manure
- E. Apply cottonseed meal
- F. Apply Ironite
- G. Apply soapy water, hose-end shower
- H. Sprinkle sulfur lightly
- I. Epsom salts now



Omega



Ruta Hagmann

After blooming in:

March-April	A, B, C, D, H
May	B, C, E, G, I
June	A, B, G
July	B, D
August	B, C, F, I
September	A, B, G
October	B, D, G

Be sure to read the directions on each product twice and follow them closely. A terrific inoculated soil amendment called "Command" is made in Newberry, Florida by *LifeSoils* and costs \$18/40-lb. bag. Fifty pound bags of cottonseed meal can be purchased for \$14 each from *West End Milling Company* at 700 W Screven Street in Quitman, Georgia.

*Charles Simon, Secretary*

<i>Date and place of meeting</i>		<i>Refreshments</i>	
		<i>Food</i>	<i>Drinks</i>
3/16/2025	Kanapaha Botanical Gardens	Wally Belgard	Frank Fletcher
4/13/2025	Kanapaha Botanical Gardens	Merry Reid	Carter Brenneman
5/18/2025	Kanapaha Botanical Gardens	Spring Picnic - Potluck	Steve Stevens

***Dues***

The annual dues for Gainesville Camellia Society are due at this time. The amount is \$15 for an individual or \$20 for a couple. Please mail a check for your dues to the Treasurer:

Merry Reid  
7631 Monongahela Avenue  
Keystone Heights FL 32656  
[reidm729@gmail.com](mailto:reidm729@gmail.com)

***New GCS Shirts***

Gainesville Camellia Society has official shirts available in two styles: Polo (light blue) and regular t-shirt (stone blue and white). Sizes available range from Small to 3XL for both styles. The cost for either shirt style is \$20. Please contact Cat Spurgeon at [acsgville@gmail.com](mailto:acsgville@gmail.com) or 321.615.2229 to get yours ordered.



### ***Follow Us on Social Media***

***The Gainesville Florida Camellia***

***Society*** <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61570106033309>

***GCS Facebook Message***

***Board:*** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2046931395806031>

***Instagram:*** [https://www.instagram.com/gainesville\\_camellia\\_society/](https://www.instagram.com/gainesville_camellia_society/)

If you have some photos you would like to share of your camellias, but are not on social media sites, consider sending them to Cat Spurgeon and she will get them posted for you. Ensure you include the variety and/or cultivar, if you have a short story regarding the camellia, you are invited to include that as well. The purpose of this is to create awareness of the local varieties that our members are growing. This also helps with getting more people interested and involved with identifying the camellias in their yard and around town. Contact Cat at [acsgrville@gmail.com](mailto:acsgrville@gmail.com) or 321.615.2229 for more information or to submit your photos.

#### ***Officers***

President: Jay Ellis  
 1st VP & Show Chair: Debbie Ellis  
 2nd VP & Program Chair: Sanford Porter  
 Treasurer: Merry Reid  
 Secretary: Charles Simon

#### ***Board Members***

Carter Brenneman  
 Deborah Engquist  
 Bill Hayes  
 Larry Hice  
 Jerry Hogsette  
 Konrad Hooper  
 Sanford Porter  
 Diane Simon  
 Ron Stevens  
 Irma Velez

#### ***Monthly Meeting of the Gainesville Camellia Society***

***Date:*** Sunday, March 16, 2025

***Place:*** Kanapaha Botanical Gardens

***Program:*** Teagan Young, a PhD Candidate with the Environmental Horticulture Dept. at UF will speak about wild coffee and urban forests.

***The Gainesville Camellia Society*** meets at 2 pm on the third Sunday of each month from September through May at Kanapaha Botanical Gardens. Any changes to meeting dates, times, or venues are posted in this newsletter.