



COMPOST PILE

LSHR to Celebrate 60th Anniversary 1954 - 2014

Our members are indeed blessed that Aline Arceneaux, Horticultural Medallion winner, former LSHR treasurer, former Compost Pile editor and current very active Board member, has agreed to prepare a two-part history of our beloved Society as we near the 60th Anniversary of its founding. Part II 1972-2014 will be included in our Spring 2014 issue.

PURSUING BEAUTY: A History of the Louisiana Society for Horticultural Research (Part I 1954-1971)

By Aline Arceneaux

Our Founder Named Outstanding Woman in Horticulture in the U.S. in 1955

In 1954 Mrs. U. B. Evans, "Miss Jo" as she was affectionately known, the founder of the Louisiana Society of Horticultural Research and its first president, and her daughter, Mariana Evans Applegate, solicited donations to fund Professor Ira Nelson's trip to South America from 49 people who are considered the first members. The donations totaling \$1,993 ranged from \$100 to \$3. The purpose of Professor Ira Nelson's trip to South America, particularly Bolivia, was to bring back new germ plasm for Amaryllis breeders. One of the new species, found in the Province of Santa Cruz, Bolivia, was named *A. Evansae* to honor Mrs. Evans and her daughter, Mariana, for their foresight in bringing new Amaryllis breeding stock to American horticulturists.

It is of interest to note that Mrs. Evans, of Haphazard Plantation, Ferriday, Louisiana, for her outstanding service in originally proposing the South American plant collecting expedition in 1954, was named the Outstanding Woman in Horticulture in the United States for 1955.

The Constitution and Bylaws of the Society were adopted on January 16, 1955. The official membership in 1955 consisted of 2 life members, 11 sustaining members and 64 active members.

The First Plant Release

The first plant release was made in 1959, consisting of *Amaryllis belladonna*, *Amaryllis evansae*, *Amaryllis striata*, *Cassia alata*, *Cuphea hyssopifolia*, *Habranthus cardenasiana*, *Oxalis hedsaroides*, *Pentas lanceolata*, and *Zephyranthes* sp. (Caffery Pink), sp. *ex Panama* (Pink selection)

Other Collections

Within the next twenty-five years, more collecting trips were made by Dr. Sigmund Solymosy. The first was to Mexico, June 26 to July 12, 1961 where he collected 13 plants in the State of Tamaulipas, three plants in the State of San Luis Potosi, 11 plants in the State of Mexico, 25 in the Federal District, nine in another part of the State

of Mexico, 12 in the State of Mexico and Puebla, 14 in the Federal District and State of Morelos, 12 in the State of Morelos, three in another Federal District, 26 in four areas of the State of Mexico, seeds from nine different plants from the private garden of Mr. Olivia Converse, Valle de Bravo, Mexico, and 11 from two more sections in the State of Mexico.

The next trip was from October 2-4, 1971 to Avila, accompanied by Professor Bruno Manaras of Caracas, Venezuela, 49 species were collected.

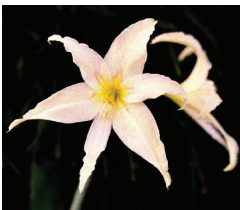
Again in Venezuela, from October 12-15, 1971, accompanied by Dr. Ludwig Scheee, Professor of Botany at the University of Maracay, they only did some sight-seeing on October 13. On October 14 they explored Altos of Choroni and the old road to the Rancho Grande where they collected 14 different specimens.

(The information about the founding of LSHR was taken from Bulletin No. 1, Louisiana Society for Horticultural Research dated March 1956.

The information about Dr. Solymosy's trips was taken from Vol. 18, No. 1, March 1979 Journal of the Louisiana Society for Horticultural Research.)



Cassia alata



From the President's Desk



Fall is one of my favorite times of year as temperatures are finally dropping below "heat stroke levels." My plant release *Laurentia 'Avant-Garde White'* really enjoyed the summer however, blooming non-stop through the heat. The *White Rose of Montana* and *Variiegated Thunbergia* grew like wildfire, and my *Senna 'Whorley's Butter Cream'* is just beginning to steal the show!

As I write this, I cannot continue without expressing my sympathy toward the Lasseigne family for their loss of such a good man as Leonard. He touched so many of our lives with his soft-spoken gentleness and love for LSHR. Our family is also going through a rough time as both of our parents have been very ill and require much care. Please keep them in your prayers. Hat's off to Margo Racca and others who have stepped up to the plate to help me with my duties as president through this time of need. (*Kenneth Durio, husband of Belle and father of Albert and Dalton and their siblings, passed away October 28, 2013, shortly after this message was written. Please see the next issue of the Compost Pile to read a tribute to this outstanding plantsman and dedicated supporter of LSHR.*)

Our speaker for the upcoming Annual Meeting, Dr. Allen Owings, manned the "Ask the Professional" booth at the 2nd Annual PlantFest at the Horse Farm. He continues to be very busy at the LSU AgCenter's Hammond Research Station where among other projects he has used grant money from LSHR in conducting an evaluation of hardy hibiscus. We should take the opportunity to visit this outstanding facility where many such evaluations are ongoing. Allen also publishes the AgCenter's weekly and twice-monthly Horticulture E-News updates and Trial Garden reports to the industry.

Albert Durio
President

ANNUAL MEETING DATE SET

Be sure to mark your calendar for the Annual Meeting (March 22, 2014) to be held as usual at the Ira Nelson Horticulture Center and the Petroleum Club. You will be receiving information about the speaker and luncheon reservations in the next *Compost Pile* issue (Spring, 2014).

MEMBERSHIP DUES – JANUARY 1, 2014

Please read carefully the announcement [in this issue](#) of changes in the method of renewing memberships and collecting dues and use the provided form to send in renewals. Let's make treasurer JoAnn's job easy [by sending renewals in early](#).

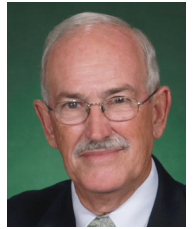
KEEP UP-TO-DATE ON 2013 PLANT RELEASES

Don't forget to track your 2013 releases in preparation for completing the reporting form which you will receive in the next *Compost Pile* issue. You must turn in the completed form at registration before the Annual Meeting in order to receive the new releases. We had a 100% return last year and we're expecting the same in 2014.



A Tribute to Leonard Lasseigne

Members of the Louisiana Society for Horticultural Research noted with sadness the passing of former president of the Society, Leonard Lasseigne, September 18, 2013.



Under Leonard's leadership from 2005 to 2009, the Society achieved several important goals including a Special Publication of the LSHR Plant Releases to Membership: 1959 – 2009, enhanced color print production of the *Compost Pile*, and the creation of a redesigned and recast Horticultural Achievement Medallion. Members enjoyed hearing and meeting excellent speakers, organizing profitable auctions and growing an interesting array of plant releases.

Leonard was known as a good, kind and hardworking man with a very generous nature and a great store of horticultural information. Many members of LSHR looked upon him as a dear friend and colleague. He will be greatly missed.



OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS OF LSHR

Albert Durio, Sr., President
Rob Barry, First Vice-President
Norman Balliviero, Second Vice-President
Roxanna Champagne, Recording Secretary
JoAnn Pugh, Treasurer

DIRECTORS AT LARGE

Harold Huffman 2012-13
(filling the unexpired term of Dr. Oswald Brown)
Glenda Balliviero 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14
Dr. Donald Ayo 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15
Peter Piazza 2013-2016

PAST PRESIDENTS WITH CURRENT MEMBERSHIP

Richard (Dick) Calhoun	Dalton Durio
Mary Courville	Dr. Jim Racca
Belle Durio	Margo Racca

HONORARY BOARD MEMBERS OR OTHER

Aline Arceneaux (Past Treasurer)
Dr. Jean Kreamer (Nominations Chairman)
Dr. Ellis Fletcher (Membership Chairman)
Ann Justice (Current Editor *Compost Pile*)
Rebecca Moss (Past Editor *Compost Pile*)
William (Billy) Welsh (Release Propagator/Coordinator)

EMAIL ADDRESSES NEEDED

If you have not turned in your email address, please do as soon as possible, via LSHR@cox.net. We understand that not everyone has email, but would like to hear from those who do.

FYI: American Snowbell

by Dr. Allen Owings

American snowbell (*Styrax americanus*) is a great native tree to consider for a spring-flowering addition to your landscape. This native is a small, flowering, shrubby-type tree that is underutilized. It is in the same family as silverbell (*Halesia diptera*).

Most references list American snowbell as a large shrub or small tree. It is somewhat widespread in the southeastern United States, being native to areas with moist soils along cypress swamps and sandy streams. Snowbell grows best in a fertile, well-drained soil (although it tolerates wetter, compacted soil) in a full-sun to partially shaded location.

Trees can be trained to a single trunk or a multi-trunked specimen. Habit is wide, wispy with an open crown and foliage is bright green and glossy. The standout feature of American snowbell is its white, bell-shaped flowers that hang in clusters of two to four. The slightly fragrant flowers normally appear in mid-spring, primarily April through early May. Fruit matures in the fall and is typically not very prominent, but serves as a good food source for birds.

Larger than the American version is the Japanese species – *Styrax japonica*. Individual trees average 20-30 feet tall. It is slightly better adapted to the upper South than it is the mid or lower South. The flowers are more prominent on the Japanese snowbell as well.

Consider American snowbell for a native mixed border, for a woodland mass planting or a backyard wildlife habitat planting. It can also be planted along stream edges if soil conditions are right. Noted horticulturist Dave Creech of Stephen F. Austin University in Nacogdoches, Texas, refers to snowbell as one of the “stellar native small trees of East Texas” – it is also great for many areas of the South!



**American snowbell
(*Styrax americanus*)**

Reprinted from *State-by-State Gardening* (September 2013) with the permission of the publisher.

From the Treasurer's Desk



**IMPORTANT CHANGE!
PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!
Dues are payable before January 1.**

I have been told that it takes hearing something three times to sink in, so here goes!

At the LSHR spring board meeting, the board voted to simplify the process for collecting dues by eliminating the mailing of dues notices and membership cards. This change was approved by the membership at the Annual Meeting at the Petroleum Club last March. Following the meeting, the *Compost Pile* (2013 Summer) had an article about the change.

So this is the third time to make this announcement, and I hope it is a charm!

NO NOTICE OF DUES will be sent. The membership renewal form is printed in this issue of the *COMPOST PILE* (2013 Fall & Winter) and can be cut out or copied to send with your payment, before January 1, 2014 to the address on the form.

NO MEMBERSHIP CARDS will be mailed. Members will use their copy of the next issue of the *COMPOST PILE* (Spring 2014) with mailing label as proof of membership when registering for the Annual Meeting March 22, 2014.

The cost savings on the stamps alone of mailing dues and

membership cards with over 250 members is a savings of about \$250 plus the supplies and handling. I will be happy to accept your payment as early as possible so all can enjoy the Christmas Season. Yes, it will soon be here! I am all smiles with an easier job. Thanks!

JoAnn Pugh
Treasurer

joannpugh@hotmail.com

MEMBERSHIP DUES NOTICE FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2014

May cut out or copy, please include all information

___ Active \$15 ___ Sustaining \$25.00 ___ Donor \$100 and up

MEMBER NAME (print) _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Email Address _____

Please mail payment to LSHR, PO Box 51366, Lafayette, LA 70505

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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SAVE THE DATE

Mark your calendar now. Our next Annual Meeting will be held March 22, 2014, at the Ira Nelson Horticulture Center and the Petroleum Club.

My Favorite and My Other Favorite LSHR Releases

By Dr. Dennis Wollard

As of today, my two favorite LSHR releases include: *Caladium humboltii* 'Lil Star' (LSHR Release 2013) which I will report on now and *Rhodophiala bifida* (LSHR Release 2001) which we will save for another issue of the *Compost Pile*.

I had a miniature caladium years ago and it went to the great garden in the sky. I remember the little caladium as having about half green and white leaves. After doing some research, the 'Lil Star' is an improved selection of this old species. I obtained the LSHR plant release and as usual repotted it into a five inch plastic pot with a standard potting mix from the local garden center. The little plant immediately responded by leaves turning yellow, then brown and then nothing.

I hoped it had gone dormant (because caladiums have a below ground storage structure) so I let it go dry by placing it high on a shelf. In a few weeks it "told" me it was ready to grow again. Water was gradually increased to accommodate growth and it has grown into a beautiful pot plant as indicated by the picture.

During the active growing season keep the plant moderately moist, but not too moist. I suggest if in doubt about watering – don't water. It is better to give too little

water than too much. The little plant likes filtered light to shade during the active growing season and moderate amounts of fertilizer. Usually in the fall of the year the plant will appear unkept with yellowing and browning foliage. Now it is time to withhold water and allow to dry. If the plant is in the ground I suggest to lift the storage structure, allow to dry and store in a location away from freezing and around 60 degrees F. Replant or water in spring as growth starts.

