



COMPOST PILE



LSHR Members Gather For 2009 Annual Meeting

Ira P. Nelson Horticulture Center Once Again Serves As Meeting Site

Retiring president Leonard Lasseigne welcomed LSHR members to its 53rd Annual Meeting on March 21, 2009, at the Ira P. Nelson Horticulture Center in Lafayette.

Members met early at the Hort Center for coffee, juice and doughnuts, chatting as they stood in line to pick up precious plant release boxes. Subsequently, they bid briskly at Plant and Silent Auctions, traditional fundraisers for the Society. These events were followed at the Lafayette Petroleum Club by a hospitality hour, buffet luncheon, the business meeting, at which new officers were installed, and a presentation by the featured speaker.

PROGRAM

Guest speaker for the occasion was Jenks Farmer, a garden designer, curator of Moore

Farms, S.C. and owner of Lushlife Nursery which specializes in providing healthy field-grown crinums to horticulturists and botanical gardens. Jenks delighted the audience with a talk and power point presentation titled "Tart It Up! Creativity in Horticulture."

THANKS TO WORKERS

President Lasseigne expressed thanks to the following persons who worked to make the day successful:

Registration: Aline Arceneaux, Edna Wheeler and Ruth LaVaque

Acquisition of auction plants: Albert Durio, Broussard Greenhouses, Dr. Dennis Wollard, Heidi Sheesley and June Walker

Plant Auction: Dalton Durio, chairman, Jim

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Lasseigne Retires; Racca Takes the Helm

Leonard Lasseigne, a familiar figure around the Hort Center and the presider at recent LSHR Annual Meetings, has retired after four years service in that role. Most recently Leonard served as president from 2005 through 2009.



Leonard Lasseigne

Under Leonard's leadership, the Society has enjoyed excellent program speakers, lively and profitable auctions, a fascinating array of plant releases and delightful luncheons. Under his guidance, the members have looked toward the future of the Society, including experimenting with a new meeting site, facilitating print production and adding color to the Compost Pile, and creating a redesigned and recast Horticultural Achievement Medallion.

We thank Leonard for all that he has done for us, and we hope that he will continue to bring pralines to Board meetings.

ELECTED TO THE POSITION OF PRESIDENT . . .

LSHR members need no formal introduction to our new president, Margo Racca. A former Louisiana mayor, winner of prestigious awards and officer in numerous horticultural groups, Margo has served the Society often as a Board member and in many other capacities.



Margo Racca

We are grateful that our Margo, of many talents, has accepted the presidency, and we predict that with her at the helm, LSHR will continue to forge ahead in plant research and publications.

From the President's Desk

Margo Racca



It is indeed my pleasure and honor to serve as the LSHR President. This is the only organization that I belong to that can handle all of its business with two Board Meetings and one General Meeting a year. Amazing!

This is not to say that there isn't a lot that goes on all year long, however. Billy and Kristi work very hard propagating our Plant Releases to have them ready for distribution in March. This is no small task. Dr. Fletcher and Nancy keep our records straight and wasn't that a marvelous book he produced this past year? Wow!

Dr. Wollard works on the Scholarships and Grants. And speaking of grants, we are revising our Grant Program to include a research and discovery trip whereby one of our plant releases would be a new discovery. Isn't that exciting?

Ruth keeps our money straight and Ann is busy thinking of new ways to make the Compost Pile interesting and educational. Aren't you glad that you are a member of LSHR? I am.

Your job is to grow those little darlings that you receive and keep records on what you did, how you did it, what survived, what didn't and then turn in your report. After all, we are a Society that researches plants, right?

We are looking forward to our meeting next spring when our speaker for the luncheon will be "The Bulb Hunter." Hope to see you there.

2010 ANNUAL MEETING DATE AND LOCATION ANNOUNCED

Mark your calendar for the next Annual Meeting to be held March 20, 2010, at the Ira Nelson Horticulture Center in Lafayette. You will be provided with details regarding the speaker and luncheon reservations in a later issue of the Compost Pile.

NEW MEDALLION DESIGN NOTED

At the direction of the Board, Ruthie LaVaque has done considerable research in the process of designing and recasting the silver Horticultural Achievement Award Medallion which is presented on occasion by LSHR to an individual for his or her long-termed contributions to horticulture. The first two new medallions were engraved and presented to Dr. Ellis Fletcher, who was the recipient in 2007, and to Dr. Ed O'Rourke, the 2008 recipient.



Three additional medallions were cast for future awards. Nancy Naomi at Paul's Jewelers assisted with the order and planning of the new mold, and jeweler, Steve Credeur, prepared the mold and did the casting.

NOMINATING NEW LSHR MEMBERS AND CANDIDATES FOR THE HORTICULTURAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Nominations should be sent to membership committee chair, Dr. Ellis Fletcher, 341 Orangewood Dr., Lafayette, LA 70503. Nominations will be accepted any time; however, nominees are presented to the Board of Directors only at

the Fall Board Meeting. Correspondence recommending an individual for LSHR membership, and for the medallion award, must be postmarked prior to November 1st of each year.

Nomination of an individual for membership is acceptable by e-mail since the date of the electronic mailing is indicated and a handwritten signature is not required; however, nomination of an individual for the Horticultural Achievement Award requires a post-marked envelope along with a letter of recommendation and a handwritten signature. Reasons justifying the nomination of an individual for the Horticultural Medallion Award are mandatory.

PLANT RELEASE FORM IN THIS ISSUE

Members are urged to keep the Plant Release Report Form included in this issue. At registration next spring, we will be asked to turn in completed Plant Release Report Forms. Blank report forms will also be available through the mail by request prior to the meeting from Ann Justice, 202 Briargate Circle, Lafayette, LA 70503 or at the Annual Meeting. Electronic forms can be e-mailed to you and returned at ajustice@bellsouth.net

NEW LSHR POST OFFICE ADDRESS IS:

Louisiana Society for Horticultural Research
PO Box 1473
Breaux Bridge, LA 70517-1473

OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS OF LSHR

Margo Racca, President
....., First Vice-President
Albert Durio, Sr., Second Vice-President
Nancy Anne Rowe, Recording Secretary
Ruth LaVaque, Treasurer

DIRECTORS AT LARGE

Norman Balliviero 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011
Dr. Jeanie Kreamer 2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012
Cherry Fisher May 2007-2008, 2008-2009, 2009-2010

PAST PRESIDENTS WITH CURRENT MEMBERSHIP

Richard (Dick) Calhoun
Mary Courville
Belle Durio
Dalton Durio
Leonard Lasseigne
Barbara Nelson
James (Jim) Racca

DIRECTORS OF RESEARCH

Dr. Dennis Wollard, Director
Kenneth (Ken) Durio, Associate Director

HONORARY BOARD MEMBERS OR OTHER

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

Scholarships Awarded

Two scholarship requests to the LSHR Research Scholarship Fund were approved at a meeting of the Board of Directors March 20, 2009. Robert Burwell (LSU) was awarded the Post Graduate Level Scholarship, and Joshua Granger (McNeese) was awarded the Undergraduate Level Scholarship. Although there were four applicants for Grant Money for Research, there were no awards.

Four students applied for scholarships (one at post graduate level and three at undergraduate level). Applications were also received from Southeastern University and the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

Winner of the Post Graduate Award, Burwell, is enrolled in the Plant, Environmental & Soils Department at LSU with a major in Horticulture/Agronomy. His thesis topic deals with the chemistry of soil processes.

Granger, who has completed his junior year at McNeese, is in the Agriculture Department with a focus on Plant and Soil Science. His objectives, after graduation from McNeese, include attending turf management classes at LSU, and applying for a position with Sulphur (LA) Parks and Recreation.

According to LSHR Board member and Director of Research, Dr. Dennis Wollard, scholarship awards provide \$500.00 per semester for two semesters. To be eligible, an applicant must be enrolled in a Louisiana college and/or university at the junior, senior or post graduate level. Applicants must be full-time students in good standing, enrolled in a horticulture, plant science or closely related field of study. They must apply annually. A submission of official transcript and one letter of recommendation from current or former faculty members or professional in major field of study are required for Scholarship Requests.

Lafayette Parish Master Gardeners' Fall Plant Extravaganza Scheduled For Saturday, September 12

Take Advantage of the Prime Fall Planting Season!!!

*Seventh Annual Fall Plant Extravaganza
To Be Held Saturday, September 12, 2009*

LAFAYETTE, LA — Once again, the Lafayette Master Gardeners are holding their Fall Plant Extravaganza at the Ira Nelson Horticulture Center on Johnston Street in Lafayette. This popular event showcases the expertise of the Lafayette Master Gardeners. A variety of perennials, trees, blooming shrubs, vines, tropical plants and tender plants are offered for sale.

The sale is scheduled for Saturday, September 12, 2009, from 8:00 AM until 1:00 PM.

2009 Annual Meeting

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and auction sales clerks Jenny Albarado and Pat Huval
Research and distribution of plant releases: Dr. Ellis Fletcher, Dr. Wollard and Billy Welsh
Culture information and slides of plant releases: Billy Welsh and Dr. Wollard
Supplies, coffee and juice: Dr. Fletcher and Ann Justice
Doughnuts and pastries: Heidi Sheesley and Jan Walker
Silent Auction: Nancy Ann Rowe and Ann Justice

RECEIPTS FROM THE 2009 FUND-RAISERS

Receipts from the Plant and Silent Auctions and the Symphony Raffle totaled \$4,728.00.

Lasseigne extended his appreciation to the following who donated plants and garden items: Treeseach Farms, Dr. Dennis Wollard, Albert Durio, Heidi Sheesley, Todd Lasseigne, Bera Smith, Jim/Natalee Farasey, Judy Corne, Dr. Albert Rees, Hazel Theriot, Ann Justice, Nancy Ann Rowe, Live Oak Nursery, Kent's Nursery, Ira P. Nelson Horticulture Center and Roxanne Durio.



From the Treasurer's Desk



It is always a pleasure to visit with our members—however briefly—at the annual meeting. Many, many thanks to Aline Arceneaux and Edna Wheeler for their help with registration for this year's meeting. Your help made all the difference!

Is your name and mailing address correct in our records? Please take a moment to look at the mailing label on this issue of the Compost Pile. Membership cards will be issued with the name as it is on your mailing label. A name is very personal, and a correct address is important. Please send corrections to me at the return address of the Compost Pile or to Ruthiesgarden@cox.net.

LSHR values each member, so be sure to keep your dues current.

Looking forward to seeing each of you again at the next annual meeting!

Ruth LaVaque

FYI: Transport Cuttings Successfully

When many of our LSHR members are on vacation or just out enjoying other gardens, they may need a successful way to transport cuttings. During these trips members may be given cuttings which need to be safely transported or for that matter mailed home. Many times I have attempted to place plant materials in plastic bags and transport them, just to find that they were crushed in luggage or found on the bottom of a stack of shoes or other items. At best, I have placed the plastic bag with plants inside my extra shoes in luggage. This does help in reducing crushing and bruising of the materials to a certain extent. However, the best way I have found to transport cuttings is to use a plastic bottle.

Actually, if you look at the convenience store, you may find some water or soft drink plastic bottles with a larger mouth opening in which it will be easier to place cuttings or small plants. The bottle must have a screw type cap for this to be successful. Drink the water or soft drink and rinse out the container, do, however, leave some water in the bottle.

I would suggest taking cuttings and prepare them as you would for any type of small cuttings of the correct size, removing some lower leaves and maybe even reducing the

surface area of some of the upper leaf areas. Gently work the cuttings into the bottle. Place the cutting(s) in the container with the bottom cut end down as if you were sticking it in a rooting media. You will be amazed at the numbers of cuttings you will be able to place in one bottle. Once the bottle is filled with the cuttings, place the screw cap tightly on the bottle.



Cuttings in plastic bottles

By using this method one does not have to be in a hurry to return home and get them placed in an appropriate mix for rooting. I have taken the bottle and placed it in a brightly lit environment and the cuttings have rooted in the bottle. Make sure that no plant materials are in direct sun light because the plants or cuttings might burn with direct exposure to light.

The most difficult part of using a plastic bottle for transporting cuttings and seedlings is getting the materials out of the bottle. To remove the plants from the bottle, carefully cut the bottom of

the bottle without cutting yourself. Place the cuttings into an appropriate rooting mix. You may then reuse the bottle top as a dome to cover the cuttings and keep high humidity around the cuttings during this rooting time.

Hope this tip helps you bring home safely more exotic cuttings for your garden from far away places.

Dennis Wollard, PhD

Glenda Balliviero Reflects on Honor

“You’ll never know how honored and proud I was to receive the International Master Gardener Search for Excellence Award for Youth for the Lafayette Parish Master Gardeners. There were more than 900 participants from the USA, Canada, Europe and Central America and many made wonderful comments about our program to Norman and me during the conference.”

The local program, The Children’s Garden, housed at the Lafayette Parish Master Gardeners Demonstration Garden,” has been visited by some 4,500 guests, including 700 school students from Acadiana and surrounding parishes. Funds from a grant written by Glenda provided the initial equipment, and donations from the Master Gardeners and the community have made it possible for the program to expand.

(Excerpted from the Lafayette Parish Master Gardener’s Newsletter, May, 2009)

LSHR Member Rowe Garners Awards

Kudos for Nancy Anne Rowe, whose *Pachypodium ropsulatum* v. *rosulatum* was awarded the Sectional Award of Merit at the 2009 Festival des Fleur Flower Show sponsored by the Lafayette Garden Club. In addition, her plant received the Award of Horticultural Excellence, given to the exhibit judged as the finest in the entire Horticultural Division.

As Nancy Anne explains, her prize plant is not an orchid. She started it from seed sometime in the 1990’s and, “as luck would have it, the plant was in spectacular bloom for the flower show.”

She notes, “Caudiciform succulents are a kind of gardening hobby.” And wryly adds, “It is too bad we don’t judge our friends for their delightfully large, warty bottoms, as we do this group of plants.”

(Excerpted from the Lafayette Parish Master Gardener’s Newsletter, May 2009)

FYI: Munching on Elderberries

Our local dark purple-black berries of l'arbre de sirup (*Sambucus canadensis*, better known as Elderberry) are most certainly edible, says Keith Delhomme, reporting for Lafayette's EarthShareGardens organization. Raised by parents now in their 70's who hailed from Carencro, Pecaniere/Arnaudville, Delhomme has eaten elderberries raw by the handfuls for years without any ill effects. However, if you're not used to having them raw, he suggests that it's best to eat just a few to start and see where they take you.



Elderberry flower

"They aren't particularly sweet but neither are they bitter," he explains. "They definitely have crunchy seeds. They provide very large amounts of potassium and beta-carotene, as well as sugar and fruit acids,

calcium, phosphorous and Vitamin C." (See <http://www.wildmanstevebrill.com/>)

Keith continues, "Most sources will recommend that one avoid eating the twigs, roots, leaves, bark and unripe green berries."

The berries are commonly used these days by tossing the twigless berries into pancakes, muffins, cake or breads, or cooking the berries down to syrup or jam. Or perhaps more commonly used in making wine. Cooking the berries seems to be universally

acknowledged as a way to avoid reported unpleasant side effects.

Keith reports that although his parents did not use the berries for food or tonics, they used the leaves for several purposes. Bunches of leaves were placed under hats, "to draw the heat away from their heads", or 'down their pants' to prevent heat-related chafing while working in the fields (cotton and sweet potatoes...).

Keith Delhomme
EarthShareGardens

2008 PLANT RELEASE REPORTS

The hurricane season of 2008 caused a wider than normal variation in the plant ratings. As happened in 2005, a pair of Hurricanes (Gustav and Ike), caused damage or the loss of plants for quite a few of our members. Also reported were plant losses from squirrels, puppies, errant mowers & drifting Round-Up. A certain amount of loss & variation is to be expected due to differences in growing conditions and the personal preferences of members but weather extremes add to it. According to our Members the clear favorites were *Dianella tasmanica* 'Variegata' for its foliage and *Justicia spicigera* for its flowers.

1. *Araujia sericifera* ASCLEPIADACEAE (White Bladderflower) – Avg. 5.9; generally reported as having vigorous growth with 'lovely,' 'interesting leaves' & 'fragrant flowers.' Some members found that though vigorous it did not bloom. Pests/Problems: One member had a problem with white flies & another with root rot.

2. *Chionanthus retusus* OLEACEAE (Chinese Fringe-Tree) – Avg. 6.3; Most found it slow growing and slow to leaf out. Some though were 'vigorous,' 'doubled in size.' Pests/Problems: None.

3. *Cycas bifida* x. *C. revoluta* CYCADACEAE (Forked-Leaf Cycas x Sago Palm) – Avg. N/A - Unable to determine due to slow germination. Some members reported 6 mo. - 1 yr. to germination but many seeds had not yet sprouted. One member accelerated the process by scarifying the seed and then covering it with a clear plastic cup until germination. Pests/Problems: none.

4. *Dianella tasmanica* 'Variegata' LILIACEAE (Variegated Flax-Lily) – Avg. 8.0; Many members stated that it 'multiplied,' 'bloomed beautifully,' 'had beautiful foliage' and was their 'favorite.' Pests/Problems: root rot & scale were reported by two members.

5. *Eriobotrya Japonica* ROSEACEAE (Large-fruited

Loquat) – Avg. 7.4; 'thriving,' 'good grower even in poor soil.' Most members were awaiting the first fruit crop before final evaluation. Pests/Problems: None

6. *Forsythia viridissima* var *koreana* 'Kumson' OLEACEAE (Silver-Vein Forsythia) – Avg. 5.8; Did not seem to grow well for most members but for some it did and they felt it had 'real potential' with 'great foliage.' Pests/Problems: white flies and aphids were each reported by a member.

7. *Juanulloa mexicana* SOLANACEAE (Golden Fingers) – Avg. 7.2; 'exquisite flowers,' 'great,' 'nice leaf color,' 'OK but not spectacular.' One grower found the plant did better with shade. Pests/Problems: Spider mites reported by one member.

8. *Justicia spicigera* ACANTHACEAE (Orange Plume Flower) – Avg. 8.0; 'delicate, pretty flowers,' 'excellent plant,' 'bloomed year round,' 'beautiful with little attention.' Pests/Problems: Scale reported by one member.

9. *Setaria palmiflora* POACEAE (Palm Grass) – Avg. 7.3 'beautiful foliage,' 'good in arrangements' 'grew well,' 'very tough,' 'thrived in the shade.' Pests/Problems: None

10. *Solanum pseudocapsicum* 'Variegata' SOLANACEAE (Variegated Jerusalem-Cherry) – Avg. 8.1; 'vigorous,' 'wonderful foliage,' 'beautiful fruit.' Pests/Problems: Several members expressed concern about toxicity of the fruit; others reported that the stems rooted and found it invasive. One reported rats eating the fruit.

11. *Trachelospermum jasminoides* 'Pink Showers' APOCYNACEAE (Pink-Flowering Jasmine) – Avg. 6.8; While many members reported it as 'vigorous' with 'beautiful blooms,' an equal number found it 'slow growing' and non-blooming. Other comments were 'runners rooted easily' and 'lots of promise.' Pests/Problems: None reported.

Compiled by Rebecca Moss

2009 Plant Release Report Form

Please use this form to help LSHR know more about the 2009 Plant Releases. Please use the Comments and Notes line for any other information that you noted (Ex. Fragrance).

Example: *Lagerstroemia indica* – (Crepe Myrtle)

Transplanted (location/light) – Ex: Flower bed – full sun or 6" pot – shade

Fertilization – Ex: Miracle Gro monthly

Current size and health – Ex: 24" – very healthy

Insect or disease problems – Ex: none

Overall performance (1-10 with 10 as highest – Ex: 8

Comments and notes – Ex: fragrance

1. *Callicarpa dichotoma* ‘Duet’ VERBENACEAE (Chinese White-Fruited Beautyberry)

Transplanted (location/light) _____

Fertilization _____

Current size and health _____

Insect or disease problems _____

Overall performance (1-10 with 10 as highest) _____

Comments and notes _____

2. *Gardenia augusta* ‘Fukurinkoba’ RUBIACEAE (Variegated Japanese Gardenia)

Transplanted (location/light) _____

Fertilization _____

Current size and health _____

Insect or disease problems _____

Overall performance (1-10 with 10 as highest) _____

Comments and notes _____

3. *Leucosceptrum japonicum* ‘Golden Angel’ LAMIACEAE (White Shrub Mint)

Transplanted (location/light) _____

Fertilization _____

Current size and health _____

Insect or disease problems _____

Overall performance (1-10 with 10 as highest) _____

Comments and notes _____

4. *Michelia figo* ssp. *skinneriana* MAGNOLIACEAE (Skinner’s Banana Shrub)

Transplanted (location/light) _____

Fertilization _____

Current size and health _____

Insect or disease problems _____

Overall performance (1-10 with 10 as highest) _____

Comments and notes _____

5. Ocimum citriodorum 'Pesto Perpetuo' LAMIACEAE (Variegated Basil)

Transplanted (location/light) _____

Fertilization _____

Current size and health _____

Insect or disease problems _____

Overall performance (1-10 with 10 as highest) _____

Comments and notes _____

6. Pittosporum tobira 'Shiina' PITTOSPORACEAE (Variegated Dwarf Pittosporum)

Transplanted (location/light) _____

Fertilization _____

Current size and health _____

Insect or disease problems _____

Overall performance (1-10 with 10 as highest) _____

Comments and notes _____

7. Podocarpus lawrencii 'Purple King' PODOCARPACEAE (Purple King Podocarpus)

Transplanted (location/light) _____

Fertilization _____

Current size and health _____

Insect or disease problems _____

Overall performance (1-10 with 10 as highest) _____

Comments and notes _____

8. Reineckia carnea LILIACEAE (Japanese Lilyturf)

Transplanted (location/light) _____

Fertilization _____

Current size and health _____

Insect or disease problems _____

Overall performance (1-10 with 10 as highest) _____

Comments and notes _____

9. Ruellia graecizans ACANTHACEAE (Red Spray Ruellia)

Transplanted (location/light) _____

Fertilization _____

Current size and health _____

Insect or disease problems _____

Overall performance (1-10 with 10 as highest) _____

Comments and notes _____

10. Sedum 'Neon' CRASSULACEAE (Giant Purple Heart Wandering Jew)

Transplanted (location/light) _____

Fertilization _____

Current size and health _____

Insect or disease problems _____

Overall performance (1-10 with 10 as highest) _____

Comments and notes _____

Louisiana Society for Horticultural Research
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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One of My Favorite LSHR Releases

By Ann Justice

Fortunately, the title of this feature was changed from "My Favorite Release" to "One of My Favorite Releases." Choosing only one is surely impossible for most of us.

That said, very high on my list of favorite releases is *Brunfelsia nitida*, the beautiful Lady-of-the-Night, whose haunting fragrance perfumes my patio on crisp, cool nights.

A grower of this tropical plant describes it thus: "It blooms in the evening with a delightful fragrance. The scent floats in the air like a gardenia but much softer. It's ideal for placement near an entry or in a night garden."

I grow this lovely evergreen shrub in a container on



Brunfelsia nitida

my patio (which could be considered a night garden) and, to my surprise, it burst into bloom a few weeks ago. Truly the fragrance is bewitching. The new white flowers fade with age to cream color, but the bloom remains lovely for several weeks. This plant is a member of the Nightshade family. It usually blooms in the South in late winter and spring, but flowering sometimes occurs unexpectedly in late summer, as well.

Its relative, the purple, blue and white Yesterday-Today-and-Tomorrow shrub, is much better known. Some others common names of *Brunfelsia nitida* are Cuban Lady-of-the-Night and Today-and-Yesterday. It was released by LSHR in 2004.