

**VNA Horticulture Research Foundation Inc**  
**Beautiful Gardens Plant Introduction Committee Meeting Notes**  
**Thursday, February 15, 2007**

The meeting was called to order by Fred Duis at 9:20 a.m. with the following people present: Rumen Conev, Butch Gaddy, Bill McCaleb, David Seward, Linda Pinkham, Neal Beasley, John Wise, Mark Weathington, Doug Hensel and Jeff Miller.

Prior to the meeting, Dr. Robert Heinz, Dean of the School of Engineering & Manufacturing Technologies, came by and expressed his support and the support of J. Sergeant Reynolds Community College of the Beautiful Gardens program partnership.

**Executive Director's Report** - Rumen Conev reported on the current status of the test sites. Due to changes at Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens and Litten Hall in Manassas, these sites will be display gardens and not used as official test sites. The research work at IALR is continuing. Rumen has *Kalmia* seed from several sources which he will be germinating soon. He has a 60% time technician (Velva Groover) to help with the Beautiful Gardens program. John Wise and David Seward will be grafting 4 dogwoods (a fastigate form, a spring/fall bloomer, a dwarf form) in March to use in the program.

**Research Grant Funding** - Jeff Miller reported that Beautiful Gardens' research projects received \$14,419 in research funding (41% of grants' totals) from the VNA Horticulture Research Foundation for 2007.

Contact	Research Proposal	Request	Granted
Yinghui Dan	Development of High Throughput Micro Propagation System for <i>Helleborus</i>	2,951.00	1,500.00
Zhiwu Li, Rumen Conev, Linda Pinkham	Development Hexaploid 'Germplasm of Daylily ( <i>Hemerocallis</i> )	5,500.00	2,500.00
Rumen Conev, Linda Pinkham, Marie Dills	Feasibility Study for Commercial Nursery Production of <i>Persea thunbergii</i> in Virginia	1,000.00	0
Barry Flinn, Rumen Conev, Donald Hyatt	Development of In-Vitro Protocols for Propagation of Native Azalea Genotypes with Superior Ornamental Characteristics Part II	4,500.00	2,919.00
M. Javed Iqbal, Zhiwu Li, Rumen Conev	DNA Markers Linked to Rust Resistance in Daylily	5,000.00	3,500.00
Rumen Conev, Don Hyatt, Mark Weathington, Linda Pinkham, John Wise	Establishing a gene-pool of promising <i>Kalmia latifolia</i> germplasm for breeding and introduction of superior Mountain Laurel cultivars	2,200.00	0
David Seward	Establishment of a Holding and Propagation Site at J. Sargent Reynolds Community College	7,690.00	5,500.00
	Totals	28,841.00	15,919.00

**Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden** – Jeff will contact LGBG to determine the use of the \$3,500 grant given in 2006; the poly could go to JSRCC and a complete inventory of the BG plants at LGBG.

**JSRCC** – there was a discussion as to having JSRCC as a propagation/holding site and/or test site.

**Plant Distribution** - It was the consensus that the existing plant distribution will be terminated after this year and if there are enough plants for distribution.

**MANTS Grower Meeting** - Rick Baker reported on the grower meeting that was held during MANTS.

**Plant Selection Committee** – will expand with more growers and will re-evaluate plant lists for promotions and evaluation and report.

**Halifax Master Gardeners** have selected *Adina rubella*, *Stokesia* 'Peachie's Pick' as their best performer for 2007.

**Commercialization of results** from the research on daylily resistance – Rumen Conev will check with Dr. Iqbal from IALR and Fr. Nowak from VT on the feasibility of such a venture.

**Production and Propagation Committee** – will be expanded to include more growers representing the larger nurseries. There was a discussion on developing contractual agreements for exclusive rights to grow BG germplasm. Rick Baker will contact Jay and Linda Guy at Carolina Nurseries about how their system works with NOVALIS.

**National Arboretum Trip** – a July trip to view crape myrtle selections in bloom for possible introduction into the BG program.

**Norfolk Botanical Garden** – it was the consensus of the group to provide BG signage to NBG and to commit more funding to this test site.

**A Promotion Timeline** for plant promotion, plant introduction and plant propagation was discussed with the following promotion milestones:

March 8'07 - BG meeting – announcing the long list of plants for promotion to the combined Plant Selection and Production/Propagation Committee. Discussions and narrowing down the nominations creating a short list;

April'07 – Promo Plant List for '09 finalized and announced to all interested parties;

October'07 – A FSMIP grant soliciting finances for BG promotional activities to be submitted by Rick Baker;

January'08 – MANTS meeting. Plant selections for 2010 promotion presented to a large audience for discussions and approval;

Spring'08 – Visits with retailers. Finalizing the decisions on tags and retail and promo materials;

August'08 – VNLA Field Day –promotion of the 2010 plants to the membership;

Fall'08 – Sale tags to growers. Continue visits with retailers.

Jan'09 – MANTS meeting. Plant selections for 2011 promotion presented to a large audience for discussions and approval;

Fall'08 through spring'09 – massive media releases and speaking engagements;

March'09 – Initiation of sales of BG Promo plants at retail level;

***Intro milestones:***

March'07 – all the sites ready for the spring planting: bed preparation, permanent labels ready, irrigation systems completed, tested and fully operational, schedules for plant delivery and planting prepared and communicated to Exec. Director;

Spring' 2007 – Plant delivery and planting at test sites;

June'07 – Visit to OPGC, Ohio. Germplasm acquisition (perennials);

July'07 – Visit to USDA NA, D.C. Plant acquisition (crape myrtles, other germplasm);

January'08 – MANTS meeting. Plant selection for 2009/2010 evaluation presented to a large audience for discussions and approval;

March'08 – late in the month the March 15 2007/ March 15 2008 evaluation data summarized and sent to Dr. Conev;

Spring'08 - Plant delivery and planting at test sites;

July'09 – evaluation of triploid daylilies from 2005 hybridization done. Initial selection of most promising genotypes completed. Evaluation of 2006 triploid hybrids initiated;

January'09 – MANTS meeting. Plant selections for 2010/2011 evaluation presented to a large audience for discussions and approval;

March'09 - late in the month the March 15 2008/ March 15 2009 evaluation data summarized and sent to Dr. Conev;

***Prop milestones<sup>1</sup>***

Feb/March'07 – David Seward grafts promising dogwood germplasm (provided by John Wise) and ‘Lady Fairfax’ dogwood (provided by Don Hyatt) for further evaluation;

April 1'07 – Deadline for moving the plants and hoop house from LGBG. Plant inventory completed and submitted to Dr. Conev, Fred Duis, Jeff Miller, and Linda Pinkham;

Summer'07 – Softwood cuttings propagation of prospective *Daphne*, *Hydrangea*, *Leptodermis* germplasm, Azalea ‘Fairfax’, etc.

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<sup>1</sup> Only short-term planning done at this time! Immediately after the March meeting propagation plans for fall 2007 and beyond to be developed and finalized by collaborative effort of prop. sites managers, germplasm contributors, and plant selection committee members.