

Southeast Chapter ABS Annual Meeting
Bamboo Farm & Coastal Gardens, Savannah, GA
February 17, 2007

Stephen Garton, superintendent at the Bamboo Farm & Coastal Gardens welcomed us to the Bamboo Farm. He suggested that we expand our meeting to become an educational effort to inform the public about bamboo. He noted a great interest in bamboo and a great potential for promoting bamboo for many new uses such as carbon sequestration. He wants help to put on a bamboo festival. Mid April was suggested as a good time to do such a festival. He also made a request for grant funds to help interpret the collection to the public. Bill King mentioned that the ABS is currently soliciting grant applications. Dave Linvill brought up the idea of establishing a partnership between the SEC chapter and the Bamboo Farm. Dr. Garton was in agreement and Dave said he would make a formal proposal in the business meeting. Several people affirmed the importance of the bamboo farm and the wonderful resource it represents. He mentioned that the Bamboo Farm is doing a long term strategic plan and will be forming a committee to develop the plan. Bamboo is the core collection of the site. How can they complement the collection or improve the collection. He mentioned that they now can sell bamboo plants and products as long as they include an educational component and as long as they keep a good account of what has been sold. Feedback from several members was that we do not have a problem with the bamboo farm selling bamboo. The bamboo farm would like a statement of support from the chapter for the selling of plants. Sue mentioned that there was not a local bamboo source and many gardens often sell plants. Bill King mentioned that he would only be concerned if they sold large quantities. Stephen also passed on a request from Todd Forrest at the New York Botanic Garden for 400 4" diameter *Phyllostachys bambusoides* poles and that their budget is \$1.50/ft. or \$45 a pole.

The next speaker was Melanie Harrison-Dunn, Curator of the USDA Temperate Bamboo Germplasm Collection in Byron, GA. Melanie introduced herself as curator of the collection. She mentioned that there are two new employees with the Plant Introduction Station that have an interest in the collection and have been helping to clean and groom more of the groves. One is located at Byron and one is at Griffin but can help out. There may be changes in how they treat plants for fire ants that are destined for areas in the fire ant quarantine. She will be meeting with a representative of the GA Dept. of Agriculture and may have to change their treatment protocol. If this happens they may have to limit distribution to 3 or 4 times a year. Melanie also mentioned that they will be adding some new species to the GRIN (Germplasm Repository Information Network) listings. These additions include a *Pseudosasa amabilis*, *Arundinaria gigantea*, *Phyllostachys bissetii* dwarf, and *Phyllostachys propinqua*. Melanie wants to improve the signage for the collection. This would include replacing missing signs and installing durable signs in such a manner that they are not damaged by tractors and other equipment. Several people made suggestions for improving the signs. Steve Stampers laminated signs were suggested as a possibility as were other options.

Other announcements

Michele Von Bergen mentioned the address of Bamboo World, the bamboo information and discussion website that she hosts:

http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/Bamboo_World/ .

Stephanie Oshima

Stephanie is a member and nursery owner from the mountains of western North Carolina. Stephanie told us of the possibility of having a bamboo festival at the Asheville Botanical Garden. The Botanical Garden will publicize the event and vendors would receive free admission, a booth, and a chair. The Gardens would receive 15% of any sales. Stephanie said that there is a lot of space in which to set up booths. She would like to do this in the summer and suggested dates in July and August. Members gave feedback and a date in July was selected but since the meeting the date has changed and is now August 11th and 12th. Preliminary information is being sent to potential vendors in several chapters and details and sign up forms will be available by the end of March. Stephanie is serving as the coordinator for this event but she needs our support as vendors.

Michele Von Bergen brought up the idea of a chapter T-shirt. Paul Schneider mentioned that the design on the 1995 ABS meeting t-shirt was one of his favorites and would be his choice. Robby Russell asked that members with ideas send them to him and he has a graphic artist that can refine the idea and make it suitable for printing on a shirt. He also showed a picture that was the basis for 1995 shirt. Sue Turtle suggested that the shirts should be all cotton or a cotton/bamboo blend. Stephanie Oshima made a motion that Robby be in charge of this idea and he will report back to the chapter on the status of this project. Paul suggested putting the options on the website so we could choose.

Steve Ray mentioned that he had a hard time finding out when the meeting was going to be held. Sue Turtle suggested that we send out a postcard or a one page mailer to publicize these events in advance. It was noted that this would normally be done by the chapter secretary.

At this point President Robby Russell formally opened the business meeting and introduced John Tkach of Charlotte, NC as the chapters new webmaster. John had been appointed to this position by President Russell following the resignation of Gayle Lewis. John asked the members present to give him ideas for new content for the website. A motion was made and seconded to let John reorganize the website. MaryAnn Silverman reported that several books have been given to the bamboo farm along with a plant of *Bambusa textilis* Kanapaha (which was originally dug from the Bamboo Farm in the late 1970's) in memory of Richard Waldron. MaryAnn suggested that Stephen Garton should decide on a plaque to go with the *B. textilis* plant that would fit it with the gardens. The chapter will pay for the plaque. We have not heard from Kanapaha Gardens in Gainesville concerning book donations and Mike Hotchkiss will contact them again and send a list of titles that the chapter could provide.

Bert Silverman opened discussion on the request by the Bamboo Farm for a grant from the chapter that would be used for interpretation of the bamboo collection at the Bamboo

Farm and suggested an amount of \$2000. Dave Linvill stated that a formal agreement was needed first. Bill King mentioned that we approved this 2 years ago but it was never formalized in writing. Stephen agreed that the proposal needs to come from them and be approved by the chapter. Dave Linvill also stated that the chapter should have a member on the long range strategic planning committee. Michelle Von Bergen and Sue Turtle both expressed interest in this job. Paul Schneider suggested breaking the discussion into 2 motions. The first motion was to appoint a volunteer for the strategic planning committee and to authorize a travel stipend. Sue Turtle volunteered to represent the chapter on the committee and the motion was approved. The amount of the stipend was not discussed. The second motion was to authorize an amount of \$2000 to be granted to the bamboo farm and coastal gardens contingent upon receipt of a proposal that will be reviewed by a committee headed by Mike Hotchkiss with members appointed by Mike. The committee will solicit feedback on the proposal from the chapter membership.

Nominations for the Chapter offices of President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. (Ed. note – normally a committee appointed by the president would suggest nominees but this had not been done so nominations were taken from the floor).

Michelle Von Bergen and Tracy Cato were nominated for President. Each introduced themselves and Tracy turned down the nomination for president but volunteered to serve as vice president. Robby closed the discussion and both were elected by unanimous vote. John Tkach volunteered for the position of secretary. He was nominated and elected by unanimous vote. Lau- Kin Chan (who was not present) was re-nominated as treasurer and elected unanimously. Robby has since spoken with Lau-Kin and she has agreed to serve as treasurer for one more year.

Bill Kings term as ABS representative will end at the ABS meeting in Philadelphia in October. Nominations for ABS representative were opened and Bill King was nominated. Bill accepted the nomination and was unanimously elected. The chapter had not elected any new board members in recent years so the President opened the floor for nominations. Paul Schneider, Robert Russell and Mike Hotchkiss were nominated by Bert Silverman, seconded and elected. Bert Silverman mentioned the appointed positions of librarian and membership representative. Mary Ann Silverman, the current librarian, agreed to continue in that position. Sue Turtle mentioned that all membership applications will be sent to Kathy Small in Encinitas, CA and we will not need anyone to process memberships except for chapter only members. John Tkach offered to maintain a chapter membership list. John has already contacted Kathy Small and will share the list with the newsletter editor.

Sue Turtle explained the BOTA project in Central and South America and asked the chapter to consider making a donation to BOTA. The money would be given to support a student doing research on bamboo in the field. Some ABS chapters have given amounts ranging from \$1000 to \$2500 for this effort and others have not made donations. There was discussion on this with various members being for and against the donation. Members agreed that BOTA is a worthwhile organization but some said they would

prefer to support work on bamboo in the southeastern U.S. A motion was made to give \$1000 to BOTA for this year only and it passed with a majority vote.

Bert Silverman made a motion to amend the bylaws so that the annual meeting can be held on any date designated by the board of directors. Robby Russell asked if there was any further business and then closed the meeting.

Submitted by Mike Hotchkiss