

# GERANIAMANIA

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## A NOTE FROM JACK

I hope this finds you all well and safe during these trying times. You might wonder why there was no newsletter this month. Our president - Patrick - fell and bruised his leg and ended up in Grossmont Hospital with a potential blood clot. He is out of the hospital but is in the Stanford Court Rehab Center in Santee and will be there for a while. In the mean time Monica fell and severely broke her ankle and is she is also in Rehab at the same location as Patrick. Their son Robert is here to feed the cat and take care of everything else.

We also we have sad news to report - Cathy's mom has passed away after a long illness. The club is sending flowers to Cathy as well the Powell's.

I hope you all have a Happy Thanksgiving and a wonderful Christmas/Holiday!

Jack Ohmstede

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# OCTOBER MEETING AT THE POWELLS

Patrick and Monica Powell graciously opened the driveway and front garden of their home to the club for a real in-person meeting on Saturday, October 24. There were 8 members in attendance; all wore masks and maintained proper social distancing in efforts to have a safe public gathering.

Patrick led a nominating session to form a slate of officers for the club for next year. The outcome was that Jack Ohmstede has agreed to serve as President, Cynthia Pardoe has agreed to be Vice-President, and Brenda Archer will continue as Treasurer. We are still closing in on someone to take on Secretary duties.

Voting on the Board members will take place at our next meeting, or by email, whatever method is available to us in December.

We discussed plans for the Pelargonium Conference next spring. The San Diego Botanic Garden has re-scheduled us for the last Saturday in March, which would be March 29, 2021. Please put this date on your calendar as a save-the-date for the coming year. We have no idea where we will be in terms of the Covid-19 virus and any restrictions that may be in effect. So any plans we have are tentative. Details will be forthcoming.

The club members enjoyed a raffle of various perishable items that were donated for the Conference this year and were fast approaching their 'Use By' date. There were also many cuttings and plants available for raffle plus plants that the Powells generously shared from their garden.

It was delightful to get together again, even for a small meeting, after months of no regular meetings.



Who says poinsettias are the only red flower to use for Christmas?!



# Zombie Geraniums?

The latest gift of 2020 is a bacteria called *Ralstonia*. It's a nasty bacteria, dangerous to other plants, including some important Michigan crops. In April it was known to have been in geranium clippings from Guatemala of Fantasia Pink Flare. These cuttings were sent to 288 greenhouses nationwide, but the area hardest hit, with 41 of those greenhouses, was Michigan. This bacteria kills plants by blocking water and nutrients from moving through their systems. The big problem? There is no known chemical to control it.

According to MLive.com, once *Ralstonia* is present, it can be transmitted through contaminated soil, irrigation water, or equipment, opening up the possibility of infecting crops like potatoes and tomatoes.

The Michigan Dept. of Agriculture is making sure all greenhouse or nursery facilities who received shipments of Fantasia Pink Flare geraniums are destroying them. This thing is so nasty, the state wants the greenhouses to remove the infected geraniums and surrounding geranium plants and send them to a special landfill, where they will be buried at least six feet under the ground.

Which, of course, is how all the best "zombie geranium" movies start.

Another reminder why the importation of plant material is so heavily regulated! Please don't be tempted to buy cuttings from out of the country - you don't know what (or who?) might be coming along for the ride!

# SEEKING -

## *Neil Clemenson!*



One of our members is trying to replace an angel that she has lost. It is a plant that is normally available from Geraniaceae but they are out of stock on this plant at this time.

Does anyone have this plant and would you be willing to share cuttings? If so, please contact Marilyn Carne-Smith at [lurvpetals2@gmail.com](mailto:lurvpetals2@gmail.com)



*Fantasia Pink Flare*

