

Question Period II

Richard Walhood: With regard to your international acquisitions, how are you affected by plant quarantine laws or is that another function of the university?

J.C. Raulston: You'll lose a whole of a lot of plants going through quarantine people. Basically, my procedure is that when I go somewhere and collect I assume it's all expendable, as painful as that is. There will be times when you come through everything else comes through; there are times you come through and for some reason it's the wrong day. It's an unpredictable thing. It is very difficult. We have lost a lot of materials as have all nurseries and public gardens, but we do work with the quarantine people. We take things through. The trip to Mexico a few weeks ago, they collected for so long they knew people by name and everything as they come through. We spent probably 3 h and it was very slow since they went through everything. It's a process you go through.

Don Kleim: *Campsis grandiflora*. How large a flower?

J.C. Raulston: The flowers are 2-1/2 in. in diameter. They're huge. The picture on the cover really doesn't do them justice. They are spectacular.

Don Kleim: In 1926, W.P. Clark brought in a collection and what was *Campsis grandiflora* [syn. *Bignonia grandiflora*], he brought in a cultivar called 'Splendor'. A 4-in. blossom, shrubby as such we still have a few plants, but it is a big one.

J.C. Raulston: I appreciate that list, but it brings up a very important point. Much of what we're doing is not new necessarily, but plants cycle through and they are handled by individuals and then up with collectors. It is glamorous to take an expedition to China, but my theory is that you can throw a dart at a map and in a 5-mile radius anywhere you can find amazing plants, either seedling variations on plants that are native there, mutations on the landscape plants, old plants that somebody brought in, literally, there are wonderful plants everywhere and they go out of the trade and we need to constantly bring them back.

Kristin Yanker-Hansen: Can anybody be a member of your organization?

J.C. Raulston: We would love to have you as a member.

Kristin Yanker-Hansen: What are the membership benefits?

J.C. Raulston: I get so happy when people send me checks. We produce what I call our periodic newsletter because I write it and it's very periodic at this point and one's due right now. We do have a variety of mailings that go out to people. On the local scene there are lectures and plant distributions and things like that. Long distance it's a matter of keeping up with what we're doing as much as anything. If you get up to higher membership levels, we have a connoisseur level. Each year we do by mail a distribution to those people of our choicest and most exceptional plants that we have. As professional nurserymen, literally any of you have access to our collections. We do the best we can. Write to us and let us know what you are interested in and we'll process it as we can. I have a few membership brochures here and in the handout there is an address.

Barbara Selemon: You give away so much. How do you recoup your expenses?

J.C. Raulston: We get support from the industry and people give us donations and we work very hard. At this point the university provides 0.5% of our operating budget. The rest we get from the public and memberships. We are not allowed to sell plants. So we depend on donations. The nursery industry has been very supportive. We apply for grants, we tap dance, we do everything we can. At this point our operational budget runs \$200,000.00 a year which we have to raise every year. It's a struggle. But, we have fun at it.