

COLLINSBURG GARDEN SOCIETY

“Welcome, members and guests,” said Eloise Merchant, president of the Collinsburg Garden Society. “We have a number of interesting topics to discuss tonight, so let’s get the business agenda out of the way first. Doris, will you read the minutes of our last meeting, please?”

“Yes, Madam President,” replied Doris. “As you know, as the county librarian, I pride myself on taking accurate notes. Last month’s meeting began ...”

“How many pages of notes are you going to read, Doris?” yelled Harvey Milkbong from the back of the hall.

“I have eighty-four pages of detailed minutes, Harvey. Now, as I was saying ...”

“Madam President, I move that we accept the minutes from the last meeting unread,” yelled Harvey Milkbong from the back of the hall.

“I have a motion on the floor,” said Eloise. “Do I have a second? ... Doris, please note that all members have seconded the motion. All in favor of accepting the minutes from our last meeting, raise

your hand. The motion carries unanimously ... except for one gentleman back at the coffee table. Do you have a problem with last month's minutes, sir?"

"Uh, no," said the man. "I'm just delivering the donuts and coffee."

"Very well," said the president. "Thank you so very much, Doris. What would we ever do without you?"

"Have shorter meetings," yelled Harvey Milkbon from the back of the hall.

"Order, please," said Eloise.

"Madeline, would you please give us a treasurer's report?"

"Yes, Madam President," answered Madeline. "Our annual plant sale brought in \$174.66 last week. The permit to hold the plant sale cost \$175.00. Next year we hope to do better ..."

"What about it, mayor?" asked Wilbur Johnson. "Couldn't you have cut some slack on the permit fee for the town's own garden society?"

"Yeah," said many in unison.

“My esteemed friends, voters, and fellow garden society members. Let me congratulate you on your exceptional interest in the affairs of this fine town. I would deem it a pleasure and my civic duty as your elected mayor to answer that astute question. Let me say that I will give all due consideration to the question of remuneration for public services. It is with great dignity that ...”

“I move that we accept the mayor’s explanation without further discussion,” said the man delivering the coffee and donuts.

“Do I have a second?” asked the president.

“Second,” said all, in unison.

“Madam President,” said Doris. “I must note that the man making the motion is not a member of the Collinsburg Garden Society.”

“All those in favor of accepting the mayor’s explanation without further discussion, given that the motion may at some future date be considered invalid, raise your hand.”

All raised their hands, except the man delivering the coffee and donuts.

“Sir, do you have a problem with the motion that you made?” asked Eloise.

“Uh, no ... ma’am. My uncle, the mayor, just reminded me of a few details on my contract for supplying coffee and donuts, so I must abstain.”

“Did you have anything else to report, Madam Treasurer?” asked Eloise.

“Yes, Madame President. After we pay for the coffee and donuts tonight, we will have \$14.32 in our bank account.”

“Thank you, Madeline,” said Eloise. “Do we have any old or new business to bring to the floor?”

The hall fell silent, except for Bob Picos slurping his coffee.

“Yes, Madame President,” said Doris, against a background of groans. “I would like to propose that we sponsor a display at the library for National Gardening Month.”

“Do you have any idea how much that would cost us, Doris?” asked the president.

“I can get all the materials for \$14.30,” answered Doris.

“Madame Treasurer?” asked Eloise.

“We have it,” said Madeline.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to sponsor a display.

“Anything else?” asked the president. “No ... okay. Now for our educational program this evening, we have Professor Bolivar J. Shagnasty with his insight on the *Chamaedorea microspadix* palm ... Professor.”

“Thank you, Madam President,” said the professor. As your esteemed president said, I will bring you a portrait of *Chamaedorea microspadix*, also known by its common names of Bamboo Palm and Hardy Bamboo Palm.

The *Chamaedorea microspadix* is a monocot in the Arecaceae family. *Chamaedorea* means ‘a gift near the ground’ and *microspadix* is from the Greek for ‘small’ and ‘flower stalk’. It is cespitose, up to 3 meters erect or leaning and 3 to 5 meters in horizontal breadth. Leaves are pinnate, reduplicate, with slightly drooping, sigmoid leaflets spreading in a single plane and evenly spaced along the rachis, but with broader apical leaflets. They have a tubular sheath that is 20 to 30 centimeters long, oblique apically, densely and longitudinally striate-nerved. The petiole is 15-25 centimeters long, rounded, strong, flat or only slightly grooved. There are 9 or fewer, when the terminal pair is

broader, pinnae on each side of the rachis. The pinnae are up to 25 centimeters long and 4-5 centimeters wide, regularly arranged, alternate, lanceolate, sigmoid or falcate, velvety, glaucous or green below. The upper pair of pinnae are often confluent and 2-3 times broader than others, and they have 3 primary nerves, several secondaries and tertiaries. The inflorescences are pendulous, infrafoliar, sometimes breaking through the old persistent sheaths, to 60 centimeters long and branched to one order with 3-6 branches. The peduncles are 10 centimeters long, 8 millimeters wide at base, and 5 millimeters wide at apex. The spherical fruits are 1 centimeter in diameter and orange-red when mature.”

The words flowed from Professor Shagnasty’s golden tongue for quite some time. When the plant intellectual finally finished his oration, the entire room gave him a standing ovation.

“Hey, Bob,” said Harvey. “Did you understand anything that guy said?”

“Not a word. I think he was speaking in a foreign language.”

“Yeah, sounded like Russian to me,” said Harvey. “If we didn’t understand what he was saying, how come we’re standing and clapping?”

“I’m doing it just because I’m glad it’s finally over,” said Bob.

“Yeah, me too, brother.”

“Thank you, Professor Shagnasty, for that inspiring lecture,” said Eloise. “Members, I’m reminding you that Doris will have a complete transcript of Professor Shagnasty’s lecture available on Tuesday. Professor Shagnasty will also be available at the close of the meeting to answer any questions you might have.”

“Do you think we should ask for a translated copy, Bob?” asked Harvey.

“No, man. You don’t want to show your ignorance.”

“Yeah, you’re probably right.”

“So, if there are no further ...” said the president.

“Hey, mayor, can we get some jelly-filled donuts next time?” yelled Harvey from the back of the hall.

“My esteemed friends, voters, and fellow garden society members. Let me congratulate you on your exceptional interest in the affairs of this fine garden society. I would deem it a pleasure and my civic duty as your elected mayor to answer that astute question. Let me say that I will give all due consideration to the question of refreshment contents. It is with great dignity that ...”

“I withdraw the question, Madame President,” yelled Harvey from the back of the hall.

“So, if there are no further questions ... let me remind you that next month our very own Doris will be bringing in some of her Neoregelia for show and tell. We will also be having some surprise treats from Sophie Cruger’s recent trip to Germany ...”

“I hope it’s some of that German beer,” yelled Harvey from the back of the hall.

“As I was saying, surprise treats from Sophie Cruger, and we are most fortunate to have as our guest lecturer, the world famous, Professor Ludwig von Booring. His topic will be “Economic Opportunities in Armadillo Training for Gardeners”. It’s sure to be an exciting meeting. Thank you for coming and enjoy the coffee and donuts.”

