April Hort Report

I’ve brought a houseplant to talk about, because I want everyone to know about the advantages of purchasing a ‘Challenge Plant’ from the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. Each September, three different plants are available for purchase, with the purpose of showing them the following year at The Philadelphia Flower Show.

Last September, I purchased for $8 each, an Alsobia ‘Cygnet’, and a Lavandula multifida. I entered them both online before the January deadline, and received a pass to get into the show at 7 AM any day. Some years, I have received passes good for only the specific days of my classes, so it does vary from year to year. But, what a bargain, getting into the show for $16, and more importantly, before the masses arrive!

My Lavandula was not show-worthy, but I entered this Alsobia, and won a third-place ribbon for it, out of nine entries. If it still looks good next January, I will enter it in the ‘Returning Challenge Plant’ class. There are two challenge plant classes, one for ‘novices’, which are entrants who have never won a blue ribbon at the show, and one for those who have. I won a blue for a returning plant in 2009; maybe I’ll win another in 2018.

I’ve rooted four Alsobia cuttings; one for Sue Soraruf, and three spares. If you read this report, and want one, send me an email, and I’ll give you one. It has a beautiful flower, with speckles and frilly edges.