MISSISSIPPI NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

MARCH 1983

NEW PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

It is a great honor to have been elected your MISSISSIPPI NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY President. I assume this office with great hopes of being able to provide the leadership you seek to meet your objectives in making the many aspects of native plant exploration in Mississippi a continued, growing experience for each member. I hope each of you will feel free to suggest the avenues you would like to see our fine organization follow.

Mississippi offers such a varied and vastly interesting array of native plants to see and learn about. We are truly blessed to have so many knowledgeable people among our membership to guide us on field trips and identify for us even the most minute plants any members seeks out and asks the identity of. Dr. Sidney McDaniel, our past President, is perhaps our most valued field guide in this respect. We truly appreciate each giving of their time and patience in seeing that our field trips are always at locations with unusual, bountiful and often rare plants, as well as, to locales we would seldom chance to find on our own. Gentlemen, we thank you!

My thoughts of objectives for this administration are to continue to have as many field trips scheduled as possible. I feel this can best be enabled by naming Dr. Sidney McDaniel, Chairman of Field Trips. Of course, we encourage you to notify him of any locations or specialty plants you are interested in seeing scheduled on field trips. A listing of planned or tentatively planned field trips will appear elsewhere in this Newsletter. Hopefully you will also arrange some "Mini-Field Trips" in your own region with members and friends from your area. The Newsletter will gladly list your field trip location and date in the event other MNPS members might wish to join you....let us know how your field trips went for you afterwards, what you saw, who in MNPS went with you and anything else of interest, so we can pass it along to the membership in your Newsletter. Fun and success are contageous, so spread it around!

Any members who do slide photography of native plants are hereby highly encouraged to volunteer to show these slides before the membership at meetings or field trip weekends....or have friends of yours with slides come as your guest and show the slides. Evening get togethers with slide showings are generally good times for everyone after an active day on a field trip....and slide showing comes in awfully handy on the field trips which are suddenly daunted by rain.

My greatest effort will be in my objective to make native plants available to members interested in having them. It is difficult to organize and implement such a plan without access to facilities which enable gathering goodly quantities of several types of native plants at a time, to insure having enough for all the members who would like to have them. However, practice and experience in this matter should bring about the solution. I would be interested in knowing your interests along these lines. It gives me great pleasure to announce that Travis Salley has agreed to serve as Chairman of Native Plant Distributions!

Your communication with this administration is of the greatest value in enabling us to

bring to you what you want from your organization. The Newsletter is also the voice of your organization. We want you to take an active part in MNPS and welcome receiving articles suited to the needs and wants of the membership. Will McDearman and Faye Swan are always glad to hear from you and work with you in bringing together articles about native plants you have worked up, so please share yourself with MNPS through your Newsletter.

We have every reason to be proud of the Mississippi Native Plant Society. The organizing members did an extraordinary job of bringing it together and the officers and members from that point on have been the reasons for its unusually outstanding unity and enthusiastic character. You each deserve a tremendous amount of credit for your success. You have made my job as President an honorable and heart-warming position to hold, yet it will be difficult to surpass the achievements already made, unless you yourselves are the ones who will cause it as we embark on a new and promising year! Thank you for being with me!

Sincerely,

Joan A. Pitcher

Joan A. Pitcher
President, MNPS

FIRST FIELD TRIP - 1983

The first field trip of the MNPS will be a joint field trip with the New Orleans Mycological Society (NOMS). On Saturday, March 19, we will meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Gloster Arboretum just outside Gloster, in Amite County, Mississippi. Lowell and Peggy Newby will be there to greet each as they arrive. This field trip through the arboretum will be led by Dr. Richard Stadtherr, retired horticulturist from LSU at Baton Rouge, as well as Sidney McDaniel from Mississippi State. This arboretum was established in 1956 by Frank and Sara Gladney and has many native plants that are to be found in the loess soils of this part of the state. In addition, different rare plants and trees of the world are established including native wildflowers threatened with extinction elsewhere. One of the highlights of this arboretum are the plantings of magnolias from around the world. Alone, ten varieties of North American magnolias can be seen here. One of the highlights of the arboretum is one grouping of 17 Big Leaf magnolias. Also, there are plantings of native azaleas. This will be an opportunity for MNPS and NOMS members to visit an established arboretum with a wide array of plantings that is centrally located for many members of both societies.

This weekend also begins the NOMS annual field trip for morels. Should there be sufficient daylight after the conclusion of the arboretum trip, we shall try to have a short field trip to an area near Gloster to look for morels on Saturday afternoon. On Sunday, March 20 we hope to have a field trip at Pond, MS southwest of Woodville, and will meet in the parking area just west of Pond, at 10:00 a.m. For the last two years, morels have been found near here.

For those who might like to either arrive early and stay in the area Friday night, or stay over on Saturday, there are various accommodations available. Some suggestions are:

1) The Glostonian Motel with Restaurant just north of Gloster, on MS Hwy. 33. Rates are $23/room (1 dbl bed + 1 day bed; accommodates 3 people) Phone: (601) 225-4263.

2) Traceway Campgrounds, outside Natchez, MS on Hwy 61N, camper hook-up, $9.45/night Tenting (2 people) $6.30, Water $.50. Also have a bunkhouse for 10 people $5 each person/night; make arrangements as a group in advance.

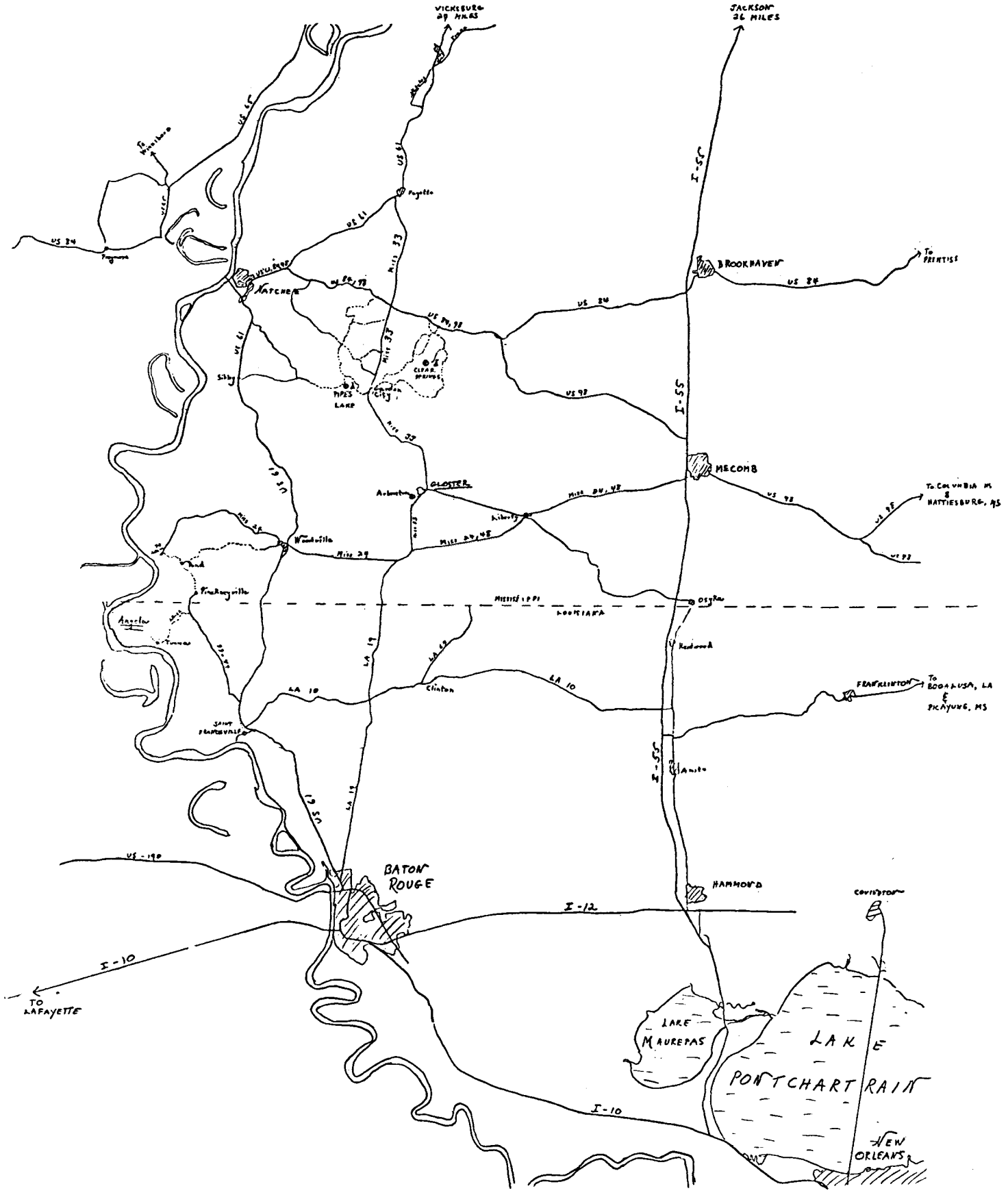
3) Within the Homochitto National Forest, camping is available in two nearby areas:
(a) Pipes Lake within the Sandy Creek Management Area, west, off MS Hwy. 33 near Garden City.
(b) Clear Springs Campground east of MS Hwy. 33, south of Hwy 84 & 98 between Roxie and Meadville.

4) Limited accommodations at arboretum. 3 bedrooms with 2 beds/room. Furnish towels and linens. First come-first served. Contact Mr. and Mrs. Gladney. (No alcohol allowed on premises.)

5) Ramada Inn- St. Francisville, LA

SEE MAP FOR DIRECTIONS TO GLOSTER!

NOTE: Each person should plan on bringing their own lunch; there is a grocery store in Gloster at the junction of Hwy 33 & 24.



Outline of Future MNPS Field Trips

April - Trip to Delta area near Rolling Fork, single day only. Accommodations: Rolling Fork, Vicksburg, Greenville.

May(early) - Picayune area - visit natural areas associated with Crosby Arboretum.

May(late) - Canoe trip, D'Lo, MS.

July 16-17 - NOMS Foray - Joint Meeting.

August 20 - Joint Foray with La. Native Plant Society (NOLA).

Labor Day Weekend - Joint Foray with NOMS.

Late September - Starkville, to visit prairies and observe wildflower bloom.

Mid-October - Tishomingo St. Park, see fall coloration in Mississippi.

Dec. 2-4 - Harrison Foray, Joint with NOMS, Saucier, MS.

PLANT DISTRIBUTION

- Travis Salley

We are in the process of forming a Plant Distribution Committee. One aim of the committee is to obtain, by propagation, endangered or rare species of plants of Mississippi to be distributed to members of MNPS. Alabama Wildflower Society has an Exchange/Sale plant program. I had a nice telephone conversation with Mr. George Wood, Editor AWS. One of the things we discussed was the plant program. With the information I have, I make the following suggestion and will bring it before the group at the next meeting:

Each member bring a plant to donate to MNPS to be sold. Members may also bring plants to exchange with other members. Plants should be home grown with no restriction on type of plant.

Mr. Wood said they allowed wild plants with restriction. This would be something for discussion before I would suggest collecting wild plants. Seed maybe. I have several plants that do well in this area and I am sure other members have different plants that multiply well in their area. This would be a good way to increase the species in your garden or pot plants.

Please bring a plant or more to the meeting at Gloster and let's get the show on the road.

I need some suggestions for the committee and volunteers to serve on the committee. I have been asked to serve as Chairman.

Elizabeth Hudson, Sweeny, Texas sent some Texas Bluebonnet seed last fall for us to try in Mississippi. I planted some and gave some to the group at the Newton meeting. I received word from her recently that her plants were doing well. She has had problems with them in the past. I have several plants that are living but I hope they look better later. The cold does not seem to hurt them but they look better in the well drained area.

I had one teasel plant last year. This year I have over 100. They seem to do so well they could create a problem in Mississippi. I do not know if they grow wild here but they do in Kentucky.

- Travis Salley

INVITATION FROM ALABAMA WILDFLOWER SOCIETY

AWS is inviting MNPS to their Birmingham, Alabama Meet, April 9 & 10. It will be headquartered at Holiday Inn South (I-65 South - Hoover Exit). Field trips will include all-day trip to Woodruff's Mill near Adamsville, Ala. April 9. This is a lush vegetative area with many beautiful spring wildflower and ferns. Sunday morning we will visit a private wildflower garden and the fern glade and wildflower garden at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. Following a picnic lunch (bring your own, both Saturday and Sunday), the meeting will end. A dinner will be served at Holiday Inn on Saturday night at 6:30 P.M. Cost $8.50 (including tax and tip). Dinner reservations should be made no later than Wed., April 6. Reservation forms for dinner and room accommodations appear elsewhere in this newsletter. Let's having a good showing of MNPS members at this meet! If you do not use the form to make your reservations, be sure to mention that you are attend the Alabama Wildflower Society meeting to get special rates. A block of rooms is being held until March 25.

Botanical Exploration – A New Lindera (spice-bush) for Mississippi ?

The images of Charles Darwin collecting plants in South America, or Sir Joseph Hooker identifying the plant collections made by naturalists during the 1825-28 Pacific voyage of Captain Beechey, and in North America Andre Michaux who was sent by the French government to collect plants from the New World, or Thomas Nuttall the English botanists working in the Missouri River Valley, are all understood as examples of 19th century botanical exploration. To investigate both geography and vegetation was obviously the most descriptive and pertinent mechanism for early explorers to characterize unknown lands. And although their technology and limited ability to more fully interpret the biological significance of such plant discoveries might seem inconsequential according to 20th century science, the same motivation, the interest, and even the scientific necessity to find and describe unknown species still exists.

Before a wide range of questions can be developed concerning the ecology, biogeography, and evolutionary relationships among plants, the flora of a region must first be collected, identified, and mapped. Botanical exploration is clearly fundamental to the broad science of plant systematics, especially because species previously unknown to science are described and diagnosed. New species are then entered into a system of nomenclature or international rules that serve, in part, to provide a stable name to the new plant. Future investigators, no matter what field of science, use the nomenclatural system to make a consistent referral to the species.

Most of the botanical exploration is currently centered in the diverse tropical rainforests of South America where the rush is on to explore the region before the virgin forests are cut. More than 30,000 species have been estimated to occur in the Pacific basin, and new species are routinely discovered.

A different but related trend exists in the southeastern United States where most of the species were originally described by the early 1900's. Though not as diverse as the tropics, the southeastern flora is more rich than any other region in North America. Consequently, a great deal of floristic research continues. In Mississippi as other states, there is an ongoing process to determine the composition and distribution of its flora. As field work narrows toward poorly collected regions, or in unique habitat, an event that has become rare might happen - a new species is discovered.

In the southeast, the incidence of new species reported for the first time to science has become extremely low. Hardly more than a few species have been newly described in the botanical literature from this region in the past decade. So it is indeed remarkable that a new species of Lindera (spice-bush) has been discovered and described in Mississippi.

The first record of this species comes from a 1964 collection made by Dr. Sidney McDaniel. Several other botanists, Dr. Ken Rogers, Sam Jones, and Michael Lelong made subsequent collections from other localities, but there was some confusion as to the identity of this small shrub. Vegetative characteristics of the plant revealed it unmistakeably belonged to the Lauraceae or laurel family, yet whether or not it was a Litsea (pond-spice) or Lindera became questionable. The problem was not unusual since the plant was very rare and only a few vegetative, non-flowering specimens were available for study. Finally, some time toward the late 70's after a few reproductive specimens had been collected, Dr. McDaniel concluded it was undescribed species of Lindera.

Dr. Eugene Wofford, a plant taxonomist at the University of Tennessee, has recently completed the formal nomenclatural description and naming of this new species as part of his work with the laurel family of the southeastern United States. At this time, it would be premature to release the name until Wofford's work is officially published next month.

Known from hardly more than six localities, the new Lindera is definitely rare. Amazingly, all existing populations are confined to Mississippi. Ecologically,

Mississippi's new and only endemic flowering plant is restricted to wet, very peaty, pitcher plant bogs scattered in the southeastern region. Unfortunately, bog habitat is rapidly disappearing in Mississippi due to the exclusion of fire, an important ecological component, and through simple habitat destruction. The habitat is in desperate need of preservation, protection, and management.

The story should and will continue in the next issue with a more complete description of this species, and a comparison of its relationships with two related species, Lindera benzoin (spicebush) and L. melissifolia which also occur in Mississippi.

At this point, it is perhaps suitable to conclude noting that it is incredibly rare to find an undescribed species in Mississippi. An element of luck is involved, but most of all there is the unpublished sort of knowledge that accumulates after years of field work, as with the two principle collectors of this species, Sidney McDaniel and Ken Rogers.

- Will McDearman

If you wish to be included on the mailing list of the Crosby Arboretum news journal, a quarterly publication, please fill out the form below. May we also encourage you to submit names of friends who would be interested in receiving the news journal.

NAME _____

ORGANIZATION _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP _____

Please return to:
The Crosby Arboretum Foundation
3702 Hardy Street
Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39401

NOTE FROM THE EDITORS: We apologize for not being able to use all the material that was contributed this time. We will hold it for the next newsletter. Keep it coming!

TO: Virginia Benton, 1628 Sunnywood Circle, Birmingham, AL 35216

I would like to make reservation for _____ persons (at $8.50 each) for dinner at The Alabama Wildflower Society meeting on Saturday night, April 9. I am enclosing my check for $_____ for this reservation.

Date: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____

Reservations should be mailed to reach Virginia by Wednesday, April 6, 1983.

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GROUP WILDFLOWER ASSOCIATION

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

ARRIVAL DATE _____ NUMBER OF NIGHTS _____

GUARANTEED BY ADVANCE DEPOSIT

$_____ AMOUNT ENCLOSED (ONE NIGHTS RENTAL OR)

GUARANTEED BY CREDIT CARD # _____

TYPE OF CARD _____ NUMBER OF GUESTS _____

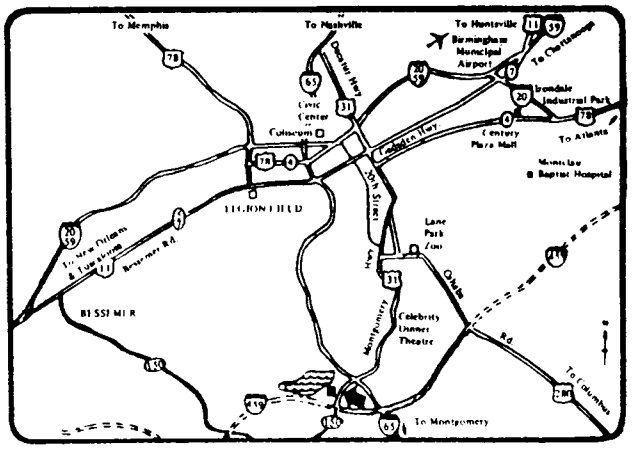
TYPE OF ROOM DESIRED: PLEASE CIRCLE

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PLEASE RETURN THIS CARD NO LATER THAN March 25, 1983

Double occupancy add $3.00



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NOTE: If your address label has an * on it, this will be the last newsletter you receive until 1983 dues are paid.

about membership

Membership Application and Dues Notice - 1983

_____Renewal _____New

Please indicate the class of membership desired and enclose the appropriate dues.

____Regular $5.00 ____Student $2.50
____Family $7.50 ____Sustaining $10.00
____Associate (Out of State) $5.00
____Contributing $25.00 ____Life $75.00

All classes of membership receive the Newsletter. Please make checks payable to Mississippi Native Plant Society. Return this form with payment to the Secretary-Treasurer at the following address: Mr. Travis Salley, 202 North Andrews Avenue, Cleveland, MS 38732.

Be sure to include the following information with your payment:

Name(s)_____
Mailing Address_____
_____
_____
Telephone (not essential)_____

The Mississippi Native Plant Society--a society for anyone interested in the native and naturalized plants occurring in the State of Mississippi.

MISSISSIPPI NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
P. O. Box EN
Mississippi State, MS 39762

FIRST CLASS