

Petal Power

Golby-Reasoner Chapter
American Hibiscus Society

June, 2007

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A Buggy July

Indeed, July will be buggy. Since this is a newsletter that deals in (hibiscus) gardening issues our readers will know we are not referring to a pram or a “horse and buggy”, but just plain buggy bugs. Indeed, if your plants do not have bugs by now, they most likely will by July, and so it is fitting that at the July 8th Chapter meeting the topic of the program will be “Bugs”. We will be viewing a slide show from the American Hibiscus Society descriptively titled “Bugs”. During and/or after the slides we’ll share our experiences in controlling those critters we all love to hate.

That’s 1:00 PM, July 8th at Synovus Bank, Manatee and 26th Street West.

SUCCESSFUL SHOW? YOU BET!

Yes, it was a successful show according to just about any measurement you might want to use. It was attended by a large number of really nice people, lots of blooms were entered (873) and they were good quality (50% gold ribbon or better), nice compliments were heard about several aspects of the show from the public and those entering blooms, a good number of hibiscus plants were sold (360) to help beautify the community, the Chapter made a little money, and perhaps most importantly – the Chapter members involved appeared to feel good about having produced a really good show!

The concept of having the show at the Fair Grounds in two buildings was rather daunting initially, and while other configurations with additional space could be better, the practicality of the arrangement proved itself. We will, of course, do a few things differently should we be fortunate enough to be offered the same space next year. We hasten to say that we were most appreciative of the cooperation and “neighborliness” of all the county employees we had the opportunity to meet before and during the show.

The set-up went quite smoothly on Friday prior to the show with Donny Waldroup, Bill Faulls, and David Kaplan delivering all the Chapter stuff prior to ten o’clock. A good group of members and guests proceeded to prepare both buildings for the show. It really worked

out quite well since one team of folks covered the tables in the plant sale area while another was in the other building covering the tables for blooms, etc. Others were busy setting up the kitchen, the stage area and the judging rooms. By-and-large everything was completed by 11:30 a.m., however, some stayed around doing odds and ends until somewhat after noon.

When our reporter arrived on the scene on the morning of the show around eight o’clock most of the plants had been unloaded and Jeannie Nathan and Dottie and Jack Taafe were well on the way to having the kitchen fully functional. Coffee is, once again, the mainstay of the nation in the morning! It was easy to see that Beege Hunter, Dottie Erikson and Betty Seipel had registered several entrants because hundreds of blooms were already in evidence in the bloom preparation area. In general, things were humming along and everyone was in good spirits – and so went the day, through and including the pack up/clean up that concluded somewhat before 5:30 p.m.

Let’s see if we can list all the chapter members who helped to make the set-up day and/or the show day such neat events – one of which we can all be proud. **Shirley Adams, “Petey” Birchal, Sandy Brown, Dottie Erikson, Bill Faulls, Dave and Rae Flanders, Pat Grant, Gene and Sue Haugh, Dick and Mary Hodill, Beege Hunter, Dave Kaplan, Carl and Pat Kramer, Mark and Janet Love, Jeri Lovett, Norman and Marlyn Marshall, Jennifer Murdoch, Jeanne Nathan, Yvonne Santiago, Betty Seipel, Frank Vejrostek, Donny Waldroup.** In addition, six or eight folks who weren’t members helped, most notably **Dee** and **Maynard Pastorius** were helping again – and later rejoined our “merry band”. Welcome back!

Show Bits and Pieces

The most amazing occurrence at the show was Maria Diaz winning Best of Show Double with an outstanding *Standing Ovation* – the only bloom she entered! We are happy to say Maria has joined our Chapter – perhaps she will share with us her gardening secrets!

Also placing a bloom on the stage was Bill Faulls with

an Amateur Single prize winning *High Voltage*. It was a beauty! It is hard to remember when our Chapter placed two blooms at the highest level.

The space limitations led to fewer items being served in the way of refreshments. While a smaller variety was available, the amazing volume and tastiness were enjoyed from early morning to mid-afternoon. Most of those eating lunch found the picnic tables under the huge oak trees a delightful setting. (In keeping with our position that puns are the best form of humor – there is one waiting within one of the following paragraphs.)

We have to recognize the contribution the new bloom trays made to the judging process. Well, perhaps they didn't contribute all that much, but they looked good doing it – and they didn't shed pieces of themselves like the old ones – while they did it!

Once again the prizes given to the rosette ribbon winners were outstanding and appreciated by those receiving them – particularly because they are so unlike anything provided by other Chapters. Of course, the credit for the prizes goes to Yvonne Santiago who designs and makes them – and sells them to the Chapter for a very reasonable cost. And by the way, she says she is running out of ideas – so if you have thoughts on the subject let her know.

Was it Carmen Miranda that had the wild, wacky hats “back in the day”? (And just where did that expression come from – and what does it mean, exactly? Or is that it – it is not exact?) Well, if it was Carmen, - Golby-Reasoner had is own version, three times over, in the hibiscus bloom covered hats worn by Dee Pastorius, Dottie Erikson, Petey Birchall, and Jennifer Murdoch. Our reporter took a picture of Dee facing the Christmas tree – and it is hard to tell she is there!

Thanks to Pat Grant, plants valued at over \$1700.00 were purchased by means of credit cards. This was the first year that we accepted credit cards and there is some feeling we may have sold more plants than we would have had we not accepted them. Again, thanks to Pat Grant for the use of her charge card equipment and account.

Last, but certainly not least we again encourage a round of applause for the Show Co-Chairs, Mark and Janet Love. Their dogged determination to pursue every detail is the stuff of which great shows are made. And that's just what they produced. May we say “Congratulations and many thanks” as we surely speak for all Chapter members. The work that David and Rae Flanders do



*Maria Diaz, Best of Show Double
Picture by Gayler Boettcher*

on publicity mirrors that of the Love's in its “behind the scene” character. Noticeable or not, the show would not happen without publicity and the Flanders have done a super job in that arena for a number of years. Perhaps we can tell that story in a future issue.

Hibiscus Gardening in July

Lets see, it was during the very first part of June that the kind of summer that we are used to arrived – with a vengeance it seemed. We had what was just about a perfect and exceptionally long spring with 80 degree days with, for the most part, low humidity. And then the temperatures went up along with the humidity – and guess what? Summer arrived and will stay, in one form or another, until September or October.

We should be having pretty regular rains, but not so regular that we won't have to water our hibiscus, particularly those in pots. And occasionally, you will note drooping leaves on your hibiscus late in the day. This will be particularly noticeable on the larger plants with lots of foliage. Of course the cause is due to the sun drawing moisture out of the plant faster than the roots can supply it. (Did you hear about the Buddhist who refused Novocain during a root canal? His goal was transcend dental medication.) You can spray the foliage with a hose if you wish, however the plant will recover after the sun goes down although you may lose some buds (commonly known as “bud drop”) if you don't.

Another cause of bud drop is thrips – a minuscule insect that sucks the juice from flower buds and their stems. Spraying with an *Ortho* product containing *Acephate* (they continually change product names) every other week should control them as well as aphids which also cause bud drop. If the buds continue to drop with regular use of *Acephate*, you may wish to add an every other day spraying of the buds only with *Bayer Rose and Flower Insect Killer* until the condition stops. We have only seen



*Bill Faulls, Best Amateur Single
Picture by Gayler Boettcher*

the Bayer R&S spray in ready mixed spray bottles which makes it rather expensive, but by only using it only on buds it goes a long way.

Since the Chapter did not purchase fertilizer to sell at this year's show we indicated last month that we'd look around locally for some that would come somewhat close to what was recommended for hibiscus in the first The Tropical Hibiscus Handbook. That would be a fertilizer with a formula approaching 7-2-7 with minors Magnesium, Manganese, Copper, Zinc, Iron and Boron. We found that there are some fertilizers available that while not exactly what we might mix ourselves, given the opportunity, they may not be too bad. So if you look around you will find some. The currently available The Tropical Hibiscus Handbook discusses fertilizer at some length and it should be considered when fertilizer is chosen, but it does tend to go a bit further than most grower/hobbyists would want to go in terms of supplemental applications. As we search for a fertilizer with what we may call a good hibiscus formula, use of a good 6-6-6 with minors is a lot better than nothing. Depending on the size of the plant, apply between a quarter to a half cup every month until November. We'll discuss fertilizer more in the coming months.

Please Welcome New Members!

Ms. Susan Brown
304 45th St. Ct. NW
Bradenton, FL 34209

Mr. Nemecio Cabrera
11304 Norris Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20902

Ms. Maria A. Diaz
5211 52nd Ave. W.
Bradenton, FL 34210

Mr. & Mrs. Marion Duncan
PO Box 814

Anna Maria, FL 34216

Glenn Hartley & Linda La Haie
4083 Rock Creek Dr.
Port Charlotte, FL 33948

Mr & Mrs. Maynard Pastorius (Returning Members)
4311 Royal Palm Drive
Bradenton, FL 34210

Mr & Mrs Paul Powers
1215 Knights Gate Ct.
Sun City Center, FL 33573

Golby-Reasoner Chapter, AHS Chapter Meeting Minutes June 10, 2007

President Boettcher called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. at the Peridia Country Club during our annual luncheon, and welcomed new members. Dottie Erikson was thanked for her considerable contributions to the luncheon including making place settings.

A motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the May 6th minutes as published in Petal Power. Treasurer Adams reported income of \$4582.50 and expenses of \$801.85 leaving a current balance of \$5385.92.

President Boettcher congratulated members on their contributions to the show, especially Mark and Janet Love, and Dave and Rae Flanders. He complimented new member Maria Diaz on winning Best of Show Double, Bill Faulls on winning Best Amateur Single, and Carl Kramer on winning two Golds.

Dr. Robert Hunter conducted the installation ceremony for chapter officers and board members.

The meeting adjourned at 1:21 p.m. for multiple desserts and pleasantries.

Gene Haugh, Secretary

Coming Events

July 6, 10:00 a.m. Board Meeting, Manatee County Library South.

July 8, 1:00 p.m. Chapter Meeting, Synovus Bank, AHS Slides -- "Bugs".

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