

# Petal Power

Golby-Reasoner Chapter  
American Hibiscus Society

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Editor: Gayler Boettcher: g.boet@gte.net

Publisher: Gene Haugh: gene.haugh@gmail.com

Web Site: 4hibiscus.com

## Potluck Coming! Yummy!!

The (what has become) “Annual” October potluck will be held on Thursday, October 25<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 p.m. at the home of Gayler Boettcher, 9213 Forrester Drive, Bradenton, FL 34202. (If a GPS system is used, the address may show up as “65<sup>th</sup> Ave. E.”) The coordination of the potluck itself is being handled by the incomparable Dottie Erikson, so therefore any questions you may have may be directed to her at 753-7785.

Coffee, soft drinks, and wine will be provided. Should you wish some other beverage, feel free to bring it. In order to provide the needed seating, it is important to know how many will be attending. Therefore, if you did not sign up at the September Chapter meeting and have not received a telephone call during which you are asked if you are attending – and you wish to attend, call Dottie and tell her you will be there!

There will be a short Chapter meeting, since the potluck is the October Chapter meeting. After the short business meeting there will be a short fun program – and a program about hibiscus if a number of new members sign-up.

The potluck has come to be one of the better attended events on the Chapter calendar – and for good reason! And the reason is that the Chapter has an outstanding group of cooks – for which we are all very, very thankful. You’ll be sorry if you miss this event!

### Directions to the Boettcher home.

Go east on Route 70 (53 Ave. E.) and at the second stop light past the I75 underpass turn right on to Braden Run, which takes you into Braden Woods. At the first stop sign turn right onto Forrester Drive and drive for a pretty long quarter circle to 9213. Don’t let the house numbers confuse you – keep driving and you will eventually get to the 9000’s.

## November meeting a tour.....

“And now for something entirely different” - we will have a winery tour in lieu of our November meeting. Well, we never said we were married to the concept of being a sit-in-a-room kind of organization! However, we must admit that after three months of events “outside the room” it will be sorta nice to get back to it. (October is the potluck – November the winery tour – December the Christmas luncheon.) The details are as follows:

**WHEN:** Sunday, November 11<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM

**WHERE:** Rosa Fiorelli Winery Inc., 4250 CR 675 (322-0976)

**WHAT:** Tour of the winery and a wine tasting.

**COST:** \$5.00 per person, plus tax

### Directions to Fiorelli Winery

The winery is between State Routes 64 and 70, on County Road 675. CR 675 is ten miles east of I75 if you go on either SR 64 or SR 70, so it would be prudent to set your trip odometer as you pass under I75 as you go east on either 64 or 70. On CR 675, the winery is 0.8 of a mile south of SR 64 and 4 miles north of SR 70. The address is 4250 CR 675. (Our Program Chair Rae Flanders, or her assistant, prepared a beautiful map showing the directions to Fiorelli’s, but reproducing it for PETAL POWER was a problem – and maintain our commitment to “one sheet issues”. We hope the written directions get everyone there.)

There will be some walking and standing, so other than “goin’ to church” shoes would be in order. We are told the winery is really beautiful and is something worth seeing – so plan on getting out of what ever room you would otherwise be in and join the group for – something entirely different.

### Christmas luncheon - December 8<sup>th</sup>

The Christmas Party luncheon will be on Saturday, December 8<sup>th</sup> at the Bradenton Yacht Club. And while it seems entirely too early to be concerned

### **\* Words of Wisdom \***

*A person with a clear conscience has a bad memory.*

with a Christmas function - as discussed previously, we will not be having a “sit-in-a-room” meeting before then and therefore tickets for the luncheon will be available at the potluck, October 25<sup>th</sup>. The cost of the Christmas luncheon is not known as this is being written, but it will be determined prior to the potluck in order that tickets can be purchased at the potluck.

### **Work Day Cancelled**

Simply put, the work day scheduled for Saturday, October 6<sup>th</sup> at the Palma Sola Botanical Park (PSBP) was cancelled. All those who were known to be planning to attend were contacted about the cancellation and many, many apologies are extended to those who arrived at PSBP only to find no one there – and furthermore, no hibiscus garden!

After the previous three or four words we need to provide some background to the results/facts summarized in the first paragraph of this article. Donny Waldroup was asked to survey the PSBP hibiscus garden to determine what needed to be done to the plants as a part of planning for the work day. The result, in concert with a knowledgeable PSBP volunteer, was that it was determined that the hibiscus were past saving. They were full of insects and disease and were showing very strange growth characteristics, to say the least. The recommendation to pull up the plants was made to the PSBP Foundation Chair who was, it appeared, relieved.

The future of the space at the PSBP that has always been the hibiscus garden is unknown. Many had the opinion that the garden’s location was not the best for a hibiscus garden. It is our understanding that the Foundation Chair was going to discuss the entire subject with the widow of “Bud” Reasoner for whom the garden was planted as a memorial. Monetary memorials to Mr. Reasoner were used to establish the hibiscus garden.

### **Hibiscus Gardening in November**

Believe it or not, in this era of global warming, it is still possible that we could have some damaging cold weather in Manatee and Sarasota Counties!

True, we have not had any hard freezes for a number of years – and we surely want to continue that record. However, light freezes and frosts are always a threat with the severity depending on how far one is from the Gulf. So, for those folks who are close to I75 for instance, November is the time to start preparing for the possibility of freeze or frost.

Those preparations would include gathering old quilts, blankets, cardboard boxes, etc., in locations that provide easy access. We will discuss some of the approaches hibiscus gardeners have used successfully to protect their plants from cold damage in future issues of PETAL POWER. The fact that we are waiting to discuss those approaches must mean that we don’t think damaging cold will be upon us in November. That is true although Eric Golby told many times about the year when there was a wind chill below freezing on November 10<sup>th</sup>! The result was, as you might imagine, many, many yellow hibiscus leaves about 10 days later.

Having mentioned Eric, we are reminded that he recommend an application of a fertilizer without any nitrogen during the first week of November to “harden off” the tissues of the plant to withstand the cold better. He continued to recommend that after “Gainesville” (Eric’s terminology) and said that was not as effective as a normal feeding. Our position is based on geography - if the hibiscus is where there is virtually no chance of frost or freeze, lightly fertilizing throughout the winter seems appropriate. If the hibiscus is located east of I75 it perhaps should not receive any more fertilizer until February or March - after a light feeding in early November.

The critters that you have been engaged in combat with all summer may still be evident, but they should be decreasing in numbers. That doesn’t mean they wouldn’t or couldn’t still damage your most prized hibiscus so you should continue to be aware of what is going on on your plants.

Of course the “funnest” thing about hibiscus gardening this time of year is the blooms that should be popping out in profusion! Enjoy!

### **Early Days with Hibiscus Continued.....**

In the January and February issues we reproduced excerpts from a series of articles entitled “Rambling

Reflections” that Eric Golby wrote for *The Seed Pod* in the early 80’s. We are using copies of the articles and not the articles as they appeared in *The Seed Pod* – and the second page of the copy of the first article was missing. As we look at the beginning of the second article, it appears the latter part of the first article must have discussed the advent of *The Florida Hibiscus Bulletin* which was put together by Norman Reasoner and which attempted to list the nomenclature of many of the hibiscus varieties of the time. Here is the first part of the second article:

“*The Florida Hibiscus Bulletin* (circa 1948) received a great deal of correspondence from hibiscus growers all over the country. Bulletin #1 is a collector’s item now because, like any first edition, not too many copies were printed, and because it went mostly to the first early growers and collectors. Later editions may be found here and there today, but it was Bulletin #1 in which names were so terribly mixed up.

Remember, this was before the day of the “permanent” plastic labels (that we accept without a second thought today). The nearest thing to a good label then was a smooth white pin wooden pot label or a three-inch wooden label wired with copper wire (which often cut deeply into the plant stem when left too long). Better grade ones had a light coat of white paint that made the writing last longer.

These labels were rarely legible beyond six months, due to weather and mildew and seemed to be in use only by nurserymen. Plants were more often obtained with the name given orally, so that poor memory and bad misspelling ran hand in hand. It is easy to understand why some people had a plant of Peachblow and others had a plant of Peach Glow.

Serious hibiscus collectors often put numbers on their plants awaiting identification. Jim Hendry at his Fort Myers Everglades Nursery raised his seedlings under number, and their names caught up with them later. For instance, his Double Yellow #40 became Peggy Hendry, and his Double Yellow #111 became Mrs. James E. Hendry (*not* Mrs. J. E. Hendry III as sometimes written), and his Single Yellow Y-11 became Buttercup in 1951.

Acquisitions other than his seedlings also had numbers. For example his variegated 386 is what

we know today as Matensis. When Sally and I honeymooned in Cuba, I swear we saw it in every other patio garden in Havana. This is corroborated by Prof. John V. Watkins (one of the few honorary members of AHS) in his book “In Caribbean Gardens” written while he was professor in the Department of Ornamental Horticulture at the University of Florida. So, I presume it had been there for many years.”

When space allows, we will continue Eric’s “Rambling”.

## Chapter Meeting Minutes September 9, 2007

President Boettcher called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. at Synovus Bank. The August 12 minutes were approved and the August Financial Report by Treasurer Adams was accepted. Auditor Carl Kramer reported the final balance was correct.

President Boettcher announced that former member Tom Tourt had passed away on August 25 at Sandwich, IL.

Dottie Erikson passed around a sign up sheet for the October 25 potluck which will be held at President Boettcher’s home. Rae Flanders described the planned November field trip at Fiorelli’s winery and members opted for the tour only (no snacks) at \$5 plus tax.

Recent Board actions included approving purchase of 25 handbooks and a schedule of Board and Chapter meetings submitted by Dave Flanders.

Several members offered to receive Petal Power by email only.

A “work day” at Palma Sola Botanical Park (PSBP) is planned for October 6 and a signup sheet was circulated. Dick Hodill volunteered to be a hibiscus resource person for PSBP and serve on their board. The chapter declined an invitation to a PSBP plant and antique sale in October.

The program by guest Pat Neal dealt with care for orchids. The meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m. with desserts served by Dottie Erikson and Pat Grant.

Gene Haugh, Secretary

## Coming Events

October 25, 6:00 p.m. Potluck Dinner, Gayler Boettcher home, 9213 Forrester Drive

November 2, 10:00 a.m. Board Meeting, Manatee County Library - South

November 11, 1:00 p.m. Fiorelli Winery Tour, 4250 CR 675

December 8, Christmas Luncheon