

Petal Power

Golby-Reasoner Chapter
American Hibiscus Society

April, 2008

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It's all about the Show!

Historically, the Chapter meeting just prior to the annual show is all about the show. Since we are not in the least original, the May 4th Chapter meeting (which is the last meeting prior to the annual show) will be all about the show. Fancy that!

Therefore, the Show Co-chairs, Janet and Mark Love will take center stage and visit with us about the details of the Set-up Day and the Show itself. This tends to be one of the best attended meetings of the Chapter year – perhaps just because everyone is feeling a bit of the excitement that always accompanies the launching of the show. And then again, some may think that “If I’m not there I may get more jobs than I really want.” May we hasten to say that during the numerous “Show Meetings” we have covered for PETAL POWER, we have never seen someone who wasn’t at the meeting assigned a responsibility. But if the thought among some that it just might happen increases attendance – so be it.

There is one item, - almost a housekeeping type item – that will have to occur during the May meeting. That is the election of officers and Board Members. The slate of nominees were presented by Carl Kramer, Nominating Committee Chair, at April’s Annual Picnic and are listed as a part of that meeting’s minutes recorded in this issue of PETAL POWER. Please review that list and at your first opportunity tell each of the nominees “Thanks for making the commitment to serve.” Please make sure to do that when you meet Dave Flanders. Again David has stepped up to serve as President, - because no one else would do it. It is pretty hard to have a Chapter without a President so we owe Dave more than a few words of thanks.

NOTE that the May meeting is on May 4th – the first Sunday in the month – not on the second Sunday which is our usual meeting day, but which in May is Mother’s Day. Thus, we are meeting on the first Sunday, May 4th!

In Memoriam

Richard Hodill, Past President
June 8, 1922 – April 10, 2008

It is Dues time...

In our annual struggle to not write something about dues being due – well, lost again! Anyway, it is that time of year when those wishing to extend their memberships should do so. Shirley Boettcher, Treasurer, will be taking dues at the May 11th Chapter meeting and at the Show. The tab is the same as it has been during the past several years. It’s \$27.50 for single memberships and \$30.00 for family memberships. For your information, twenty-five dollars of each membership is sent to the AHS.

Bye Bye, Mike and Trudy!

You have read of the migration of Floridians to northern states. You have heard of moving companies actually running vans south empty instead of the other way around - as it has “always” been.

Our Chapter is experiencing something of that trend. A year ago, at the annual picnic, Karin and Leo Delbert said their good-byes since they were leaving us – going north. This year, at the annual picnic, Trudy and Mike Topolosky announced that they were leaving us – going north!

We will certainly miss Mike and Trudy. They have been faithful, hard-working members for many years and possess the kind of commitment and knowledge that is hard to replace.

We understand from some of the Chapter members that there is some talk of canceling future picnics. We hesitate to choose sides, but we really question if that action would reduce the northern migration.

Talk about wired!

A number of members took a handful of wires home from a recent Chapter meeting. The

* Words of Wisdom *
He who laughs last thinks slowest.

assignment that they chose to accept - was to make the 18" wires into three times as many 6" wires. Of course the 6" wires will be used to display hibiscus blooms at our Show, May 25th. This is a reminder – to those who have the wires – to start being cut-ups if they haven't and if at all possible, please bring them to the May 11th Chapter Meeting. And oh yes, it would be nice if you would slightly sharpen one end of the 6" wires. How that is accomplished is up to you since there are a number of ways to do it. The AHS specifications state either end may be sharpened. We here at PETAL POWER prefer the left end since we all are right handed. (And we wrote that with a straight face!)

Dick Hodill

Dick Hodill died on April 10th. For those of us who are comparative youngsters, Dick Hodill was Chapter president (1989-90) during an era when our Chapter presidents were legendary (Dr. & June Snyder, Bob Hunter, and Len Erikson were among that group). He also surely held most of the other offices in the Chapter and was active in AHS business – most recently heading up the Society's MAL (Members At Large) endeavors. Dick was an official judge for many years – in fact he judged blooms at our Show just last year. May his future hold nothing but "Best of Show."

A Memorial Service was held for Dick on Saturday, April 19th. Chapter members have made a tradition of attending such services and honoring the passed members with a collection of blooms. It was disappointing that only 5 members and perhaps three times that many blooms were at Dick's service. True, Dick had not been active in the Chapter for a several years, however ...

Hibiscus Gardening in May

With our Show scheduled for May 25th we need to have our plants in top-notch condition in order to produce prize winning blooms. If you are not using a time release fertilizer, use a small amount every other week and on the off weeks you could consider an application of a balanced water soluble fertilizer like *Peters* (full strength) as a foliar feed and a drench. If you are using a time release fertilizer you

might want to give your plants one extra half dose along with the every other week use of something like *Peters*.

Remember that the Chapter will again be selling a good fertilizer for hibiscus at the Show. That would be the time to stock up! After 4:00 p.m., Chapter members can buy it at cost – about \$2.50 for 5 pounds.

Prize winning blooms will not happen if the garden critters have anything to say about it. Therefore, if you are sparing the chemicals, use a daily or every other day spraying of the underside of the leaves with water from a watering wand. If that doesn't give you the control you are looking for, use an oil or soap spray. You can purchase Horticultural Oils which are labeled as such. Or, you can make your own oil spray by mixing 2 tablespoons vegetable oil and 2 tablespoons liquid dish soap in a gallon of water. You can make your own insecticidal soap too by adding 2-1/2 tablespoons liquid dish soap to a gallon of water. (Don't use either spray in temperatures over 90 degrees and never in direct sun.) You can use these sprays every few days and certainly after every rain.

Should none of the above give you critter control you may be faced with using chemicals. For the hobbyist, something like an Ortho product containing Acephate is probably appropriate. They seem to change the name of their products every now and then, but we think the current one is *Systemic Insect Killer*. Bayer has a product out that combines a very good insecticide Imidacloprid, with a miticide and a fungicide. The Bayer product is called *3-in-1 Insect, Disease, & Mite Control* and it's a bit pricy when one considers its dilution rate. Particularly as we approach our annual show, using either of the two sprays mentioned every other week should give good critter control. If you have a stubborn insect problem, spraying every 7 to 10 days would be OK, but only until the problem is under control.

While not often considered, the control of ants around the garden is an important part of controlling problem insects on numerous plants, including hibiscus. We'll treat the whole story in a latter issue, but if you notice lots of ants on or around

your hibiscus use a spray or granular insecticide on the ground in the area in an attempt to control them.

Many of the problems we have with our hibiscus (and other garden plants) would not be a concern or would be only a small problem if we really looked at our plants daily. If we did that we would see problems while they were small and (hopefully) we'd take whatever action was necessary to assure the problem disappeared. There is an old saying about the best thing for a garden is the gardener's shadow. Casting your shadow on your plants daily sounds easy, but it becomes more difficult as our lives become more active and our gardens and associated grounds become larger and more heavily planted. Good luck!

By the time May arrives many of our hibiscus will be in full bloom. Even the plants we heavily pruned back in late February or early March may have a few blooms. If nothing else, these blooms will remind us that virtually all tropical hibiscus have blooms that are real beauties. We understand that Chapter members will be able to purchase plants at cost (\$10) at our annual plant sale – after 4:00 p.m. This of course means that the plants will have been “picked over” and most of the favorites will no longer be available. But, as we said earlier, virtually all of our tropical hibiscus are special and have wonderful blooms. So buy – and enjoy!

Please Welcome New Members:

Jay Cowart and Tammy Wise (813) 781-1263
5220 Plum Avenue
Seffner, FL 33584
captjc80@yahoo.com

Chapter Meeting Minutes April 13, 2008

The meeting was called to order in the screened building at the Palma Sola Botanical Park following the Chapter annual picnic.

Membership chair Betty Seipel presented Bob Haendel with a New Members Survival Kit.

Jay Cowart and Tammy Wise were introduced as returning visitors and members-to-be.

President Boettcher announced that this would be Trudy and Mike Topolosky's last meeting! They are moving to Virginia.

It was announced that Dick Hodill passed away on the previous Thursday. Dick was active in the Chapter including

a stint as president 1989-90. The memorial service is at 11:00 a.m., April 19th at Kirkwood Presbyterian Church.

Hearing no objections the approval of the previous meeting minutes and the financial report were not considered.

Dottie Erikson was complimented for coordinating the picnic details.

It was announced that Shirley Boettcher, Treasurer, would be collecting dues after the meeting.

While next month's meeting will be all about the Show, several recent actions by the Board constitute things members need to know – or may want to know:

- Plant prices will again be \$15.
- We will not accept credit cards for plant purchases because of additional costs (sales tax and the processing fee are about \$1.50 per plant).
- Members may purchase available plants and fertilizer at cost starting at 4:00 p.m. on show day. (\$10 - \$2.50) All plants placed in the holding area – must be paid for.
- There will be no special incentives provided to prospective members.
- Plant sales are scheduled to start at 1:00 p.m., but Donny Waldroup may start sales when he feels it is appropriate.

Nominating Committee Chairman, Carl Kramer read the list of nominees for officers and board members for the forthcoming year, as follows:

President – Dave Flanders
1st Vice/President – Janet Love
2nd Vice-President – Donny Waldroup
Treasurer – Shirley Boettcher
Secretary – Rae Flanders
Director 2008-09 – Dorothy Erikson
Director 2010-11 – Dave Kaplan
Director 2010-11 – Jennifer Murdoch

Nominations from the floor were invited three times. Hearing none, President Boettcher closed the nominations.

The meeting was adjourned.

Gayler Boettcher
Acting Secretary

Coming Events

May 4, 1:00 p.m.: Chapter Meeting, “**Show Time!**” featuring Mark and Janet Love.

May 23, 10:00 a.m.: 1:00 p.m. Show Setup.

May 25: **Annual Show**

