

Petal Power

Golby-Reasoner Chapter
American Hibiscus Society

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The Show is the Thing!

In addition to being “the thing”, the show will be the major subject of discussion at the March 8th Chapter meeting. It may be hard to imagine, but on that date the show will be less than two weeks away. Therefore it really makes sense that the program should be called “Who Does What at the Annual Show?” This is usually one of the best attended meetings of the year and you should not miss it. How else will you know what will be happening at the show as it once again moves to the Family Life Center of the First Baptist Church? Don’t miss it!

Unbelievable...

It was somewhat unbelievable that over 30 members and guests were expected and about that number arrived at the Unbelievable Hibiscus Nursery to enjoy the wonderful hospitality of hosts Kathy Grandoff and Don Mixon. It is safe to say that none of the visitors had had hosts that cut holes in their walls in order that their guests would be comfortable! Unbelievable. It was a beautiful day and the refreshments turned out to be more like a meal than a snack. (No complaints were heard about that!) Many thanks to Kathy Grandoff, Janet Love, Donny Waldroup and Rae and Dave Flanders for the many goodies!

We have not heard of anyone that had difficulty on the drive there or back, which is (you guessed it) unbelievable. The fact that several drivers drove past the gate to the nursery does not detract from the unbelievability.

Many thanks should also go to Rae Flanders for spearheading the “share the ride” effort. The Board of Directors should also be commended for believing that the membership would support a field trip in significant numbers. Perhaps we can do it again another year.



Host Don Mixon explains the unbelievable to Donny Waldroup.

Adding income...

The December, 2008 issue of PETAL POWER discussed the reasoning behind the need for income from other than the sale of hibiscus plants at our annual show. The case was made, and made very well if we do say so ourselves, that if we sold 300 hibiscus plants, we would be \$700.00 short of meeting the expected expense of producing the show. Since the prospect of selling 300 plants is pretty slim – in fact we probably will sell closer to 200 than 300 – we need other sources of income – such as the ones discussed in the following two articles. That would be the “Treasure Table” and sponsorships.

Support the Treasure Table!

Well, “Treasure Table” isn’t all that good a name for what we used to call the “Gift Table” at our annual shows, but we do need a descriptive name. Something that speaks to the fact that we hope to have only the top 20 or 30% of the items you would

put out for a garage sale on the table at our March 21st show and plant sale.

Of course the object is to have a classy sale of items and thereby to add to the income of the show in order to have a profitable show – for a change. There is particular interest in having hibiscus and/or gardening related items – and then additionally, items in the top 20 or 30% of the items you would sell at a garage sale. Please price the items before you take them to First Baptist. And perhaps price them somewhat higher than you would for a garage sale. Items will be accepted on the set-up day, Friday March 20th and Saturday, March 21st.

Sponsors needed!

Another means of making our show profitable is to obtain sponsors. This has been discussed for several years, but this is the first year that every member has been encouraged to obtain sponsorships. Considering that this effort wasn't fully launched until the January Chapter meeting it has moved right along and hopefully is just gaining momentum. For your information, here is the list of sponsors as this is being written in mid February (and we know of more "possibles"):

Earthbox Research Center
Southern Agricultural Insecticides, Inc.
Duncan Real Estate, Inc.
Heath Marston, State Farm Insurance
Unforgettables at Magnolia Antique Mall

You will note that the sponsor list includes a fairly wide range of businesses and so it may provide some ideas about who might be fair game to contact for a sponsorship. The Fort Myers chapter is perhaps the most successful in obtaining sponsors. Their sponsors include a garden center, bank, insurance agency, internet marketing company, financial group, eye center, and a car dealership. Again, a pretty wide range of businesses. Every one is a possible sponsor!

As one considers whom to approach to become a sponsor, it has been suggested that the place to start is to think about whom you pay money to – or, who makes a profit from your money? Or, who would appreciate being associated with an event like our show – and perhaps even has an advertising budget?

Or, any of many other reasons that might lead you to believe someone might be a sponsor. Then it is just a matter of making the approach, leaving one of the sponsorship request forms and, depending on the circumstances, leaving a copy of the letter from David Flanders, both of which were emailed to members that have email. Copies of the form were also distributed at the January Chapter meeting.

How much do sponsorships cost? Of course there is no stated price, but as the subject is discussed with a prospect, mentioning "50 to 100 dollars" might be appropriate. Sponsors receive mention, as they specify on the sponsorship request form, in the newly designed program given to all attendees and on signage at the show.

Good luck! We cannot have too many sponsors. The deadline for sponsors to "sign-up" is March 9th, but for another \$100.00 or so we could "hold the presses" a few days.

Deserved Thanks...

We recently received the following note from the folks who facilitated our Christmas gift's journey to the children of migrant workers:

"Thank you so much for all the beautiful gifts you gave the children. You made a difference! The children and parents will remember you in their prayers. Thank you, Sally Beesley and Nancy Schriver"

Hibiscus Gardening in March

It finally happened! We had a cold snap – in fact we had a couple cold snaps. Those who made the trip to Wesley Chapel on the 8th appreciate what a difference being 60 or 70 miles further south and in some cases considerably closer to the Gulf makes in the effect of cold weather on hibiscus.

Temperatures in the teens really do some damage! However, folks in the Manatee/Sarasota area had some frost and some freezing temperatures. The result is some bad looking plants if they weren't protected or if they were protected badly. The February 9th issue of the Herald (in all its editions we assume) carried a good article by Peggy Dessaint about the twitch some gardeners probably have in their pruning hand about now. A portion of that article follows:

“The temptation is to prune off damaged sections to make landscapes tidy and neat. Resist the urge to do this. If plants are pruned now, tender leaves and stems that are underneath become fully exposed to rogue frosts, freezes and chilly winds. I’ve seen many late winter frost cause a second round of injury on prematurely pruned shrubs such as bougainvillea, **hibiscus**, ixora, jatropha and plumbago.

“If you can tolerate the discolorations, delay pruning until the end of this month for western Manatee, or early March for the coolest parts of eastern Manatee. Make pruning cuts into green stems, just below dead sections. By doing this, you will remove all the dead tissue, and plants will have a healthy and tidy appearance.”

Peggy’s message is the one that we give every January or February, but it is nice to have someone else do it for a change. Of course this year we have the very early-in-the-year show and so we would recommend that even those hibiscus that have no damage from the cold shouldn’t be pruned until after March 21st, the date of the show. You wouldn’t want to prune away blooms that could be entered in the show!

In the first part of the Peggy Dessaint article that we quoted from above, Peggy makes the point that plants that did receive damage from the cold will come back – after pruning and warm weather do their magic. Insofar as hibiscus are concerned, they will come back too, however there may be some decisions to make. If the hibiscus are garden varieties and are badly damaged to the point that it will be several months before they will bloom again – and if they are important to their setting, to the landscape – then perhaps it would be best to replace them. If the same situation occurred to a relatively expensive hybrid hibiscus, perhaps some thought would be required before it was replaced.

Chapter Meeting: Feb. 8, 2009

Twenty-six members traveled by car pool to the Unbelievable Hibiscus Nursery in Wesley Chapel on a beautiful Sunday afternoon. We were all graciously received by our hosts, Kathy Grandoff and Don Mixon.

A short meeting was held, beginning with a motion to approve the January minutes as printed in the Petal Power. Motion passed. Shirley gave the Treasurer’s report for the period ending January 31, 2009. The beginning balance was \$1,696.27. There was a total income of \$538.00 and total expenses of \$155.19, making an ending balance of \$2,079.08. Shirley also announced that she and Gayler, and Mark and Janet Love had a garage sale in the Love’s Park and made about \$72.00 for our Hibiscus Society.

Program Chair, Jennifer Murdock, announced that our next meeting will be March 8, with Mark and Janet Love leading us in “Who Does What at our Annual Show”. March 20 is setup day, and Saturday, March 21 is the big day of the Show. Our annual picnic at Durante Park will be April 5 and Dottie Erikson will demonstrate flower arranging at the May 3 meeting.

Following the meeting we toured the Nursery. It’s hundred of plants all beautifully survived the freezing temperatures this past week, with Don’s help and the extensive use of propane heaters.

We all enjoyed snacks, including Kathy’s fried chicken, and a social time at the picnic tables. Several people were winners of plants or embroidered Hibiscus bags furnished by Kathy and Don.

With many thanks to our hosts it was all too soon time to journey back to our homes.

Rae Flanders
Secretary

Coming Events

Monday, March 2, 6:30 p.m.: Board Meeting, Central Library

Sunday, March 8, 1:00 p.m.: Chapter Meeting, “Who Does What at the Annual Show?”

Friday, March 20, Show Set-up
Saturday, March 21, Annual Show and Plant Sale: Family Life Center, First Baptist Church