

Petal Power

Golby-Reasoner Chapter
American Hibiscus Society

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It's Show Time!

Location

Just in case someone doesn't know – or for those that have forgotten – our show is once again being held at the Family Life Center of the First Baptist Church, which is set back a little from the north-east corner of Manatee Avenue and 13th Street West.

Set-up Day

Set-up day, **Friday, March 20th** will begin at **10:00 a.m.** Everyone's help is needed. With enough members working together, we should be wrapped up around noon. Even though the activity may last a bit longer, it should be possible to make lunch plans with fellow members if you wish.

We always need scissors, so please try to remember to bring some. Please put your name on them in some way, for obvious reasons. And bring some plastic bags. Yes, we will use plastic bags instead of paper sacks for plants this year. If at all possible, bring your contribution to the "Treasure Boutique" (the "Gift Table".) Don't forget to put a price on all your items. Also, if you don't have an official Chapter shirt we understand there are a couple available (medium size). See Rae Flanders. It's nice if all members wear their Chapter shirts at the Show so that our guests know who the hosts are – and whom to ask if they have questions.

Show Day

The day of the Show, **Saturday March 21st**, will begin for most members around 8:30 am. Some members may have assignments that don't begin until later, but there are always a lot of loose ends to tend to relatively early – thus the 8:30ish time. Perhaps a list of things to remember would be of help in - remembering stuff ...

- Bring blooms! Bring any blooms you have – not just hybrids. Each person can only enter one bloom per variety and the person entering the bloom should be the person that brought the bloom. The folks at the

registration desk will help you enter your blooms.

- If there are parking spaces on the street in front of the Family Life Center when you arrive – and you are going to stay at the show all day – please park in one of the spaces. We will be stringing yellow plastic tape between the side view mirrors of the cars parking there.
- Don't forget your contribution to the refreshment table! And bring your items for the Treasure Boutique, priced – if you didn't bring them on Set-up Day.
- Wear your Golby-Reasoner shirt – if you have one.
- Wear your Chapter name tag. If you can't find the box with the name tags in it – ask someone who has a name tag on where it is. Of course return your name tag to the box before you leave.
- Wear comfortable shoes – and perhaps bring another pair you can change into late in the day.
- After four o'clock, members may purchase hibiscus plants and fertilizer at cost. That is, plants may be purchased for \$10 and fertilizer for \$3.00. (Please remember that plants must be paid for in order to be placed in the "holding area".)

Mark and Janet Love have once again accomplished an amazing amount of planning for the staffing of our Chapter's Annual Show and Plant Sale. The number of telephone calls that Mark has made as he lines up Chapter members to do certain things at the Show – well, it's just amazing! In addition, Mark and Janet were instrumental in obtaining the First Baptist location for this year's show when it was determined that we just had to move the show off the Memorial Day week-end. Many thanks for your many efforts – Mark and Janet Love!

Picnic time...

The annual Chapter picnic is on Sunday, April 5th. If that date isn't on your calendar, this would be a

good time to put it there. This picnic is on the first Sunday of the month – not the second (our usual meeting date) since the second Sunday in April is Easter this year.

As we think about April 5th as being a good date for a picnic, many of our Chapter members can relate to their days “up north” and can think about what an early April picnic would have been like there ...

Be that as it may – April 5th is a wonderful time for a picnic here – and the pavilion at Durante Park on Longboat Key is just the place for such a picnic. The particulars are as follows:

Date: April 5

Time: 1:00 p.m.

Place: Durante Park, Longboat Key

What: It's a picnic!!

The Chapter is providing the chicken again this year (could this be the last year?) and everybody is providing everything else. There was a sign-up conducted at the March Chapter meeting and we assume the usual calling will take place (Dottie Erikson's efficiency you know) in order to know how much chicken to purchase and to assure we don't end up with 12 dishes of baked beans. *(Editor's note: For the record, we at PETAL POWER would very much like at least 9 dishes of baked beans. Twelve would be a bit much.)*

An important matter. Bring something to sit on. The benches in the pavilion will not hold our crowd (30 some signed up at the March 8th meeting) – and they aren't the most comfortable things in the world. Therefore, bring something to sit on.

There will be a short business meeting at the picnic. While any subject may be introduced at the meeting, the Chapter bylaws require that the nomination of officers and board members for the coming year be made in April. So nominations will certainly be on the agenda. Dave Kaplan, chairman of the Nominating Committee, will present the slate of nominees and nominations will be received from the floor. The suspense is more than one can take.

Directions to Durante Park: As one comes from either direction on Gulf of Mexico Drive on Long Boat Key, there is a large sign that says “Joan Durante Park 500 feet” – then watch for the flagpole on the east side of the road, which marks

the park entrance – turn in and follow the road to the pavilion.

Dues are due!

Chapter membership dues will be collected, beginning at the picnic, April 5th. Single memberships are \$27.50 and family memberships are \$30.00. In an effort to have current information about all members in the 2009-10 chapter directory, when dues are paid everyone will be asked to complete a small card asking for street address, phone number and email address.

And now for a Flea Market...

What next? We are doing garage sales – we are doing a Treasure Boutique at the show – we are selling sponsorships for the show – and now we are going to be a part of the Red Barn Flea Market. (Do you get the idea we are trying to make some money to supplement our usual source of income – plant sales? If you get that idea you are so right!)

As we now understand it, the Red Barn Flea Market has one or two not-for-profit groups occupying stalls – at no charge – rather regularly. The Golby-Reasoner Chapter has reserved a stall for Friday, April 3rd and Saturday, April 4th. Therefore, rather than taking the items that aren't sold at the show's Treasure Boutique to Good Will or some such, they will go to the Red Barn (a couple of weeks later).

The number of items that will remain on the Treasure Boutique tables after the show closes is unknown. Add to that, the fact that the stalls at the Red Barn are only 10'x10'. Therefore, we will not know until after the show closes if there will be enough space at the flea market for the items that members may have been saving to put in a Chapter garage sale – which has never happened. The decision on that will be made known to those members remaining after the show. It is our understanding that details about the Flea Market sale will be communicated by the Chapter callers as they call about the Chapter picnic (which is the Sunday after the flea market sale). If the caller doesn't mention the possibility of having your garage sale items included at the Flea Market – please ask.

Hibiscus Gardening in April

April is part of our dry season, in fact historically it is our driest month, so it is likely you won't receive

an inch of rain a week which, as a rule of thumb, is what hibiscus like. Therefore, from time to time during the month, you will need to get out the hose or turn on the irrigation system to give your hibiscus a drink. April temperatures are normally mild, with highs averaging less than 82 degrees. However, it also tends to be a windy month and plants may dry out more quickly than you might expect in view of the temperatures. Don't forget to mulch, both in ground and potted plants, in order to conserve water.

If you waited to do whatever pruning you need to do until after the March 21st Chapter Show you need to start really soon in order to get the most blooms from your hibiscus. We have discussed pruning several times in the past, therefore we will not repeat anything on that subject this year. The Hibiscus handbook is always a good source of information about pruning or most any other hibiscus-related subject.

April is the month when we see our plants starting vigorous growth. This is particularly noticeable in hibiscus planted in the ground, since ground temperature needs to get above 65 degrees to initiate root growth.

The insect population begins noticeably with the new growth. Once, the rule was to spray with Orthene in the first week of April and at the same time spray other plants and nearby lawns with Sevin to control other insects that may transfer to your hibiscus. As we move toward the use of fewer chemicals, we tend to wait until the insects or the evidence of their presence is seen, before spraying. However, to do that, we need to be very observant. Aphids are difficult to spot and they may show up with new growth. Spraying with a soap and oil solution is sufficient in many cases. The formula is really complicated, - 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil and 2 tablespoons of liquid dish soap in a gallon of water. If the oil and soap spray doesn't provide sufficient control, move to an insecticide with Acephate or Imidacloprid in it.

Apply a good hibiscus fertilizer early in the month – watering both before and after the application. (A fertilizer like the kind sold at the Chapter show would be a good choice.)

April is a pretty good month to pollinate hibiscus blooms to make new seedlings. The sun is not too hot to dehydrate the pollen. Try it – you'll like it!

Chapter Meeting: March 8

President Flanders welcomed thirty-four members who gathered at the Synovus Bank meeting room. A motion was made and passed to approve the February minutes as they were printed in the Petal Power. Gayler Boettcher was the voice for Shirley, reading the Treasurer's report for the period ending February 28, 2009. The beginning balance was \$2,079.08 with an income of \$241.30. Expenses were \$204.45 with an ending balance of \$2,115.93.

Dorothy Erikson passed around a sign-up sheet for the pot-luck picnic next month, April 5, 1:00 P.M. at Durante Park.

Gayler announced that leftover items from the Treasure table at the show will be packed up and taken to a rental-free stall at the Red Barn to be sold on April 3 and 4. A sign-up sheet was passed around for those who can sell at the Red Barn that weekend.

Mark Love reported on the final plans for our Annual Show at the Family Life Center on March 21. Set-up will be Friday, March 20 at 10:00 until finished. We are to be at the Family Life Center on Saturday at 8:30 a.m. Mark gave everyone cards with their duties for the two days.

Gayler explained the set-up. There will be more Bloom Preparation tables this year and the Plant Sale will be outside under the awning.

An "Arizona Sunset" hibiscus plant donated by Unbelievable Hibiscus was raffled and won by lucky Jeanne Nathan.

The meeting was adjourned. Jeri Lovett and Rae Flanders provided refreshments and a social time followed.

Rae Flanders, Secretary

Coming events

Friday, March 20, 10:00 a.m.: Show setup

Saturday, March 21, 8:30 a.m.: Annual Hibiscus Show and Plant Sale!

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

Friday & Saturday, April 3,4: Flea Market Sale, Red Barn Flea Market

Sunday, April 5, 1:00 p.m.: Annual Chapter Picnic, Durante Park, Longboat Key