

Petal Power

Golby-Reasoner Chapter
American Hibiscus Society

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Editor: Gayler Boettcher: gboet@gte.net

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

Web Site: 4hibiscus.com

May 3rd Chapter Meeting

The May Chapter meeting is on May third which is the first Sunday – since, as usual; the second Sunday in May is Mother's Day.

The program for the meeting has two parts. (A.) The first part could be titled "What's For Next Year's Show?" The Board of Directors have spent several hours in their two meetings since the show, discussing what could or needs to be changed in next year's show – considering everything identifiable including the demographics of the Chapter's membership. President Flanders will share the thinking of the Board and ask for input and lead a discussion of the various subjects with those attending. (B.) The second part of the program could be titled "Let's Talk Hibiscus!" and will be an exchange of information by everyone present with Gayler Boettcher serving as discussion leader and moderator. Part B will be subject to the "If Time Allows" rule.

While Part A of the program is important for everyone – over-all, the most important part of the meeting for those who haven't paid their dues – to do so! It is that time of year!

The most important aspect of the business portion of the meeting will be the election of officers and board members. We are and should be very appreciative of those who are willing to commit the time and energy to serve in a leadership role in the Chapter. The slate of nominees is in the minutes of the April meeting published in this issue of PETAL POWER.

Brunch at Peridia!

One word sums up brunch at Peridia and that word is of course, – "Yummy". So thankfully, once again the Chapter is having its annual restaurant (and installation) meeting at Peridia Country Club. This year it is on Sunday, June 14th, beginning at noon and again the Chapter is picking up some of the cost – resulting in a cost to members of \$15.00 per person. Non-member guests will pay \$17.50. (The Chapter share isn't as large as last year since then the show was on May 25th and we didn't know what the financial results were when the price was set.)

Those attending the May 3rd meeting will have an opportunity to sign-up for the brunch. Those not in attendance may call Dottie Erikson (753-7785) or Shirley Boettcher (751-2924) to "sign-up" and make payment arrangements.

Another Great Show!

Much has occurred since our last issue of PETAL POWER. Or so it seems. Of course, the successful production of our 45th annual hibiscus show was the biggest and most important event that occurred – at least from the standpoint of the Chapter.

While it is true that a pretty small number of blooms were entered for judging and a relatively small number of folks of the community attended the public show, the fact remains that a fairly small number of Chapter members created a beautiful event. An event of which they all could be proud.

The fact that the show was something to be proud of should remain as the most important aspect of all our memories as we think about the 2009 show in future years. Indeed, financially, the show was not an overwhelming success however; it looks like we only lost a couple hundred dollars. (Considerably better than last year.) In addition, we gained a little experience about obtaining sponsorships in some numbers – a lesson that may be of considerable importance in future years. And we learned we can conserve funds in numerous ways that affect the bottom line.

As stated earlier, it was a relatively small number of Chapter members who created the beautiful event that was the 2009 show. In keeping with our long time practice (that we started the year before last) we will again attempt to list all the members, and non-members who worked on the show. And so here is the list – in no particular order – and with many apologies to those we may have forgotten:

MEMBERS: David Kaplan, Bill Faulls, Bob Haendel, Jack and Dotty Taaffe, Norm and Marlyn Marshall, Betty Seipel, Petey Birchall, Frank Vejrostek, Tootie Baldini, Beege Hunter, Carl and Pat Kramer, Maynard and Dee Pastorius, Marion and Judy Duncan, Jeri Lovett, Jeanne Nathan, Jennifer Murdoch, Charles and Belle Hilt, Dottie Erickson,

Norma Bryar, Marilyn and Dale Young, Gene and Sue Haugh, Gayler and Shirley Boettcher, Dave and Rae Flanders, Mark and Janet Love, Donny Waldroup.
“MEMBERS FOR A DAY”: **Danielle Seipel, Dave Seipel, Gary and Betty Bagley, Dean White.**

In case you are wondering, there are 41 names listed. That number certainly indicates an almost astounding commitment of time, energy, and expertise to the production of an outstanding show by Chapter members and friends of the Chapter.

Waldroup Sells!

We all know that **Donny Waldroup** at least has experience at selling hibiscus since he has been heading up the plant sales at our shows for a number of years now. But we didn't know he was good at selling stuff at garage sales – until he had a garage sale at his house several weeks ago. And how do we know about that you may ask. We know about his garage sale because we know the Chapter treasurer, who told us that Donny had handed her \$85.00 – which were proceeds of his garage sale!

Other Garage Sales

It appears that we overlooked giving credit to other members for garage sales held, at least partially, for the benefit of the Chapter. After writing the article about Donny Waldroup's garage sale, we reviewed several past issues of PETAL POWER and it seems that two other sales, both several months ago, were not mentioned.

Janet and Mark Love and Gayler and Shirley Boettcher teamed up to have a garage sale at the Love's during their park-wide sale. The **Flanders**, who live in the same park, also contributed items to the sale. The items remaining were then taken, several weeks later, for inclusion in a sale **Dee and Maynard Pastorius** were having in conjunction with a sale day their development was having. The result of all this was \$106.30 for the Chapter coffers. But hey, it's all in the name of recycling – and saving the earth - and all that. Right?

And now for something entirely different...

Yes, it is true that the Chapter having a stall at the Red Barn Flea Market was entirely different. But then everything must have a “first”. And we must give a big “thanks” to the folks at the Red Barn for making the stall available to us, on the popular “700 aisle”, at no charge.

The object of the flea market stall was to provide the Chapter with a presence – and to sell a few of the “left-

overs” from the “Treasure Table” at the show and the garage sales discussed in the previous article – and to sell some hibiscus plants! All those objectives were achieved, however perhaps not to the degree one would have desired. (The Chapter made only \$90.65)

A sign-up for members to work Friday and Saturday, April 3rd and 4th at the Red Barn was conducted at the March Chapter meeting with an ample number volunteering to staff the stall and to cover for those unable to participate at the last minute – of which there were only a couple. Those who worked a morning or an afternoon were: **Marion Duncan, Petey Birchall, Charles and Belle Hilt, Norma Bryar, Jeanne Nathan, Dotty and Jack Taaffe, Bob Haendel, and Betty Seipel.** And then there was **Kathy Grandoff** who was there virtually all Friday and Saturday and sold a few of those Unbelievable Hibiscus.

A Great Picnic in the Park

Indeed! The annual Chapter picnic April 5th was, in every sense of the word, a great Picnic in the Park!

It was great – great fellowship with 40 great people, great food, great weather, in a great setting! All that, well perhaps not the weather and setting, were organized and orchestrated by the one and only **Dottie Erikson.** Dottie sent us a note that said, “I wish to thank all the members that contributed to the success of the picnic at Durante Park.” And we all wish to thank you Dottie!

Hibiscus Gardening in May

Since our show was in late March this year, some of our members who would have normally conducted some aggressive pruning in early March (or late February) ended up doing their pruning in very late March or early April. Those who did significant pruning will need to really push the fertilizer (perhaps including some foliar feedings) in order to try to make up for the time they have lost. Those who did what pruning needed to be done at the “regular” time will need to fertilize, but not so much. Whichever camp you are in, be sure to water both before and after fertilizing. Monthly applications of Epsom salt are also a good practice. Use about two tablespoons in a three gallon pot, with proportional amounts in smaller or larger pots and in-ground plants.

It is a little past the best time to add organic nutrients to hibiscus, but if you “dig” this approach – go to it. Barry Schlueter, the editor of the latest edition of the Hibiscus Handbook, was a real advocate of using organic nutrients to wake up soil bacteria and strengthen plants. He recommended that fish meal be applied into a conical hole or two, about a half cup for smaller pots and a cup for larger potted plants. Two cups or more could be

used on in ground plants. Other recommended organics for early in the growth year are cottonseed meal or milorganite or some combination of those. He felt those organics can give you an extra season of growth when you just can't repot everything that would benefit from it. Mr. Schlueter used Osmocote for his fertilizer, also applied in holes. If you have time, he would also recommend sprinkling a few tablespoons of agricultural gypsum (calcium sulfate) into each pot to improve tilth and stabilize pH to some degree.

Since this is a time when our plants grow very well, it is a good time to propagate plants by air layering. Look in the Handbook for instructions. Air-layering rooting takes about 6 weeks. **Donny Waldroup** is our resident expert on the subject.

If you haven't seen some type of worm or caterpillar in your garden, you may be the only one in Manatee and Sarasota Counties. *Thuricide* is safe and only kills plant eating caterpillars and worms. If you can't find *Thuricide*, other products contain the same active ingredient – *Bacillus thuringiensis* – which is, for good reason, commonly known as “BT”. Believe the label if it specifies a storage temperature for this product – don't store it in your hot garage.

Gardeners should consider ants in their plants (plants – not pants) as a sign that something bad may be going on. Ants “farm” other insects such as aphids and scales on plants. A pretty sure sign that the ants are good farmers is the presence of a sugary glaze of excrement on plant leaves. This substance will, in time, be covered with a more easily seen black, sooty mold (conveniently known as “sooty mold”) Therefore, controlling the ant population might be considered the first step in controlling the population of more destructive insects. An approach used by some successfully is to spread a granular insecticide around plants, on a rather regular schedule, whether the plants are in pots or in the ground.

Although several things may lead to leaves without good color. However, at this time of year, a leading cause may be a deficiency of minor fertilizer elements. This can be remedied with a product containing minor elements that is diluted and sprayed on plants. A minor element product also comes in a granular form, but we haven't seen that for some time. It would seem to be more effective if you can find it.

Chapter Meeting: April 5, 2009

Thirty-seven “picnikers” arrived at the Durante Park pavilion at 1:00 on Sunday afternoon. President Flanders welcomed them all and thanked Dorothy Erikson (the hostess with the mostest) for the superb job

in organizing the picnic, the Taaffe's for bringing the chicken, and everyone for bringing the great food.

A short business meeting was held. The minutes were approved as printed in the Petal Power and a motion was made and passed to dispense with the Treasurer's report. He thanked everyone who made the annual show a success, especially the Love's and Boettcher's who worked so hard organizing the show and everyone who helped out at the Red Barn Flea Market donating and selling “stuff”.

Rae Flanders reported on the candidates for the following year for Chairman Dave Kaplan who was unable to attend. The candidates are:

President – Dave Flanders
First Vice-President – Janet Love
Second Vice President – Donny Waldroup
Secretary – Rae Flanders
Treasurer – Shirley Boettcher
Past President – Gayler Boettcher

Directors –
Bob Haendel
Jeri Lovett

There were no nominations from the floor and nominations were closed. Voting will take place at our next Chapter meeting on May 3. Installation will be at the luncheon at Peridia Country Club on June 14.

The meeting was adjourned. Jack Taaffe led us in prayer and everyone enjoyed the food and social time with one another.

Bill Faulls won the raffle on a Burnett plant left from the show. Several people purchased seedlings grown and donated by Janet and Mark Love by way of a “Chinese Reverse Auction”.

Rae Flanders, Secretary

Coming Events

Sunday, May 3 1:00 p.m. Chapter Meeting, Synovus Bank, 26th St. W. & Manatee: “What's For Next Year's Show?” & “Let's Talk Hibiscus!”

Monday, June 1 6:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Central Library

Sunday, June 14 12:00 noon, Installation Meeting and Brunch at Peridia County Club

DUES ARE DUE!!