

# Petal Power

Golby-Reasoner Chapter  
American Hibiscus Society

September, 2009

Editor: Gayler Boettcher: gboet@gte.net

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

Web Site: 4hibiscus.com

## And Again, Yummy...

We didn't look at past issues of PETAL POWER, but we think the introduction to every article we do about the Annual Potluck has the word "yummy" in it some where. It is the word that comes to mind when one thinks of 15 or 20 dishes of things to eat all in one place – in other words, a **potluck**! We have a member of our staff here at PETAL POWER that is a "PK". Of course "PK" stands for "preacher's kid". His tenure as an in-the-parsonage PK was a good many years ago – during the *Golden Age of Potlucks*. During that period in our nation's history, churches had at least a couple potlucks a week – lunches and dinners. Every Ladies Aide, Quilting Sisters, Men's Fellowship, Bible Study or whatever – had to have a potluck or it just didn't draw a crowd. Of course our staff PK looks forward with great anticipation to the Chapter Annual Potluck and, as it turns out, a potluck still draws a crowd. That is, our potluck is one of the best attended events on the Chapter calendar.

The details about the potluck are as follows:

DATE: Thursday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>

TIME: 6:00 P.M.

WHERE: Shirley and Gayler Boettcher's home  
9213 Forrester Dr. (Braden Woods)

**Dottie Erikson** is once again doing an amazing job coordinating the details of the potluck and contacting members to ascertain their attendance and their "pot". (In the vernacular of the potluck world – "pot" is short for the contribution a potluck attendee makes to the feast.) If you have not been contacted and plan on attending, please call Dottie at 753-7785.

It is expected that the October issue of PETAL POWER will be delivered prior to the potluck and a reminder about it will be in that issue – along with directions to the Boettcher's. However, just in case PETAL POWER is delivered after October 23<sup>rd</sup> we will give the directions in this issue also, as follows:

### 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. (Park anywhere except where orange flags mark sprinklers.)

Having brought up the concept of the Golden Age of the potluck, we were reminded about the "Greatest Generation" label Tom Brokaw gave to those that lived during the period of WWII. We can't help but wonder if, among the various elements that made that generation the greatest, the nourishment and fellowship found in the many potlucks of the time didn't play a major role in forming what that generation was. (OK, so that may be stretching things a bit, but we thought it was worth a try...)

## Palma Sola Botanical Park (PSBP) Festival

On Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, PSBP will be holding a Festival and our Chapter will once again have a booth there. As indicated in the last issue of PETAL POWER, our Chapter has a long history of support of PSBP and after several years of not being a part of the Festival we will once again "be present and accounted for". We will not be selling plants, but we will be "selling" membership and our Show.

**Donny Waldroup** is Chairman of our booth and he will be looking for hibiscus blooms to decorate a small Christmas tree. Therefore, please bring your blooms to PSBP anytime Saturday morning – the earlier the better. The Festival is, according to the PSBP website, a plant, arts and crafts and antiques sale – with "music, food and fun" for all. Sounds like fun....

The PSBP is located at 9800 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue Northwest. In case you have forgotten how to get there – go north (toward the Manatee River) on 75<sup>th</sup> Ave from Manatee Ave to 17<sup>th</sup> Ave NW and turn left (toward the Gulf) and continue about as far as you can go without getting wet – to 9800 and the PSBP which will be on your left. According to the word we received, the hours of the Festival will be from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

A sign-up for staffing our PSBP booth was held at the September meeting. The following folks volunteered for that experience:

8:00 a.m. to Noon – **Petey Birchall, Mark Love, Robert Haendel, Beege Hunter, Betty Seipel, Dottie Erikson**

Noon to 4:00 p.m. – **Dee Pastorius, Jeanne Nathan, Marlyn and Norman Marshall, Dotty and Jack Taaffe**

With the staffing that will be available at the Chapter booth; everyone attending the Festival will surely have the opportunity to meet at least one smiling, informative member of the Golby-Reasoner Chapter of the American Hibiscus Society!

### **Board Meeting Special Guest!**

The Board of Directors had a special guest at their August 31<sup>st</sup> meeting who, in a few short minutes, shared a wealth of knowledge about planning and conducting our annual show and growing our Chapter. The guest was Russell Kitching, who is a part of the First Baptist management team and who has been a supporter of our show. Russell was educated at USF and FSU and has a doctorate in administration and did his dissertation on strategic planning. He has 30 years of experience in developing strategic plans for private business and not-for-profits. He has a lengthy resume including items like stints teaching at FSU and Valdosta State and serving as President of the Florida Council on Aging.

We are sure our reporter who attended the Board Meeting didn't capture all the points Mr. Kitching made during his rapid fire presentation. However, we thought we would share the points that made it into his notes with all Chapter members in PETAL POWER because surely, many of his thoughts should be a part of our planning in the months to come. Therefore, here are his notes including the very original heading:

### **Notes - Russell Kitching**

Five months before the show make a plan. Begin by determining goals, such as how much money do you want to make? How many plants do you want to sell? How many plants do you have to sell to make the money you want? "If you have no goal – you certainly won't make it".

What do you get with a Chapter membership? Be able to list the benefits of membership. You get a newsletter...is that all? Line up discounts at places like Home Depot, Lowes, nurseries and other businesses – for 10% off with a coupon from the newsletter or with a membership card.

In our beautiful Florida weather, people are more likely to attend things in the morning.

Determine who to market to – young, old? However, younger people will see material that may be intended for retired folks. Signs advertising the show – with pictures of blooms – placed in garden shops – Home Depots – Lowes – Cracker Barrels – Bob Evans will be seen by young and old. Don't send people that aren't known at the Bob Evans or where ever – send only people that are known at the Bob Evans or where ever – to put out posters and fliers.

Make contacts and work with other non-profits, garden clubs, and agricultural groups to exchange speakers and advertise membership and the show. Build relationships with other organizations.

Newspaper advertising at that time of year is not very cost effective. Targeting high-end neighborhoods with direct mailing may be more cost effective.

Newspapers are always interested in human interest stories with a picture of a person and a plant or a flower for their "people" section. "How to" articles are also of interest to newspapers. Go for newspaper stories a week in advance of the show giving people time to put the show on their calendar. Make a point of the heritage of hibiscus and the organization. Look through old pictures and show those with a picture of a today person – going for the human interest.

Market the show at mobile home parks – put up sign-ups for drawings (?). Parks and civic organizations are always looking for programs – provide them and advertise the show and membership.

Cultivate Mike Kennedy (?) and join with the downtown Saturday market to advertise the show.

Channel 9 news will run event information. Manatee TV also.

Sell plants to high-end landscapers. Put a stuffer in the FPL bills.

You have no real hawkers at the show. You have no one interacting with people in the plant sales area and in the show area. You need to divide the plant sales into several areas with someone right there to tell shoppers about the plants, fertilizer – how to plant, etc. These folks need to be in distinctive dress to identify them – a colorful vest or something – we may have some you could borrow.

Think about concessions. Sell water for a buck. Sell coffee and donuts in the morning. Don't make it expensive – sell more for a little.

Have newsletters available for handouts.

## Hibiscus Gardening in October

October is historically the beginning of our dry season and is the beginning of what the calendar calls "fall." Of course in Florida there is no drastic change. There is usually noticeably less rain in October than in August and September and the humidity and temperature is not as high. October usually brings the start of the kind of weather we are in Florida for.

It is very likely that the rains have flushed away most of any fertilizer you applied to your plants. It will probably therefore be necessary to apply more, whether it complies with your fertilizing schedule or not. Particularly if you are in an area that is prone to winter frosts/freezes, and particularly if you will use a slow release fertilizer – make the application now so the resulting flush of new growth will have time to harden off before the cold weather arrives.

The rain has probably helped your pest control problem by upsetting some of their life cycles. With the beginning of the dry season and before the cool weather arrives, various critters may well make an appearance, so keep the sprayer at the ready.

While the rain may have aided in critter control, it has most likely washed much of the mulch away from your plantings. Of course, sparse mulch is not a condition to have as we enter the dry season. Therefore, this is a good time to start the replenishment process. Three to four inches of mulch will make a world of difference in the amount of watering you will have to do during the coming months.

October brings a period when the gardener may have lots to do, depending how extensive your gardening efforts are. It's the time to plant the fall/winter annuals, many types of bulbs, herbs, etc. If one is looking for exercise, the October garden can provide plenty. However, in the hibiscus garden, it is possible that the most effort the gardener will expend is picking lots of beautiful blooms! Now that's the kind of work we all look for!

## Chapter Meeting: Sept. 13, 2009

Twenty members were present as President Flanders welcomed all and called the meeting to order at the Congregational United Church of Christ.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as printed in the Petal Power. Treasurer Shirley Boettcher gave the Treasurer's report as of August 31, 2009. The beginning balance was \$2,037.09. Income is \$50.00, expenses \$324.00, with an ending balance of \$1,763.09. A motion was made and passed to file the report.

Dorothy Erikson passed around a sign-up sheet for the annual Pot Luck dinner at the Boettcher's on Thursday, October 22. She also reported that the Christmas Luncheon will be at 12:30 PM on Saturday, December 5, 2009 at the Bradenton Country Club. December 12 is not available.

Today's hosts are Janet Love and Rae Flanders. A sign-up sheet was passed around for future hosts.

Jeri Lovett is putting together programs for the remainder of the year. Let her know of your ideas and desires.

We will have a booth at the Palma Sola Festival on October 17, 8AM-4PM, with set up of the tent and Christmas tree at 7:30 AM. We will not be selling plants, only giving out information about hibiscus and our upcoming Annual Hibiscus Show in March. Donny and Gayler will chair this, and several members signed up for four-hour shifts.

President Flanders announced that we have been invited back to the Crosley Mansion December 2 thru 9 to again display our Hibiscus Tree and distribute information about the Annual Hibiscus Show. Quarter-page flyers and Tips sheets have been made.

We also had a special guest visitor at our Board Meeting August 3. Russ Kitching of the First Baptist Church, who has an extensive background in promotion of events, gave us many suggestions to consider for our Show. Marion and Judy Duncan, assisted by Dave Kaplan, will be putting together a written outline of these suggestions for the Board to consider.

President Flanders reminded us that the AHS Fall Membership Convention will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn in Brandon, just off I-75 at Exit 260B. Watch for details in the October Seed Pod. This meeting will be followed by a picnic at Unbelievable Hibiscus in Wesley Chapel. Let's have a good showing from Golby-Reasoner Chapter.

Dotty Taaffe read an interesting article from the newspaper stating that the flavor of the Hibiscus is the popular new taste, used in teas, jellies, etc. Lucky Dotty was the winner (second month in a row) of the hibiscus raffle, taking home "Early Morning".

Program Chairman, Jeri Lovett, introduced Gayler Boettcher, who led an interesting discussion on problems and solutions in caring for our hibiscus.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 PM.

Rae Flanders, Secretary

## Coming Events

Monday, October 5, 6:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Central Library.

Thursday, October 22, 6:00 p.m. Annual Potluck, The Boettcher home, 9213 Forrester Dr. (Braden Woods).