

# Petal Power

Golby-Reasoner Chapter  
American Hibiscus Society

February, 2009

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## March is Show Time!!

March is the month of our Show – for some it will still seem strange, but indeed – March is it! The activity will start on the first day of the month for the Board members with a Board of Directors meeting. Less than a week later is the Chapter meeting – on March 7<sup>th</sup>. Let's repeat that. The Chapter meeting is on March 7<sup>th</sup>! That is the **first** Sunday of the month – **not** the second Sunday which is our usual meeting day. And, you may ask, "Why?" It is our understanding that it was thought that having the meeting on the second Sunday was too close to the set-up day for the Show and the Show itself, which are on the following Friday and Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>...

After a short business meeting, **Mark and Janet Love**, Show Co-Chairpersons – Personnel, will discuss various aspects about the Set-up Day and the Show. We are told that Mark has been able to successfully assign Chapter members to all the various tasks necessary to once again produce one of the best Hibiscus shows. We here at PETAL POWER are told that we will have considerably more space available for bloom preparation at the Show and that there is a possibility that we could see a major change in the way the plant sale area is set up. You will want to hear about these exciting improvements to our Show.

In the remaining time, if any, **Gayler Boettcher** will lead a discussion on subjects hibiscus, as Gayler and those in attendance deem of interest.

## Deadline for Sponsorships March 7<sup>th</sup>!

The forms and checks for sponsorships are due prior to or at the March 7<sup>th</sup> Chapter meeting. Such a deadline provides adequate time for the preparation of the programs and show signage that will display the names of sponsors.

To date, sponsorships have been received at both "Gold" and "Bronze" levels, with several more known to be forthcoming. It perhaps should be emphasized that sponsorships are meant to be and were initially developed to be "sold" to individuals and businesses not a part of the Golby-Reasoner Chapter. It was only after last year's experience that it became apparent that many Chapter members were not comfortable in "selling", but

Phyllis Mohn, age 89  
Passed away Jan. 30, 2010

would like to support the Chapter and would rather do so by being sponsors themselves. Sponsorship levels came into being because last year, prospective sponsors always seemed to ask how much they should give. Sponsorship levels give a range of possible contributions, one of which will hopefully be acceptable.

Our shows in the last two years (in particular) have been less than pleasing, financially. OK, we lost significant money on them. Certainly the economic situation in Manatee/Sarasota Counties had an impact on attendance and plant sales. Be that as it may, we cannot repeat last year's experience and Chapter members have been working to make sure that doesn't happen. Selling and/or buying sponsorships is another means to help us have a profitable show.

Again, the deadline for turning in sponsorships is March 7<sup>th</sup> – the date of the next Chapter meeting.

## Workshop great success...

The poster workshop at the February Chapter meeting was a great success. Not one 911 call was made due to a scissors mishap. Everyone was thankful about that. While less important, our reporter on the scene said that gobs of posters were put together – with a spirit of cooperation and good humor that was a real joy to be involved in. Apparently, that feeling of working to a common goal was about as important to the Chapter as the posters that were produced.

A very big tip of the hat needs to be directed to **Marian and Judy Duncan** who developed the poster construction details, produced prototypes, and provided all the poster lettering. It sounds like we wouldn't have had posters had it not been for the Duncans – and that very well may have been the case! And then too there are **Dotty and Jack Taaffe** who stepped in to supervise poster production at the Chapter meeting when Subcommittee chairman **Dave Kaplan** had to be in California.

The posters were put together in sort of a production line atmosphere and therefore perhaps the pictures of the blooms on the posters you have aren't exactly what you would have liked. (After all, some of the folks cutting out the pictures hadn't done any close work with a scissors for – conservatively – 50 years?) Or perhaps you would rather have one large picture instead of several small ones. Should that be the case – and you want to do something about it, but don't have bloom pictures – call the Editor (751-2925).

## Excerpts from 2/1/10 Board Meeting

The treasurer's report for the period ending January 31, 2010, given by Shirley Boettcher: The beginning balance is \$1,768.45, income is \$36.00 and expenses \$99.64, leaving an ending balance of \$1,704.81.

The upcoming special events are the picnic April 18 at the Palma Sola Botanical Gardens and the restaurant and installation of new officers at Peridia Country Club June 13.

The Bradenton Herald has offered Golby-Reasoner Society the matching of three free ads with the purchase of one ad.

The Nominating committee is at work obtaining nominees for the Board. President Flanders voiced a major concern that the Chapter's future is in severe jeopardy if members don't step up and accept responsibility when they call.

## Reflections about the Chapter by Bob Hunter

We are providing installments of **Bob Hunter's** historical perspective about the origins of our Chapter which were presented at the January 10<sup>th</sup> Chapter meeting. We pick up the story with two very early Reasoners:

“These pioneers, Henry and wife, Mary Ellen, whose children and forefathers fought in the Revolutionary War, the Civil war, Indian Wars, World Wars I and II, and who fathered sons Pliney and Egbert and two daughters.

“Now skip to 1881 when Pliney, age 17, and an experienced farmer and student botanist, petitioned, begged and pleaded with his parents to allow him to travel to FLORIDA to discover the many wonders of plant life he had heard existed in the State. The very name of the State, FLORIDA, bespoke of its beauty, the words are eloquent — Florist, Flowers, Florescence, Floriferous. He had fallen in love with the paradise of

Florida by proxy. Mamma and Papa finally granted permission and sent him off with a gift of \$150.00 to see what the world of Florida had to offer.

“Finally reaching Jacksonville via Chicago, Chattanooga, Atlanta, Macon Pliney grabbed a train to the Florida West Coast and a coastal steamer from Cedar Key to the Wilderness south of Tampa Bay. The train ticket to Chicago cost \$3.17 and to Cedar Key \$43.05. He kept a precise and an exact record of expenses and income, of which there was little. It appears he ate a lot of oranges, fished frequently, eating some and selling sheep head for 2 cents a pound for a little extra cash!

“On November 7, 1881 he wrote: "I am here at last." he said disembarking at B-R-A-I-D-E-N-T-O-W-N. His goal: "To establish AN ORANGE GROVE." His dream came true in July 1882 when the first of his many groves of trees was completed. He had contracted for 40 acres of land for the purchase price of \$250.00. Of course the land had to be cleared. He painted a picture of the land as a veritable wilderness and settlers living in shacks in isolated locations, but was proud and happy to have acquired it. He noted, even in 1881, good land was hard to find.”

More next month...

## Hibiscus Gardening in March

The cold weather we have experienced is sure to be doing a real number on bloom production. Then of course some of us would be happy to just have plants that were alive. It has been a tough winter for all tender plants. The only folks that may find a silver lining in the weather are the nursery owners, depending on how many plants they lost to the freezes.

March tends to be the month when pruning and repotting are conducted in this area. This is when we do our major pruning, removing old hard growth and shape the plant for the long growing season ahead. But this year we also have the possible necessity of pruning away the portions of plants that have been damaged by the cold weather. That involves cutting away the limbs that are brown inside until you get to the place where the inside of the limbs are green. If you find no green, your course of action is clear. Bye-bye, sob, sob. If you find green (joy, joy) then it is decision time. Is what remains sufficient to result in a fairly productive and reasonably proportioned citizen of your garden? If the answer is “Yes”, then lightly fertilize water and you are back to “Joy, joy”. If the answer is “No”, then you are to the “sob, sob”.

Hibiscus that survived the cold weather without harm and are still capable of producing blooms should not be pruned (if they need pruning) until after our Show on March 20<sup>th</sup> – you wouldn't want to prune away a prize winning bloom!

Last month we said that this month we would confront the subject of pruning, repotting, etc. We are not going to do that since we found that we had written over a 1000 words on the subject in our February, 2007 issue. Can you imagine – a 1000 words?! We proceeded to write a 120 word apology for the wordiness. OK, so now may we apologize in just 68 words?

Back to the garden. It has been pretty windy all winter, and so since March is usually windy it will be particularly appropriate to stake or re-stake your larger plants. Winds often rock and loosen larger plants if they are not well staked.

In a normal year, we would say that if you have in-ground plants that you want to relocate, March is a good time to do it. And if they didn't get killed back by the cold weather then March is a good time. However, if you are forced to prune away a lot of the plant that was killed by the weather and the plant is perhaps traumatized by it all, perhaps this is not a good time to move it.

March is a good month to mulch your hibiscus, both in-ground and potted plants, before you get busy with other gardening chores – and before it gets any hotter. Use whatever you use on the rest of your garden on in-ground hibiscus. Something like pine bark chips work well on potted plants. Keep the mulch from touching the base of the plant to prevent fungal rots at the soil line.

## Chapter Meeting, Feb. 14, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m. at the Synovus Bank meeting room. President Flanders welcomed the 23 members in attendance.

The minutes of the December meeting, as printed in Petal Power, were approved and passed. The Treasurer's report was given by Shirley Boettcher. The beginning balance as of January 31, 2010 is \$1768.45. We had an income of \$36.00, expenses of \$99.64, leaving a balance of \$1704.81. A motion was made and passed that the financial report be approved.

It was reported that former member and treasurer, Phyllis Mohn, has died.

The April picnic will be held on Sunday, April 18 at Palma Sola Botanical Park pavilion, and the June installation luncheon will be June 13 at Peridia Country Club.

President Flanders highlighted the agenda of the February 1 Board Meeting. The bulk of the meeting was given over to preparing for the show. Marion Duncan and Mark Love attended and joined the board in this effort. Dave Kaplan led us through a sample poster "make and take" for this chapter meeting. In addition, the Boettcher's presented an update on the sponsorship program which was approved by the Board. Shirley gave a brief update and announced that two members have purchased Gold sponsorships to date.

Today's program consisted of our "Make & Take" poster fabrication, led by Dottie and Jack Taaffe in the absence of Dave Kaplan, who is in California celebrating his brother's birthday. Much activity took place as we all snipped, glued, and visited as we created about 85 posters to be placed at various places around town sometime after March 1. Extra posters will be available at Jeanne Nathan's home for pick up.

The raffle plant was won by Gayler Boettcher. (*Of course, of course, of course.*)

The next Chapter meeting will be the first Sunday of the month, March 7, and the program will be a final preparation of the Show, led by Mark and Janet Love. Gayler will lead a special session on getting our hibiscus (or what's left of them) in order for Spring. Remember: don't prune your hibiscus, or even what appears to be frost damage, until after the Show!

The meeting was adjourned, followed by refreshments served by Janet Love and Shirley Boettcher.

Rae Flanders, Secretary

## Coming Events

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

Sunday, Mar. 7, 1:00 p.m. Chapter Meeting, Mark and Janet Love, "Who Does What at our Annual Show", Synovus Bank

Friday, Mar. 19, 10:00 a.m. Show Setup Day

Saturday, Mar. 20, Annual Show and Plant Sale, Family Life Center, First Baptist Church