

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 9 Chapter Meeting

Yes, we do know that May 9th is Mother's Day, but we are going to have a Chapter meeting anyway. The program details are "in process", as they say but it will surely be something worthwhile. The call we will receive to remind us about the meeting will have the full story. Of course our Bylaws stipulate that the May meeting will have the election of officers and Board members, so you can be sure that that will happen.

That's the Chapter meeting, May 9th, at the Synovus Bank on the corner of Manatee Avenue and 26th Street West.

It rained...

But the picnic went on just as if it didn't. Perhaps a very few folks didn't make it, but almost everyone who was there ended up as folks tend to at potlucks – they ended up eating way too much! And of course that's because everything tasted really, really good.

Once again **Dottie Erikson**'s coordinating and planning was evident in the organization of the tables, the table cloths and the little things like the salt and pepper on each table. It takes some real effort – effort that isn't easily recognized because everything is just there as it should be. Thanks from everyone, Dottie! We did note that Dottie was assisted in setting things up by Betty Seipel – so thanks too to Betty – and to everyone else that brought so many goodies to eat.

Veteran potluckers can hardly wait for the next one.....

Another show on the books...

Our Chapter's 46th show had all the elements that make our shows among the best of the AHS, but what it didn't have was hundreds of blooms. All the things that we could control worked out wonderfully – we just couldn't control the number of blooms that were entered. Everyone from our Chapter and all those making up the judging process were right on track in carrying out their responsibilities – all that was lacking was a few hundred blooms.

That's the story of the 2010 Annual Show and Plant Sale – everything went according to plan, everything went



Jeri Lovett and Petey Birchall welcomed guests

beautifully and looked beautiful. The only thing missing were the number of blooms we normally have. The cold weather took its toll – no one wins over Mother Nature.

What we should remember about the 2010 show then can be found in what was new, different, or just plain better compared to previous years. Those items make quite a list as you will note as follows:

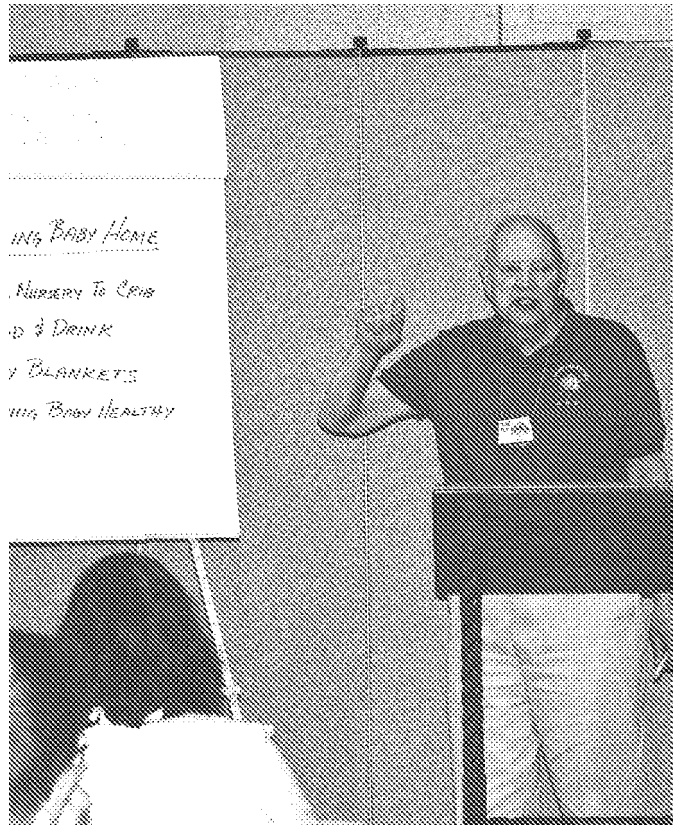
- a. The addition of carts for the plants to be sold at the plant sale was a wonderful addition to the show for several reasons. The elimination of handling hundreds of plants was a boon to everyone connected with the plant sales and made the plant sales area a cleaner, neater area. Having half of the plants at eye level for many people was perhaps a good thing for sales.
- b. First Baptist church made a large portion of the youth worship area available to us for use as a bloom preparation area. As it happened, the space wasn't required, but (assuming the space is available to us in the future) it provides the final piece of the puzzle required to make our show really first class.
- c. While it is difficult to determine the impact of the posters generated by **Marion Duncan** and the Chapter members, they were certainly beautiful and gave a large percentage of the membership a role in advertising the show. (There is reason to feel they

- were an effective means of advertising as indicated in another portion of this issue of PETAL POWER.)
- d. The new look of the breakfast/lunch that was largely due to “leg work” of **Belle Hilt** was, according to all reports, just right. It was a nice “pick up” first thing in the morning and then a sandwich and finger food for lunch – just right.
 - e. The “Mini-Sessions” presented by **Dave Flanders**, **Rae Flanders**, and **Gayler Boettcher** were a surprising success. They seemed to be of interest to a number of people and are surely something to consider for the future. Anyone interested in being a presenter?
 - f. The judging area was placed in the show room because the room previously used for that purpose was not available. While the 2010 show didn’t really test the workability of the location there seemed to be some benefits to it. It is something to be considered for next year.
 - g. The planning that went into this year’s show was more energized, due primarily to the presentation First Baptist’s Russ Kitchen gave to the Board of Directors, several portions of which were implemented through several sub-committees guided by a Steering Committee, chaired by **Dave Kaplan**. Through Dave’s leadership, show planning took on a fresh outlook.

The show bottom line...

Everyone is interested in the financial picture of the show. Why? Because after working hard on something it is nice to know what the bottom line was. Well here is the “Show Recap” as prepared by Chapter Treasurer, **Shirley Boettcher**.

INCOME	
Plants/fertilizer	\$2836.00
Publications	66.00
Fish Bowl	44.01
Sponsorships	\$875.00
Total	\$3821.01
EXPENSES	
Hibiscus plants	\$1710.00
Southern Ag. (fertilizer)	225.60
Judges Honorarium	150.00
Advertising	307.10
Flyers	70.54
Bradenton Herald	236.56
Storage	324.00
Facilities Mang. 1 st Baptist	200.00
AHS	90.00
Show packet	40.00
Seed Pod ad	50.00



Dave Flanders presenting a “Mini-Session”

Misc.	
2 replacement frames	19.95
3 rolls tickets	20.58
Postage	8.36
Total	\$3055.59
PROFIT	\$765.42

A few comments. Having a profitable year is wonderful (the past two haven’t been). We sold 171 plants this year (140 in 2009 and 181 in 2008 – we have sold as many as 400-500). We brought less fertilizer and didn’t buy any prizes (for Best Single, Best Double, etc.) We didn’t advertise in the Herald Tribune and didn’t have to buy ribbons (we bought ribbons for three years last year for \$417.47). Just like IRL and NASCAR racing, sponsors are important, providing \$875.00 this year (compared to \$200.00 in 2008 and \$450.00 in 2009).

The ticket tales

The newspaper advertisements and the quarter page fliers all had a little “Ticket” in the lower right corner. In small print, the tickets said “Present this for an extra free raffle ticket at the door.” 98 people did just that. Of the 98, 46 came from the newspaper ad. Of course the remaining 52 were quarter page fliers. From the color of the fliers, it appears that 21 came from among those that

were passed out on Main Street the day of show and 31 came from posters.

Petey Birchall and **Jeri Lovett** were the door greeters and handed out a total of 347 raffle tickets, and as indicated above, 98 were “second” tickets. That means that 249 people attended the show and that 39% of those attending brought a flier or newspaper ad.

The tale of the tickets appears to be that newspaper ads were effective, and both the posters and handing out fliers on Main Street were effective.

A Special “Thanks” to Russ Kitchen

As we write about the 2010 show it is easy to see the impact Russ Kitchen had on it. After many years of doing things the same way year after year, Russ’ visit with the Board of Directors “opened a few eyes.” Several of Russ’ suggestions were implemented, while others saw limited implementation due to various considerations. The experience gained this year will lead to better and fuller execution of several of his concepts next year. Here are some of the “Russ ideas” or what grew out of a “Russ idea”:

- Several more members were involved in the show planning process.
- We had a plan to have a real presence at the Farmer’s Market.
- We used colorful posters to advertise the show.
- Chapter members were scheduled to circulate in the show and plant sale areas.
- He provided guidance for obtaining a feature newspaper story.
- We held numerous demonstrations/presentations during the show.
- We gave the show a presence on Manatee Avenue – during the show.

Vote!

By now all Chapter members have received the AHS National Election Ballot. Hopefully you didn’t just throw away the envelope it came in since you didn’t know anyone in League City, Texas and the envelope didn’t give a clue about what was inside. If your envelope looked like it had been opened – it had been. – to put the correct ballot in. (What is the old saying – something about not being able to organize a one car funeral...?)

It is important that you take the few minutes necessary to vote. Chapters are judged by the percentage of their members that vote. There are only two offices that are contested, the 2nd Vice President and the Texas Director. We will not voice an opinion on either race. The second

quarter Seed Pod ran a nice paragraph (or more) about each candidate.

To make sure your vote counts, follow the directions, exactly.

Of particular interest to members of our Chapter is the fact that **Don Mixon** of *Unbelievable Hibiscus*, supplier of hibiscus for our shows and Affiliate member of our Chapter, is running unopposed for president.

Semi-annual dues...?

It seems like the payment of Chapter dues comes around twice a year, but we are assured that they are annual dues and therefore ... oh well, you get the drift. Only a few dues were collected at the picnic and so the May Chapter meeting is the best time to pay them. Of course you could mail your check, made out to the Golby-Reasoner Chapter, AHS for \$27.50 or \$30.00 to Shirley Boettcher, 9213 Forrester Drive, Bradenton, FL 34202. Perhaps the mail is the way to go ... the USPS needs the money you know.

Bye- the- bye, it is our understanding that Chapter/AHS dues are not deductible. Contributions, like sponsorships, are deductible. As always, checking with your tax advisor is always a good thing to do.

Neighbor shows...

Our close neighbors, the Harry Goulding Chapter (Port Charlotte) and Gulf Coast Chapter (Venice) are having their shows Sunday, May 9th and May 16 respectively. These are good shows and are easy to visit since they are so close. Of course the Harry Goulding show is the same day as our Chapter meeting. OK, the Venice show is the one to visit – and enter blooms if you have them.

Nominee Interviewed

Before you read the following article, you may want to read the minutes of the April 18th Chapter meeting in this issue of PETAL POWER, specifically the portion that documents the report of the Nominating Committee.

We were surprised when Gayler Boettcher was nominated to be the next Chapter president and we were even more surprised when he agreed to a pre-election interview for the pages of PETAL POWER. After much bargaining about time, place, and such the interview finally began – only to be interrupted by what was said to be an urgent telephone call. Anyway, here is the interview – for what it’s worth. The Editor.

PP: It seemed like it was a well kept secret and so when it was announced at the March Board meeting that you

were the nominee for Chapter president – we were surprised. We were particularly surprised since you had made several strong comments about how you would not be the nominee. What changed your mind?

Boettcher: I thought, and I still think, that it is extremely important that someone other than Dave Flanders and I be president as it has been the case in 7 of the past 8 years. I felt that it was important to take a firm position about my availability in hopes that someone would step forward.

PP: The last time you were the nominee, you asked several people to play a role in your presidency. Did you do something like that again this year?

Boettcher: You have a pretty good memory. Yes, I once again asked Dave and Rae Flanders to carry out the obligations that the Chapter has with the AHS to the extent they care to. I also again asked Jan and Mark Love to continue as Show Chair - Personnel as they have, so beautifully, for the past several years. The Loves and the Flanders graciously accepted which made my acceptance relatively easy.

PP: Assuming you are elected, what are your views for the Chapter's future?

Boettcher: Although the nominations were closed at the picnic meeting, I'm sure there must be a way to reverse that action – so if there is someone...

Insofar as the Chapter's future is concerned I am always upbeat about our chapter members and way they are willing to do what there is to do. I do have the same concern now as I did before becoming president the previous times and that is that I hope I find a way to be worthy of leading such a great group of people.

PP: Now that sounds like you have been listening to too many politicians.

Boettcher: Gee, I guess it did although I did mean it. Would you delete that, - please?

PP: No way.

Boettcher: What was that Shirley? Oh, I see. Sorry, but I have a call I need to take. See you at the next meeting ...

Hibiscus Gardening in May

May tends to have summer-like temperatures which may lead us to believe our summer has really begun, including the usual summer rains. In fact, it is not

unusual to have a three or four day mini rainy season sometime in the month. However, May is part of the dry season with an average rainfall of less than three inches. With the warm weather encouraging the growth of our hibiscus, which in turn increases the need for water, we have to watch carefully to make sure our plants don't dry out.

Maintain your fertilization program during May's explosive plant growth. Whether you use a granular or water soluble fertilizer (both close to the 7-2-7 preferred by hibiscus), it is safest to water both before and after the fertilizer. Feeder roots close to the top of your planting medium may be burned by the fertilizer without the before and after watering routine.

Insects will begin to be active in May, if they have not been previously. Vigilance and set routines are basic to any successful program of insect control. A daily water spray under the leaves is recommended. Failing with that, try soap or oil and soap sprays. If those fail, a chemical spray containing *Acephate* is good for the hobbyist hibiscus gardener.

Before we completely pass by the subject of unwanted visitors indiscriminately chopping on plants, we need to mention that worms and caterpillars of varying types could be noticed in May. The selective control for them is commonly called "Bt" (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) and is available under several names, among them *Thuricide*.

May is still a good month for rooting and air-layering new plants. Of course, air-layering is not limited to hibiscus and is a fun, relatively quick way to obtain relatively large offspring from your favorite plants. Inexpensive too!

The first signs of a minor element deficiency could start being evident in early spring. If leaves are not an even green color, the right shade of green for the variety in question, a deficiency of a minor element (or two or more) could be the problem. Several products containing minor elements are on the market, with names like "Minor Element Spray", - descriptive, eh?

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 10th Chapter meeting. Remember that Bob's writing was meant to be spoken, not read – so listen as you read. We pick up the story with Pliny Reasoner exploring while on vacation with friends with a new sailing boat:

It was Pliny's 22nd birthday and an epoch of his life never to be forgotten, his first glimpse of the true tropics. He continued, "We could scarcely take our eyes from them. The noblest of nature's production in the United States. It had been like searching for the Holy Grail".

He further writes, "We finally reached the end of our journey; the boat was made fast; we stepped through the narrow fringe of mangroves and there, not half mile distant, beyond a belt of green prairie, towered over the forest of tropical palms, the majestic dark and plumed 'glory of the mountains'."

No time was lost. Armed with ax and machete we hurried across the prairie up to our ankles in mud and water — cutting a passage through the intervening jungle with machete, for the forest is absolutely impenetrable without cutting a passage through thorn and bramble we stood awestruck at the foot of a gleaming shaft, towering above us, over the tops of immense oaks and on toward the blue sky truly the 'King of the Palms'. And as we looked, the myriads of stinging mosquitoes, the thorns, and briars and the difficulties of the way were all forgotten and unheeded."

Pliny was so taken by the beauty of the Royal Palms and so proud that his nursery would soon be the first to introduce these for sale, that he took the name of the palms for his enterprise and the nursery was thereafter called "The Reasoner Brother's Royal Palm Nursery".

The year 1887 was a watershed year for the Reasoner family and for the growing nursery. Early that year Pliny's and Ebby's family from Illinois moved lock, stock and barrel to Oneco, Florida. Their Mamma, Papa, sisters Edith and Julia joined them and they moved into a large wooden newly built house on the Nursery property.

Papa and Ebby shipped out on the Permit in April cruising along the coast and gathering an abundance of specimens for the nursery. Father's and Brother's tales of the various stops excited Pliny's wanderlust again and he and the captain of the Permit were sailing south toward Key West in the next month.

While a bit short this month, we are going to leave Pliny sailing south because the next bit of the story (which is a good part) is too long to include this month. Till next month...

We have a New Member

Please welcome:

Ms. Elizabeth Piggott
#19 River View Lane
Braden Castle Park
Bradenton, FL 34208

Chapter Meeting: April 18, 2010

Twenty-five members attended the Chapter picnic at the Palma Sola pavilion on a slightly rainy Sunday afternoon. President Flanders welcomed them all, and particularly our newest member, Elizabeth (Betty) Piggott, who joined at the Show. He thanked Dorothy Erikson for the superb job organizing the picnic and everyone for bringing the great food for the festivity.

A short business meeting was held. Motions were made and passed to dispense with both the Minutes and the Treasurer's report. He thanked everyone who made the annual show a success, especially the Loves and Boettchers who worked so hard organizing the show, and the Duncans for donating the poster material.

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

President – Gayler Boettcher
First Vice-President – Bob Haendel
Second Vice President – Yvonne Santiago
Secretary – Rae Flanders
Treasurer – Shirley Boettcher
Directors –
Beege Hunter - 2012/13
Dotty Taaffe - 2012/13
Don Waldroup - 2011/12

There were no nominations from the floor and nominations were closed. Voting will take place at our next Chapter meeting on May 9. Installation will be at the luncheon at Peridia Country Club on June 13 (see Dorothy Erikson for tickets).

The Annual AHS Convention will be June 17-20 in Orlando and we need a representative to attend.

Donny reported that he has a hibiscus tree to be planted at Crosley Mansion in memory of Pat Grant. Shirley will plan a ceremony.

The meeting was adjourned. Mark Love led us in prayer then everyone enjoyed the food and social time with one another.

Rae Flanders, Secretary

Coming Events

Monday, May 3, 6:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Central Library

Sunday, May 9, 1:00 p.m. Chapter Meeting: Election of Officers and Board Members, Synovus Bank, Manatee & 26th St. W.