

Petal Power

Golby-Reasoner Chapter
American Hibiscus Society

October, 2004

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October 21st – Potluck/garage sale!

There are words you don't often see together – “potluck” and “garage sale”. So what happened to “potluck/workshop”?

Here's the story. We were going to have a potluck/workshop. We are still going to have a potluck. However, apparently several folks were anxious to rid themselves of the “stuff” they had gathered together for the Gift Table at the “Show Which Wasn't”. And, because the Show wasn't, the Chapter treasury is hovering around \$3,000.00 – the point at which we start incurring bank service charges. Therefore, in an attempt to aid both the crowded folks and the light treasury, the Board of Directors uncharacteristically hatched the (fairly) brilliant idea of having a garage sale in lieu of a workshop at the potluck. Rather like substituting an apple for an orange, but it does serve to help both concerns.

Here are the facts:

What: Potluck/garage sale!

When: 6:00 PM, Thursday, October 21st

Where: The Boettcher home
9213 Forrester Drive

How to get there:

Go east on Route 70 (53 Ave. E.) and at the second stoplight past the I75 underpass turn right 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 numbers confuse you – keep driving and you will eventually get to the 9000's.

A sign-up sheet for the potluck was circulated at the October Chapter meeting. Phone calls to members not at the meeting will be made to determine the number attending and what they will be bringing. If you have not been contacted and wish to attend, please call Jeanne Nathan at 794-0908.

The garage sale will be set up in the garage (will wonders never cease) attached to the Boettcher home. Items being placed in the sale should be priced. Items that are not sold will be saved for next year's Gift Table at the “Show That Will Be”. If anyone has a few boxes that could be used to pack up the unsold items in – please bring them. Particularly coveted are moving company cartons, because they stack well. However, any and all cartons will be appreciated.

Mini-show - November Chapter Meeting

The headline says it all. At the November 14th Chapter meeting, we will have a mini-show. November should be a good month for us all to have some blooms that we'd like to show off – and to have the opportunity to see if others think they are as perfect as we think they are.

Therefore, please bring all the blooms you have, good or not-so-good, hybrid or garden variety, 2 or 20 blooms – bring what you have to add to the carpet of color! Don't miss it – it should be a blast! And remember that Friday or Saturday's blooms that are refrigerated will probably look great on Sunday – particularly in November.

The election of officers and Board of Directors members will also take place at the November meeting.

2005 Slate Nominated...

We understand that all our readers avidly peruse the Chapter meeting minutes published in almost every issue of *Petal Power*. But in case someone skips this issue's minutes, here's the nominated officers and Board of Directors members for 2005:

President, Dave Flanders

First Vice-President, Janet Love

Second Vice-President, Marilyn Young

Secretary, Gayler Boettcher

Treasurer, Shirley Adams

Board Members, 2005: Elizabeth (Holly) Righter, 2007: Gene Haugh, Trudy Topolosky

The above people deserve the thanks of all the members of the Chapter. They have stepped forward and have said "yes" when asked to assume the responsibilities of the office for which they have been nominated. We particularly appreciate Dave Flanders again agreeing to be the Chapter President. After having only retired from the presidency one year, we are most fortunate to have Dave heading back into that office.

We hasten to offer our many thanks to Pat Grant for having served the Chapter as president this year (and the year is not over yet, Pat). Pat stepped in when no one else would (in much the same way as Dave did this year, we assume) and has provided good leadership in perhaps the most challenging year the Chapter has ever seen.

Special thanks are also due Carl Kramer, Chairman (and sole member) of the Nominating Committee. Everyone, including Carl, was so intent on not "blowing away", that preparing a slate of nominees for the October meeting was forgotten. Forgotten until the October 1st Board meeting, that is. Therefore, Carl put together an outstanding slate of candidates in less than a week. (The Secretary candidate is somewhat suspect, however.) Congratulations on doing a fine job Carl - and many thanks!

October Meeting Surprise!

Those arriving for the October 10th Chapter meeting were surprised to see a quite large gentleman laying out materials and otherwise preparing to make the program presentation, instead of seeing the quite dainty Peggy Dessaint. The two individuals couldn't physically be much different.

The story behind the switch is that Peggy had surgery a few days prior to the meeting and was therefore unable to be with us. We hope she is well along with her recovery. Dave Flanders, in a fortunate turn of events, arranged for a representative of Southern Ag to be with us. That individual became ill and was replaced by the Operations Manger at Southern Ag, Mac Williams. (Sounds like an example of upward delegation.)

It is always interesting to hear a person who is learned in horticulture, but not a "hibiscus person", discuss their views about growing hibiscus. We will discuss some of his points of view in later issues of *Petal Power*. We will mention that Mr. Williams indicated that hibiscus with buds should not be fertilized since bud drop will occur. We had not heard that previously. Most hibiscus folks would be upset if most of their hibiscus plants don't always have buds on them.

October 1st Board Meeting Minutes Excerpts

At the November Membership Meeting of the AHS, President Grant and Dave Flanders will attempt to determine which growers have plants that will be available to sell at our May show and tie down suppliers if possible.

A garage sale will be held at the October 21st potluck in an attempt to bolster the treasury so that we will not incur a monthly \$16.00 service charge.

The November meeting program will be a mini-show, and election of officers and Board members.

November Hibiscus Gardening

According to the gentleman who was a mentor to many of us, Eric Golby, “The main word for November is – be prepared!” He went on to say that not only is November a month to get prepared, but it can have some cool north winds producing a freezing wind-chill factor. This leads to yellow hibiscus leaves about 10 days later. He said this took place as early as November 10th one year. Also, it's not unknown for November to have a 32° night. So we repeat Eric's statement, “Be prepared.”

Preparation includes inventorying and obtaining the materials that will be needed to protect your plants from the cold weather. That includes blankets, old comforters, boxes, etc. Don't forget some bricks, pieces of 4"x4", or something like that to anchor them in place. The spring-loaded type clothes pins (remember those?) come in handy to close the sides of blankets and such that are draped over plants. In case you haven't heard, the weather forecasters are saying that this winter will be colder than normal. (Of course, those are the same folks who so brilliantly forecast the path of the four recent major weather visitors to our state.)

For many years, hibiscus growers gave their plants an application of a high potash fertilizer, something like 0-10-10 or 2-10-10, during the first week of November. The rationale for this, again according to Eric, “was to ‘harden off’ the tissues of the plant, to withstand the cold better”. Then Eric said, “Gainesville said it won't – and I say it will!” Apparently, “Gainesville” determined that the high potash treatment is not any more effective as a normal feeding. Take your choice! Due to the difference in temperatures, those on or close to the islands could probably lightly fertilize throughout the winter, but those further east should indeed make their last fertilizer application, until February or March, in early November. Likewise, “easterners” shouldn't do any more pruning after early November until February; however “westerners” could probably continue selective pruning throughout the winter months. Of course the rationale for the secession of both pruning and fertilizing is that it reduces the production of new leaf growth that cold weather could easily damage.

We have said it many times before, but it should be said again. Never fertilize a dry plant. Water the plants to be fertilized, put the fertilizer on and then water again. This applies to both granular and water soluble fertilizers.

Particularly if you have used a broad-spectrum insecticide, such as those containing Imidacloprid, continue to look for spider mites on your plants. Pat Merritt, editor of the Lone Star Chapter's *The Petaloid*, gave a good description of what to look for: “A trashy, salt and pepper looking webbing on the undersides of the leaves are a dead giveaway that” you have spider mites. Other than the heaviest infestations of spider mites can probably be controlled with daily spraying of water that we have recommended for several years. A spray wand is almost a virtual necessity to achieve a good spray of water on the under side of the leaves. Almost all garden centers have them in a range of prices. We have found that some of the less expensive wands are best since they will provide a good volume of water at low pressure for fast watering, but will also support a higher pressure for washing down (or up) plant foliage. If you find the spraying approach wanting, application of a miticide, such as *Kelthane*, will provide good control.

(Editor's Note. In order to publish this issue earlier than usual due to the potluck being only 11 days after the Chapter meeting, the above article was written prior to the Chapter meeting. So it was interesting then that Mr. Williams, the program speaker, recommended the use of a 2-10-10 fertilizer within 30 to 60 days. He sides with Eric!)

Golby-Reasoner Chapter, AHS

Chapter Meeting Minutes

October 19, 2004.

President Pat Grant called the meeting to order at 2:05 PM.

A motion was made and seconded that the minutes of the August 8th Chapter meeting be approved as published in *Petal Power*. The motion passed.

Treasurer Mike Bossert briefly summarized Treasury activity during the most recent full month. The amount on hand August 31, 2004 was \$2,985.49. During September there was income of \$100.00 and expense of \$16.00, resulting in a balance on hand on

September 30th of \$3,069.49. The \$16.00 expense was a bank service charge that Mike discussed with the bank. The result is that the charge will be refunded.

President Grant indicated that a sign-up sheet was being circulated for the potluck at the Boettcher's on October 21st. She indicated that for several reasons there would be a garage sale, instead of a workshop, at the potluck. People have put aside items for the Gift Table at the show that are taking up space, and the treasury needs money to escape continuing bank service charges. Items not sold will be stored until the show in May.

Chairman of the Nominating Committee, Carl Kramer, reported the slate of nominated candidates for officers and Board members for 2005:

President, Dave Flanders
First Vice-President, Janet Love
Second Vice-President, Marilyn Young
Secretary, Gayler Boettcher
Treasurer, Shirley Adams
Board Members, 2005 – Elizabeth (Holly) Righter, 2007 Gene Haugh, Trudy Topolosky

A motion was made and seconded that the report of the Nominating Committee be accepted. The motion passed.

Dave Flanders introduced Mac Williams, Operations Manager, Southern Ag. Mr. Williams, who has a degree in Environmental Agriculture, discussed the cultivation of hibiscus from his point of view along with points of interest about fertilizer and chemicals in both general and specific terms. He also answered numerous specific questions from the attendees.

Refreshments were provided by Mike and Meg Bossert, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:05 PM.

Gayler Boettcher, Secretary

CLASSIFIEDS

Cold Porcelain Creations! Lifelike Hibiscus and other flowers, singles/bouquets. Yvonne Santiago: (941) 727-7293, Yvonne@coldporcelaincreations.com, or www.coldporcelaincreations.com

Coming Events

October 21, 6:00 p.m.: Potluck/garage sale at the Boettcher home

November 5, 9:30 a.m.: Board Meeting at the South Branch Library

November 14, 2:00 p.m.: Chapter Meeting: Mini Show

December 12: Christmas Party!