

Petal Power

Golby-Reasoner Chapter
American Hibiscus Society

January, 2005

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Let's Go Native!

February's Chapter meeting will feature Allen Garner, a former Manatee County Extension Agent, visiting with us about native plants. Native plants could and should be welcome in any home landscape since they can be used in many ways, tend to be low maintenance, and they will grow here! Mr. Garner's background should make him an outstanding source of information on a popular gardening subject. Sounds like a meeting everyone with even a slightly green thumb should attend!

Bolstering the treasury....

It's time to sell a few plants! The Chapter will have a booth at the West Florida Home and Garden Show January 28, 29 and 30 at the Sarasota/Bradenton International Convention Center. (That's the old Sam's Club building across from the airport on old 301.) This, as an event for the Chapter, has just been launched so not many details are known at this writing. Also, the Chapter will again have a booth at Palma Sola Botanical Park, March 12th and 13th. Details will be forthcoming at the February Chapter meeting and in the February issue of *Petal Power*.

Exciting Workshop!!

Perhaps "exciting" is a bit much, but "constructive", "defining", and "exhilarating" certainly paint a picture of the workshop that was held as a part of the January Chapter meeting. Oops, "exhilarating" is pretty much the same as "exciting"—so maybe it was—exciting!

The workshop began with four groups, each with appointed spokespersons, discussing three questions about the future of the Chapter. After 20 minutes the spokesperson from each group told about his/her group's thoughts about each question. The "workshop facilitator" (Dave Flanders) listed each point for all to see and helped clarify the items that needed a bit of "fine-tuning". The result was a far-ranging list of introspective and constructive thoughts that might well provide a track for energizing the Chapter in the future.

We will not attempt to discuss the thoughts brought out by the workshop groups although much could be said about a number of the items. However, for the benefit of the members who were not in attendance (we have already heard - "I wish I had been there!") we will pass along the complete list of items suggested by the discussion groups as captured by the facilitator. They are listed under the questions that were posed and are rough, as they tend to be, as thoughts are being tossed around and being summarized by a facilitator on a "board".

What do we want our chapter to be? What are our goals and vision?

1. Appeal to younger – Increase membership
2. Source of information – Disseminate
3. Provide hibiscus shows and programs to achieve #2
4. Social component to life in chapter
5. Known in community – Image
6. Active, participating membership – involved
7. Know as friendly and receptive/ fun

What obstacles do we face in reaching these goals?

1. Not enough people
2. Aging membership
3. Finding subjects for program/presentations is difficult
4. Programs not always interesting
5. Lack of advertising
6. Cost of publicity?
7. Show at wrong time in September?
8. Members not feeling responsible for recruiting
9. Not enough social activities
10. Seating in rows inhibits interacting during meetings

What do we, as individual members, have to do to overcome these obstacles?

1. Look at AHS statements for inspiration and guidance
2. Carryout public plantings and plaques for community
3. More programs where members participate
4. Use round table set-up for meetings
5. Motivation to talk to new members
6. Add events: shows, bus trips, etc.
7. Follow up with inactive/dropping/departing members
8. Add entertainment at shows
9. Encourage youth groups
10. Self-motivation to volunteer – take individual responsibility
“Just say ‘yes’”
11. Bring in new members
12. Encourage attendance at AHS meetings- bus, hospitality room, etc.
13. Meet at Palma Sola Botanical Gardens for garden environment
14. Generate publicity and public awareness
15. Change show date [1st Sat. in Feb?]
16. Displays and presentations in community:
 - Lakewood Ranch
 - Publix, Albertson’s, etc.
 - Home Depot, Lowe’s, other garden centers
 - Recruiting
17. Become “Ambassadors”
18. Take attendance at meetings to track these becoming inactive

We hope that all members take a little time to study the above listings. There are two or three main themes connecting a number of the thoughts brought up by the discussion groups. What are they to you? What is—and what should be your role in the matter? You should expect that much of what was discussed in the workshop will be a focal point of future activity for our Chapter. The enthusiasm evident during and after the workshop leads one to feel that a good portion of the membership wants the Chapter to move forward and are willing to help it do just that!

State Fair Show

The annual State Fair Show, sponsored by the Sunset Chapter, is on February 19, not on February 12th as printed in *The Seed Pod*. As we recall, the Fair show was huge last year, with tons of blooms. (Would you believe “pounds of blooms”?) There should be tickets at the February 13th Chapter meeting that will provide free admittance to the Fair and free parking on the Fair Grounds. (Enter via MLK Blvd. using gates 2 or 3 – and park behind building 26.) Our members have been showing lots of nice blooms at Chapter events recently so the Golby-Reasoner Chapter should be well represented at the show. Such a deal: you can enter your blooms, see the hibiscus show, and spend the rest of the day at the fair – for free!

In Memoriam
Chapter Member Robert Seipel
September 8, 1920 – January 31, 2004

A note about Bob Seipel...

Long time active member Bob Seipel passed on New Year's Eve day. Bob counted hibiscus and the Golby-Reasoner Chapter among his many interests – and the raising of hibiscus among his many talents. A heaping table of hibiscus blooms, commemorating those interests and talents, were brought by the 25 or more Chapter members who attended Bob's memorial service. He is missed.

Many thanks to Trudy Topolosky

Trudy volunteered to be the Petal Power Circulation Manager for 2005 after serving flawlessly during 2004! Thanks Trudy!

Very, very unusual...

It's January and we are about four months from our Chapter's annual Show! Due to not one, not two, but three "Acts of God", our 2004 Show is May 28th, 2005! If we hadn't "lived it" it would really be confusing, but it is at least "very, very unusual".

Unusual as it may be, since you now have your 2005 calendar is use, ink in—in capital letters—the Show set-up day on, **May 27th** and the Show on **May 28th**.

We would be remiss not to mention one of our favorite Show subjects – the Gift Table! With only four months to go it is not too early to think about what you have around the house and in the storage shed that would be prime candidates for the gift table.

February Hibiscus Gardening

It is still a cold, or at least cool, month—and dry. Not much doing in the garden again this month—except to pick those few beautiful hibiscus blooms that will appear, assuming we don't have an extended cool spell.

Each January, as we write about February, we hasten to admonish everyone—ourselves too—to not do much pruning until late February or early March. Pruning encourages growth, which is not desirable until after the chance of damaging cold weather has passed. Of course, where you live in relation to the Gulf has a lot to do with when pruning is advisable.

Eric Golby advised, a number of years ago, that after February 20th hibiscus should be given a light, half-strength application of fertilizer. The object is to help the plants phase out of the dormant stage, however it has generally been so warm this winter the plants haven't been all that dormant. Be that as it may, you may wish to consider a small dose of fertilizer in late February, except on the hibiscus you plan to drastically prune, due to repotting or whatever, in late February or early March. It would probably be best to wait to fertilize those plants after the pruning process. Some say you should wait until new leaves appear or about two weeks after pruning.

January 7th Board Meeting Minutes Excerpts

The Chapter and the Flanders have been splitting the cost of a storage unit. Graciously, Dave Flanders indicated that due to the Chapter's low bank balance, they would make the first six month payment this year with the Chapter making the second, rather than visa versa.

Dave Flanders will be speaking at the Palm Aire Garden Club on January 19th.

Golby-Reasoner Chapter, AHS

Chapter Meeting Minutes

January 9, 2005

After much table arranging, the meeting was called to order by President Dave Flanders at 2:10 PM.

A motion was made and seconded that the minutes of the November 14, 2004 be approved as printed in *Petal Power*. The motion passed.

Treasurer Shirley Adams reported that there was a balance on hand November 30th of \$3,107.18. During December there was income of \$692.50, while there was expense of \$720.14, resulting in a balance on hand on December 31, 2004 of \$3,079.54. Treasurer Adams also reported that the annual audit of the Chapter financial books had been completed and the report of the audit received.

President Flanders thanked Shirley Adams for her approach with bank personnel that resulted in the Chapter receiving two years of free checking!

Dottie Taaffe, Sunshine Chair, reported that Marlyn Marshall had been hospitalized and was now in rehabilitation. Dave Flanders mentioned the noteworthy turnout of Chapter members at the visitation and memorial service for Bob Seipel – and the nice display of blooms at the memorial service.

Highlights of the January 7th Board Meeting: The 2005 Chapter calendar was adopted. The Chapter will participate in the Palma Sola Spring Plant Sale, March 12th and 13th. The March 13th Chapter meeting will be held at the PSBP. Donny Waldroup and Gayler Boettcher will co-chair the Chapter booth. Discussed challenges facing our chapter and its future.

The Florida State Fair Hibiscus Show will be Saturday, February 19. Chapter members are encouraged to enter their blooms. Free Fair tickets will be available at the February 13 Chapter meeting.

Flanders encouraged everyone to attend the AHS National Convention, June 16-18.

Attendees were seated at four round tables, with a spokesperson appointed for each table by Dave Flanders. The following questions were posed for consideration by the four groups: (1) What do we want our chapter to be (goals and visions)? (2) What obstacles do we face in reaching these goals? (3) What do we, as individual members, have to do to overcome these obstacles? Twenty minutes were allowed for the small group discussion, which was followed by reports from the spokespersons about the points made during that discussion. There was good discussion throughout. President Flanders summarized the discussion points submitted and then attempted to obtain volunteers for the programs and other needs that remained unfilled – with notable success.

The refreshments, provided by Dot Taaffe and Jeanne Nathan, were served at the tables!

A motion was made and seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion passed at 3:52 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

January 28, 29, 30: West Florida Home and Garden Show, Sarasota/Bradenton International Convention Center (old sam's Club).

February 4, 9:30 a.m.: Board Meeting at the Erikson home.

February 13, 2:00 p.m.: Chapter Meeting, Allen Garner, "Native Plants"