

Petal Power

Golby-Reasoner Chapter
American Hibiscus Society

November, 2005

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Christmas at El Conquistador

Although it may seem too early to discuss a Christmas event, the Christmas Season will soon be upon us – just as Thanksgiving has seemed to arrive before anyone was ready for it. The Christmas Season for Golby-Reasoner Chapter members always means looking forward to our Annual Christmas Party. The pertinent information about the event is as follows:

Where: El Conquistador Country Club

When: Noon, Sunday, December 11th

For those who haven't attended this event previously we always try to mention that it is dress-up affair since they are so unusual in Florida. That is, dress-up to the extent that men wear a coat and tie (or some such) and women wear whatever goes with that. The social hour begins at noon. The food service will not begin until one o'clock.

Everyone should have received a call to see if they wanted to buy tickets or perhaps they purchased tickets at the November Chapter meeting. However, in case neither of those situations occurred in your case, and you wish to attend, please call either Dorothy Erikson (753-7785) or Trudy Topolosky (747-4567) to purchase tickets. This year's tickets are \$17.95, including tax and gratuity.

Two important Christmas Party "things to bring" are:

Blooms! What is a Golby-Reasoner Christmas Party without a Christmas tree decorated with hibiscus blooms? Well it wouldn't be a traditional one that's for sure. Therefore, bring any and all blooms you or your neighbor has, sans ants, to insure we have the usual, unusually beautiful hibiscus Christmas tree.

Migrant children gifts. A Golby-Reasoner tradition for numerous years involves placing gifts for the children of migrant workers under the Christmas tree decorated with hibiscus blooms. The gifts should be new clothing, wrapped, with a note/tag on the outside stating the gender and age of the child for whom the gift is intended. What is a Christmas tree without gifts under it and what a wonderful way to get in the Christmas spirit – giving to those that have so little.

Directions to the El Conquistador Club House

Suppose you've made your way on Cortez to 34th Street West. Turn South on 34th St. W. Continue for 20 blocks or so until you come to an intersection where Bayshore Gardens Parkway goes left and El Conquistador Parkway goes right. Turn on El Conquistador Parkway and go what would be about 7 blocks; past 43rd Street (only on your right) and the Club House will be on your left.

Yummy Pot Luck

Once again the wonderful cooks of our Chapter outdid themselves at the potluck October 27th at the Boettcher home. Always a delight, it was particularly, well, yummy this year. The crowd was relatively small, but those there did their best to uphold the tradition of eating way too much, just as those not there would have expected.

The Hawaiian theme was carried out with various food dishes, leis for everyone, and table decorations complete with shells painted with appropriate scenes and inscriptions indicating the occasion and date. The decoration items were the handiwork of Shirley Adams, who with Jan and Mark Love, hosted the event. Many thanks to them!

Everything about the evening was decorous until the bubble "machines" were broken out to the strains of "Pretty Bubbles". Well not everything can be expected to be first class.

Excerpts from November 4 Board Meeting

The Chapter booth at the Manatee River Garden Club was discussed. A motion was made and seconded that 20 plants at a cost of \$180.00 be purchased. The motion carried.

A motion was made and seconded that \$150.00 be made available for the purchase of materials for the construction of sign tripods to be used at the show. The motion passed.

A price was obtained for show ribbons. The number needed for one show would cost \$138.00 – for three shows \$328.00. A motion was made and seconded that ribbons for the next three shows be purchased at a cost of \$328.00, plus shipping and handling. The motion carried.

President Flanders will speak at the Anna Maria Garden Club, January 19th.

Registration materials have been received for the booth that the Chapter will have at the Home and Garden Show, March 10-12, 2006 at the International Convention Center.

Board of Director Changes

While it is mentioned in the Chapter meeting minutes in this issue of *Petal Power* we felt the importance of a change in the membership of the Board of Director was such that we'd make another note of it. Frank Vejrostek resigned from the Board due to health concerns. Betty Seipel was appointed to complete Frank's term in office and will assume the Membership Chair position.

We wish Frank all the best and look forward to his return to an active role in the Chapter. We appreciate Betty's acceptance of President Flanders' appointment and look forward to her contributions to future Board and Chapter projects.

Golby Goes On...

We used the above caption numerous times during past years when we wanted to tell you about something Eric Golby had done or to tell something about Eric's life accomplishments. Since this coming December 11th would have marked Eric's 97th birthday, had he not been taken from us last year, it seems appropriate that we revert to what we occasionally did in the past and tell something about him. This also fits into our objective of relating something about the Chapter and the people that have been important to it during this time of the year when not much is going on in our gardens.

Rather than focusing on Eric's contribution to the world of hibiscus, we thought we'd first look at Eric from a wider viewpoint, and then in later issues treat Eric's life and his life in hibiscus. Back in 1999 we wrote a piece about the regard with which Eric was held in the horticultural/agriculture world and in Manatee County. On the walls of Kendrick Auditorium at the Manatee County Fairgrounds are large pictures of individuals who have been elected to the Manatee County Agriculture Hall of Fame. It should not be a surprise to Golby-Reasoner Chapter members to see Eric Golby's face smiling from among the other Hall of Fame inductees. Here is what is under Eric' picture:

Horticulturist~Nurseryman~Author
Teacher~Consultant~Lecturer
FNGA Outstanding
Horticulturist 1979
American Hibiscus Society
Rare Fruit Council
Palm Society International

Cycad Society
Hibiscus Grower, Shower, Judge
Inducted – 1993

Eric's list of accomplishments point out the fact that although to us he was "Mr. Hibiscus", his interest in things growing did not stop there.

Birthday munching

For those who don't have access to the Internet and our Chapter's web site, we just had to share this item Gene Haugh posted there under "World News":

November 15, 2005, Sydney, Australia: Harriet, a giant tortoise, celebrated her 175th birthday at the Australia Zoo with a cake, and munched hibiscus flowers. Harriet is one of three tortoises collected in 1835 by Charles Darwin when exploring the Galapagos islands. He named them Tom, Dick and Harry. Harry turned out to be female.

President's Report

Every year at the AHS National Convention the presidents of each Chapter make a report about their chapters at the Second General Session. We can be rightfully proud of the manner in which Dave Flanders represents our Chapter in settings of that kind as well as in the numerous others required of a president of a chapter and a member of the AHS Board of Directors. At the forefront of his success is his ability to ascertain the really important aspects of a perhaps complex situation, summarize them well, and give appropriate and deserving credit where it is due. An illustration of this ability is clearly evident in the final paragraph of President Flanders' report to the AHS, which stated:

"The chapter newsletter, 'Petal Power', continues to provide an excellent resource and news source for our members, due to the outstanding efforts of its editor and desktop publisher."

Nuff said! That is a perfect illustration of President Flanders' intellectual clarity.

December Hibiscus Gardening

December is, on average, one of our driest months. The rain we received during the summer has disappeared so one of the most important gardening chores involves making sure our plants don't dry out. As you probably learned, a plant that has dried out will reward you with some (or maybe a lot of) yellow leaves about two or three days after they were dehydrated.

If keeping our plants watered is one of the most important things to do at this time of the year, perhaps the most important gardening chore will not involve spending time in the garden. It will involve listening

and watching for weather forecasts. This “gardening” activity is particularly important for our members living in the eastern reaches of our counties.

If the forecast for tomorrow is for temperatures 32 degrees or lower, this afternoon should be spent in covering plants or moving potted plants indoors. Whatever is used to cover plants should reach the ground all around them. In the north it would be expected that the ground would be as cold or colder than the air temperature. Here in Florida, it would be pretty rare if the ground temperature wasn't higher than the air temperature, particularly in December. Therefore, the “warm” ground helps keep our plants from being injured by cold temperatures while they are covered - if the cover reaches the ground. Of course don't leave covers on plants any longer than they are needed.

Plants should be well watered prior to the advent of a forecasted cold snap. It is our understanding that the best time to water is two days prior to the expected cold snap, not the afternoon/night before it arrives. This doesn't mean to over-water – the plants shouldn't be sopping wet – use just the amount used in a usual watering.

The cool weather tends to give us some relief from invasions of pesky pests that in warmer weather may have dined on our plants. However, if we have long periods of warm weather, aphids may come calling.

Perhaps the very best December gardening takes place around the Christmas tree in the warm living room, planning what we are going to do in our hibiscus garden in the spring.

Golby-Reasoner Chapter, AHS Chapter Meeting Minutes November 13, 2005

First Vice-President Janet Love called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. VP Love mentioned that President David Flanders and Rae Flanders are at the AHS Membership Meeting in Osprey.

VP Love observed that the potluck dinner on October 27 was a great success. Thanks were offered to Gayler Boettcher for the use of his home and to Janet and Mark Love and Shirley Adams as hosts/coordinators.

A motion was made and seconded that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted as published in *Petal Power*. The motion carried.

Treasurer Shirley Adams reviewed the financial report for October 2005. As of October 1st there was a balance on hand of \$3,777.05. There was income of \$80.00 and expense of \$15.00, resulting in a balance on hand, October 31 of \$3,842.05. A motion was made and seconded that the financial report be filed. The motion carried.

In the report of Committee Chairpersons, Marilyn Young said that today's refreshments were provided by Beege Hunter and Janet Love.

VP Love stated the new schedule for the selection of officers and member of the Board of Directors, which was as follows:

March 31, 2006: Board meeting - presentation of slate

April 9, 2006: Chapter picnic – nomination of officers and board members

May 14, 2006: Chapter meeting – Election of nominees

June 11, 2006: Chapter meeting – Installation of officers and board members

VP Love reviewed highlights of the November Board Meeting: Frank Vejrostek resigned from the Board due to health concerns. Betty Seipel has been appointed to complete his term. She will also assume the responsibilities of the Membership Chair.

Janet Love reported on Mark Love's construction of sign tripods for the Annual Show. In another Show related item, the Board approved the purchase of head table ribbons for the next three years.

Gayler Boettcher reported on the planning for the booth at the Manatee River Garden Club. The Board approved the purchase of 20 plants to be sold at the booth.

The Chapter will support the Crosley Christmas show with people, literature, and blooms.

Members were urged to support the AHS Katrina Relief Fund. Instructions are in the latest issue of The Seed Pod.

Carl Kramer reported that the Bradenton Yacht Club has been reserved for next year's Christmas Party.

Gene Haugh was introduced to make a presentation about “4Hibiscus.com” the Chapter website. Gene discussed what it contains and the phenomenal success it is having. His account about the site and aspects of the internet in general were most interesting to those that who are computer literate as well as those not conversant with computers.

The next meeting will be the Annual Christmas Luncheon to be held at the El Conquistador County Club on December 11.

A motion was made and seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion passed at 4:40 p.m.

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

December 11: Noon. Annual Christmas Party at El Conquistador Country Club

January 6: 9:30 a.m. Board Meeting at Manatee Country Library, South

January 8: 2:00 p.m. Chapter Meeting