

# Hooked on Hibiscus

Mike Bernard Acadiana Chapter A.H.S.

Holiday Issue

It's that time of the year. Where did 2004 go? One last time to get together this year to wish everyone a Happy Holiday Season and to have some delicious food at Don's Seafood Hut 4309 Johnston St. on Tuesday, December 7th at 6:30 PM.

We will be ordering off the menu so that everyone can select their own choices for their favorite food. Of course, spouses are encouraged to attend.

Also at the Holiday get together, the new officers will be officially installed so please make every effort to attend.

**Updates:** Some info on the 2005 International Convention site. As of right now, severe damage has occurred to the hotel at Punta Gorda, Florida. The AHS has a contract with them and they have assured us that the hotel and banquet facilities will be open by February 1<sup>st</sup>. However the date has already been pushed back by one month from the first of January. So the National decided it was in its best interest to have an alternate location. The Sheraton Safari in Orlando was chosen as that site. A contract will be made with them also. By Feb. 15<sup>th</sup> a decision will be made as to which location we will hold the convention as ample lead time is needed to get the correct site listed in the April Seed Pod. Since both locations have a 30 day opt out clause in the contact, so we will be guaranteed a location no matter what.

The good news is there is quite a bit of interest in having a convention here in Louisiana, and more than likely in New Orleans, however Baton Rouge and Lafayette have not been ruled out. I will be contacting several locations here in Lafayette and Baton Rouge, and I am going to ask the New Orleans chapter to check on several different locations there. So folks, keep your fingers crossed that in 2006 we just might have a convention in our back yard.

I am pleased to announce another first for our young chapter. We now have a member sitting on the National Board of Directors. I was voted to become the new Chapter Presidents' Coordinator, a liaison between the chapters and the National Board. The position is voluntary and the term is for one year but I am eligible to be reelected to the post again at the Membership meeting next fall.

As a Chapter Presidents' Coordinator, it will be one of my responsibilities to talk to chapter presidents or representatives to seek out any concerns they may have, provide potential solutions and to promote an exchange of ideas, materials and experiences between one another to improve operation of chapters. I have already spoken to several chapter presidents at the recent fall meeting and have picked up on some suggestions.

Our own Board of Directors will be called in to play a heavy part in our chapter operations this coming year. (A couple of the themes at the recent meeting was membership, membership, membership as well as "just because it was always done this way, does not mean it has to continue the same way.") I intend to bring some of these items forth to the Board for their consideration and will report the outcome to the general membership.

Again, I call for any ideas, suggestions, etc., to make our chapter a better one, to please put forth your thoughts on paper so that I can put them on the agenda for our first Board meeting in January of 2005. To date, I have not received any. Rest assured, your idea or suggestion will be presented, not who submitted it. I do not have all the answers, and I am soliciting your help in continuing to make our chapter one of the best in the society.

**The Seed Pod**....is there anyone not getting it? Or are you getting multiple copies? Please let me know as soon as possible so that we can get that situation corrected.

The next issue should come to you in a timelier manner. As a test, it will be sent out first class rather than third class mail to everyone. Over time you will be noticing some minor changes to the Seed Pod. I think all will be for the best. And if you want something published in Seed Pod, please send it to me and I will make sure it is forwarded immediately. (Hey Buddy....hint, hint)

Again, I look forward to seeing everyone at the Holiday/Christmas Dinner at Don's Seafood Hut 4309 Johnston St. on Tuesday at 6:30.

Happy Holidays to all. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. The next issue will be the March 2005 issue. Come back refreshed and ready for a very busy year.

And let there be 