

ACADIANA Chapter of the American HIBISCUS SOCIETY

WELCOME: to all chapter members and guests who are reading this newsletter. Please feel free to join us at our regular monthly meeting on the first Tuesday of the month at the Ira Nelson Horticulture Center at 2206 Johnston St. in Lafayette beginning at 6:00 P.M.

At the March 6th meeting, Fr. Gerlich will give an encore presentation on hybridizing. For anyone that missed his November presentation, try to make every effort to attend this one. It is quite informative and interesting.

Barbara Begnaud has graciously volunteered to furnish refreshments for the meeting. Thank you!

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 6th MEETING: Sandra Theall, V.P. presiding. Minutes taken by Sandra Theall & Rick Landers. Rick reviewed names submitted so far for the naming the newsletter. Sandra gave a review of the upcoming shows and meetings. She also requested those in attendance to think about what food they will bring for our show & sale in June. Father Gerlich returns for the March meeting. Mr. Dupont needs help for Festival des Fleurs on Friday for set up as well as Saturday & Sunday for the shows. Toni Gerami has volunteered her help on Friday after 5:30. Discussion of how Festival operates, i.e. which booths can just hand out information and which one can sell plants, memberships, handbooks, etc. Sandra to check on exhibitor's passes. Mr. Dupont mentioned about having a grafting party in Plaquemine in April. Barbara Begnaud will provide refreshments for the March meeting with Bera Smith providing refreshments at the April meeting. Rick will check on pricing of metal flower tags and have prices available for the March meeting.

FESTIVAL DES FLEUR: will be held at Blackham Coliseum on Johnston St. on Saturday, March 31st and Sunday, April 1st. We need volunteers to help set up on Friday, people to staff our booth to hand out flyers, help Mr. Dupont with his booth as well as picking up after the show Sunday. Mr. Dupont has graciously announced he will donate proceeds from his sales to our chapter. Sandra mentioned that in her last meeting with the Festival group, that only 2 tickets per day will be given to our group. Everyone else will be required to pay \$3.00 entry fee (even if they are working). This charge is necessary as it is their annual fundraiser. Sandra also mentioned that Kay will be in charge of setting up the sets of Channel 3 & 10 with flowers in consideration for extra TV promotional time. Needless to say, we want our hibiscus flowers WELL represented. Anyone having any plants for display during this time is urged to get in contact with Kay. In addition, Father Gerlich, President of the New Orleans chapter has been drafted (or is it conned?) to do a 50 minute speech on Hibiscus at this show. He will talk beginning around 2:00 P.M. on Sunday. Further details on the Festival will be made at our March meeting.

CAN YOU SAY SPRINGTIME !?! As I write this the predicted high for today is in the upper 70's. It looks and feels like winter is being ushered out and spring is upon us. Unlike the past couple of winters, this winter has been colder and harder on tropical plants. Hopefully you saved your favorites!

This is the time to prune and repot if necessary. Some plants are putting on new growth, and some are leggy from winter foliage loss. March is a good time to prune; by June you will have lots of fine blooms on vigorous plants just in time for our show.

Why do we need to prune? We prune to shape our plants, to remove dead and weak growth, and to encourage strong new growth where we want it. Flowers are produced on new growth and pruning produces new wood for better flowering!

What to do? This is how I go about pruning. I first examine the plant and cut off all dead and damaged wood, cutting well into live green wood. Do not leave a stub above a bud or branch. Always cut close to the bud because stubs will decay and cause trouble. Then I remove small twigs that cross and are growing toward the inside of the plant. Now comes the hard part, deciding how much to prune. I usually leave a few branches with flower buds on them so that I will not be without flowers until May and June. I will prune these branches in about 3 to 4 weeks. Once I have decided on what I will not prune, I begin to prune with the final desired shape in mind. Find the eyes or buds above last year's pruning, leaving two or three eyes and cut just above one that is facing the direction you want new growth. This is called directional pruning. The strength will go to these topmost buds and growth will develop outwards. A general rule in pruning hibiscus is to cut plants back one-third.

A few points to remember - use good, clean and sharp tools; make all cuts clean and smooth. If you prune heavy, do not over-water; because of the loss of leaf, the plants do not need and cannot cope with excessive moisture.

Hope to see you at the next meeting! We will be making final plans for the Festival des Fleurs, and we could use your help.

Luck to You!
Mike Bernard

PLANT SHOW & SALE UPDATE: After our rather dismal news at the last meeting regarding the surprising cost to rent the Lafayette High School, Sandra met with Dr. Leonard of Lafayette High School, with Rick sitting in via phone to discuss any ways to reduce the cost to our chapter. Dr. Leonard was MOST ACCOMODATING to our needs. He was able to reduce the rate to \$673.00. This, by far, is the most reasonable rate that we could find, in light of the amenities that come with it. A very special "Thank You" to both Dr. Leonard and to Sandra for your efforts in helping out our chapter.

GRAFTING PARTY: Mr. Dupont will host a grafting party at his nursery in Plaquemine in April. Details will be forthcoming on the exact date. We will also have carpools available for those who wish to attend but do not drive and/or do not care to drive.

TO ALL CHAPTER MEMBERS: The ballot should have been included in your newsletter. If it is missing, please contact me during the day at 289-0403 or at night at 369-9536. All votes must be received no later than Monday, March 5th to be counted. If you have not done so, please do it now.

TREASURY REPORT:

Acadiana Hibiscus Society
Treasurer's Report
February 6th, 2001

November Statement

Previous Balance:	1,728.23	
Checks written: Shirley McCann (refund)	\$8.00	(check cleared on this statement)
Service Charge	0.00	
Deposit	\$60.00	
Interest	0.86	
BALANCE:	\$1,781.09	

December Statement

Previous Balance:	1,781.09	
Checks written: Am. Hibiscus Society	\$130.00	
Am. Hibiscus Society	12.00	
Service Charge	\$ 12.40	
Deposit	\$ 0.00	
Interest	\$0.85	
BALANCE	\$1,627.04	

Remember this society is ***YOUR SOCIETY***. As with our flowers, you get out of it what you put into it.

IT WILL MAKE US ALL GROW AND BLOOM! And everyone loves beautiful blooms!

NATIONAL CONVENTION NEWS:

All Society Members are cordially invited to attend this year's convention to be held June 14-17, 2001 at the beautiful Naples Beach Hotel and Golf Club Resort located on the Gulf of Mexico in Naples, FL. Make your reservations now to attend this festive occasion. Since our memorabilia tables were a big hit last year, we'll have tables available for you to display AHS and Chapter history.

Come join old friends, meet new friends and let your voice be heard. This is your organization, participate, and, bring new ideas. Let's all work together as we prepare to move OUR Hibiscus Society into the 21st Century.

Saturday Night Awards Banquet

Along with an exciting evening of Hibiscus fun, we are treated to a wonderful meal that will include your choice of either Sirloin of Beef or Grilled Salmon. Your dinner will include soup, starch, vegetable du jour, and of course a scrumptious dessert.

(Please indicate to Phyllis when registering your choice of either beef or salmon.)

Auction

Our weekend would not be complete without our highly motivating auction. Bring your hibiscus-related contributions to the Publications Room when you register. If you have something really, really special that is not hibiscus related and think it will auction nicely, that contribution is welcome as well. Remember the proceeds from the auction help defray the cost of the beautiful color covers of The Seed Pod.

Dates: June 14-17, 2001

Naples Beach Hotel and Golf Club
851 Gulf Shore Blvd. North
Naples, FL 34102
Hotel Rate per night: \$99.00 single or double
Reservations: 1-800-237-7600
www.naplesbeachhotel.com

When you call in your hotel reservations, be sure to identify yourself as a member of the American Hibiscus Society.
Major credit cards accepted.

Deadline for Everything: May 12, 2001

Registration (mandatory, not refundable)	\$10.00
Awards Banquet (Indicate Beef or Salmon)	<u>\$35.00</u>
	\$45.00 Total per person

Meal prices include all taxes and gratuities

After May 12th, Registration Fee \$13.00 plus 10% increase in food charges (does not apply to room rate).

Reach for your checkbook now (before you forget) and make your check payable to

AHS Convention Fund. Mail to Phyllis Mohn, P. O. Box 7431, North Port, FL 34287-0431

Convention Event Schedule:

Registration and a few meetings on Thursday

All Committee Meetings on Friday

Hospitality Suite

General Sessions on Saturday and Sunday mornings

Educational Programs Saturday Afternoon

Slide Show and preview of Frank's new hibiscus pictorial CD Saturday afternoon

Awards Banquet Saturday evening.

Come, be a part of the 2001 Hibiscus Odyssey in Naples, FL