

AMERICAN HIBISCUS SOCIETY

Ramada Inn
Osprey FL

Fall Membership Meeting
November 11 – 13, 2005

FIRST PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE MEETING, 5 P.M., NOVEMBER 11, 2005

President Rita Hall called the meeting to order and Recording Secretary Pat Merritt called the roll. Present: President Rita Hall, 1st VP Randy Cox, 2nd VP Eddie Griffith, Secretary Pat Merritt, Chairman of Directors Sam Andrews, Treasurer Walter Bisselle, Executive Secretary Val Longson.

The president recognized 1st VP Cox to present to the Committee a proposal carried over from the June 2005 Convention to allow for the creation of officially sanctioned AHS Hibiscus Display Gardens. An American Hibiscus Society Display Garden is established to display hibiscus cultivars to the general public. Its purpose is to educate the visitor about modern hibiscus and how they can be used in the landscape. In an approved AHS Display Garden, a visitor should be able to view a large number and wide variety of hibiscus in a well-maintained garden setting. To obtain official AHS Display Garden status, certain criteria must be met. These criteria are set forth in an attachment to these Minutes. To be added to the list of AHS Display Gardens, the qualifying garden must be inspected by a member of the AHS President's Committee or their designated representative and recommended for approval to the President's Committee. The AHS has no financial obligation to, nor incurs any liability from, these gardens.

One such garden, in existence for about five years, is located in History Park in Punta Gorda FL. An application to be designated an official AHS Hibiscus Display Garden was submitted to the Committee, with photographs.

A motion was made and seconded to adopt this proposal to send to the Board of Directors for its approval. The motion carried unanimously.

With no further business, on motion made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned.

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Fall Membership Meeting
November 11 – 13, 2005

FIRST BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, 5:20 P.M., NOVEMBER 11, 2005

Chairman of Directors Sam Andrews called the meeting to order and Recording Secretary Pat Merritt called the roll. Present: President Rita Hall, 1st VP Randy Cox, 2nd VP Eddie Griffith, Secretary Pat Merritt, Chairman of Directors Sam Andrews, Treasurer Walter Bisselle, Executive Secretary Val Longson; Directors Ed Flory, Dave Flanders, Linda Hagenson, Bernard Pages, Don Schermerhorn; Immediate Past National President Roz Merritt; Chapter Presidents' Coordinator Rick Landers. Absent: Directors Carl Benninger, Don Mixon.

On motion made, seconded and unanimously carried, the Minutes of the Board Meetings held June 16 - 19, 2005, at the Sheraton Safari Hotel in Orlando FL were accepted as written, mailed and posted on the AHS web site.

Treasurer's Report: Walter Bisselle

The treasurer distributed copies of the Bylaws containing the revisions approved by the membership at the June 2005 meeting. He also furnished copies of a Budget Update and discussed some of the budget items.

Treasurer Bisselle next presented a proposal to submit the AHS's publication *The Tropical Hibiscus Handbook* to Barnes & Noble and Borders Bookstores. The applications take 90 days to process. A discussion followed about wholesale pricing and monitoring our inventory of books so that we retain enough to supply our Chapters. The current inventory is approximately 7,000 books. A motion was made and seconded that *The Tropical Hibiscus Handbook* be submitted to Barnes & Noble and Borders for distribution at a wholesale price of \$12 each, with negotiating room to \$10 each. Any reduction below \$10 each must be submitted to the President's Committee for consideration. The motion carried unanimously.

Disaster Relief Efforts

Chairman Sam Andrews presented to the Board a copy of the Minutes of a "Special Request Emergency Meeting" of the AHS Board held by telephone and Internet September 14 – 15, 2005 concerning the establishment of an AHS disaster relief fund. These Minutes were unanimously approved and will be filed with the Minutes of regular AHS meetings.

The Chairman called for discussion concerning what, if any, the AHS's involvement in disaster relief should be in the future. It was recognized that in the immediate aftermath of the unparalleled storm that hit the Louisiana/Mississippi Gulf Coast, AHS members desperately wanted to help our fellow members in New Orleans. The AHS collected and disbursed through an appointed member several thousand dollars of privately donated funds to members devastated by Hurricane Katrina. After considerable discussion, because of the lack of time remaining for this meeting and other pressing agenda items, on motion made, seconded and unanimously carried, this subject was tabled until the Second Board Meeting to be held on Saturday.

FIRST BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, 5:20 P.M., NOVEMBER 11, 2005 (con't.)

Membership and Chapter Formation and Retention

The chairman remarked that we are experiencing a cyclical and generational loss of membership and chapters. As members age and are no longer physically able to carry on the work of chapters, they are closing and turning in their charters. We must face this reality and find solutions. A discussion of the use of funds returned to National upon the dissolution of a Chapter resulted in many suggestions. The use most supported by those present was start-up funds for new chapters. After a lengthy discussion, a motion was made and seconded to set aside the funds returned by the Dr. Jack Hoffman/South Dade Chapter when it returned its charter to be used to start up new chapters. The motion carried unanimously.

Membership Coordinator

A discussion about gaining new members, retaining current members and re-attracting those members that have dropped out followed. We are not following up on members who do not renew either Chapter or MAL memberships. The discussion centered on the need for one contact that any member may use to get questions answered. This contact would aid the treasurer in membership record keeping and problem solving, not in recruiting new members. That function would remain with the Chapters and essentially every AHS member. A motion was made and seconded that the position of Membership Coordinator be created. The motion carried unanimously. National Secretary Pat Merritt volunteered to take this position in addition to her current Board duties. On motion made and seconded, Mrs. Merritt was appointed Membership Coordinator. The motion carried unanimously.

Old Business: Seedling Evaluation Committee Fees

1st VP Randy Cox discussed the \$50 fee instituted at the June 2005 meeting that SEC members were required to pay to cover some of the costs of evaluation plants. This fee was adopted because of a projected budget deficit. This deficit did not materialize and, after discussion, on motion made and seconded the \$50 SEC members' fee was rescinded effective January 1, 2006 (the Seedling Evaluation Committee operates on a calendar year basis).

New Business: Back issues of *The Seed Pod*

A suggestion was presented to the Board that all back issues of *The Seed Pod* be scanned and posted on the AHS web site for historical research purposes. An objection was presented that in doing this the AHS would lose control of this information; that once posted on the Internet it would enter the public domain. An alternate suggestion was presented that the back issues be scanned and published on a DVD to be sold by the Society. It could be copyrighted, which might give a measure of protection. This suggestion will be taken under consideration for a future project.

FIRST BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, 5:20 P.M., NOVEMBER 11, 2005 (con't.)

Fall Membership Meeting Dates

Executive Secretary Val Longson led a discussion on dates and locations for the Fall Membership Meetings. Hurricanes have played havoc with our timing and locations for the past two years. Discussion followed about where and when to hold these meetings, or if they are needed. Holding the meeting just 10 days prior to Thanksgiving is a problem for some members traveling from the Islands. A suggestion to move the meeting to January was met with a negative reaction from those members living in colder climates, where leaving hibiscus plants at that time of year could spell disaster. A meeting date of the first weekend in November will be investigated for future meetings.

Acceptance of Application for an AHS Hibiscus Display Garden

On motion made, seconded and unanimously carried, the application for an AHS Hibiscus Display Garden in History Park in Punta Gorda, FL was approved.

With no further business, on motion made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned.

AMERICAN HIBISCUS SOCIETY

Ramada Inn
Osprey FL

Fall Membership Meeting
November 11 – 13, 2005

FIRST GENERAL SESSION, 9 A.M., NOVEMBER 12, 2005

President Rita Hall called the meeting to order and Recording Secretary Pat Merritt called the roll. Present: President Rita Hall, 1st VP Randy Cox, 2nd VP Eddie Griffith, Secretary Pat Merritt, Chairman of Directors Sam Andrews, Treasurer Walter Bisselle, Executive Secretary Val Longson; Directors Ed Flory, Dave Flanders, Linda Hagenson, Bernard Pages, Don Schermerhorn; Immediate Past National President Roz Merritt; Chapter Presidents' Coordinator Rick Landers. Absent: Directors Carl Benninger, Don Mixon.

Executive Secretary Val Longson led a general discussion on the state of the Society. We have lost some Chapters during the past two years, and those members became Members-At-Large. This is why the MAL membership has grown, not necessarily gaining new MAL's. The future of the Society lies in starting up new Chapters. Anyone with Internet access can obtain more information on tropical hibiscus in an instant than our quarterly magazine, the only real benefit to MAL membership, can provide. Chapters provide more, including newsletters, member-support at meetings, and shows. At its meeting yesterday, the Board approved using Chapter dissolution funds for start-up money for new Chapters. The existing Chapters are also encouraged to contribute funds to this effort. These funds can be used for printing, postage, supplies, etc., needed to publicize a possible new Chapter. Existing Chapters should hold mini shows in favorable locations, using bloom displays to attract potentially interested people. This generated a discussion of the feasibility of starting Chapters in colder climates or where the possibility of staging a show is remote for lack of judges. A couple of judges indicated a willingness to travel to a show at their own expense if viable Chapters were started in California. A suggestion to promote growing more garden varieties and hardy hibiscus, with perhaps articles devoted to these and other hibiscus species in *The Seed Pod* was well received. Another suggestion was to put some emphasis on the use of hibiscus in the landscape in addition to developing new cultivars.

The Seed Pod

Editor Rita Hall led a discussion on ways to improve the content, delivery, mailing, and lowering costs of our quarterly publication. A representative from the pre-press graphics company was asked to attend this meeting, but was not available to do so. The cost of paper keeps increasing. A discussion of advertising rates followed, and they are included here:

Black & White:	¼ page	\$ 30
	½ page	\$ 50
	Full page	\$100
Color:	½ page	\$150
	Full page	\$300

FIRST GENERAL SESSION, 9 A.M., NOVEMBER 12, 2005 (con't.)

The general discussion revealed that 1500 copies of each issue are printed at a cost of \$2,592 (includes pre-press and printing), \$195 for the mailer to label and sort the bulk mailing, plus postage for bulk mailing and postage for first class mailing handled by Katie McClain. This totals approximately \$4200 per issue.

Ms Hall stated that even after the finished copy is submitted to the printer, it can sit for two to three weeks until it is printed and delivered to the mailer. The editor will continue to search for a printer who will give us a timelier schedule.

The discussion then turned to the need to disseminate AHS business information immediately, without depending upon *The Seed Pod*. After discussing several alternatives such as the Executive Secretary or the Chapter Presidents' Coordinator sending out a paper newsletter, Tom Miller suggested that an Internet mail list be set up using the free service provided by YahooGroups! He volunteered to handle the setup and Secretary Pat Merritt will provide him the list of names and email addresses to be subscribed. This will be a mail list available to AHS key personnel where every message posted will be received by everyone on the list. It will be used strictly for AHS business and will not be a chat list. The volume of email on this list should be minimal. The Board authorized Mr. Miller to proceed with setting up this list.

Nomenclature Report: Rick Osgood, Chairman (presented by Pat Merritt)

The American Hibiscus Society's Nomenclature Database currently contains 7,670 records. In the last 23 months, visitors to the web site have made over 42,000 searches. The Database may be accessed at <http://db.lonestarahs.com> Do not insert <www> in this URL.

Approximately two dozen hybridizers have either submitted registration information, or have expressed interest in doing so.

Bloom names for all paper-form registrations have been entered and are available online. Complete data is not yet displayed for all records, and data entry is continuing. Fewer than a dozen duplicated names have been discovered in new registrations.

All current registrations show their status as "Pending," due to the large backlog of records in need of review. Registrations submitted with incomplete information will remain in "Pending" status until all information and photos are submitted. Once reviewed and checked for duplication, each record's status will be changed to "Registered."

The online Reservation Form has been active since June, and a few hundred names have been reserved. Upon completing either the Registration or Reservation Form, a user ID and password are issued. The hybridizer can then go back and make additions or changes in the online information, up to the time when the registration is reviewed and approved. At that point, registration for that variety is frozen except for authorized editing by Committee members.

The online Registration Form has been used on a limited basis by several hybridizers. A few data-entry and display problems have been identified, and the form is being revised to fix them. In addition to the Internet forms, registrations are still being accepted by postal mail, or by fax: 713-952-5899.

Many records have only a last name or a nickname listed for the hybridizer. An effort is being made to update the records with full names. Additionally, a Hybridizers' Directory is being added, and will be linked to records in the database. It will contain profiles or other biographical information, submitted on a volunteer basis.

FIRST GENERAL SESSION, 9 A.M., NOVEMBER 12, 2005 (con't.)

The database has been modified to allow the entry and display of multiple images for each bloom. This capability might be particularly useful for blooms with wide color variations. Although only a single photo is required, images of foliage or entire plants can also be submitted and displayed with each record. Thank you Jeri Grantham for the enormous amount of time and effort you devoted to building and maintaining the AHS Nomenclature!

Please feel free to contact me with comments, suggestions and feature requests.

Bloom images for the online Nomenclature may be submitted to Pat Merritt or Rick Osgood as .jpg images of at least 400 x 325 pixels, or slides or pictures may be sent by snail mail.

General Business Matters

Several items were discussed:

1. Possible creation of a two-tiered membership allowing both spouses a vote in Society matters.
2. Review of the liability insurance coverage to seek ways to reduce its cost.

Treasurer Bisselle will review these and report to the Board in June.

Seed Bank: Bob Carran, Chairman

Two Thousand Two Hundred seeds have been sent out so far this year, with about 20 seeds per request filled. The chairman reported a desperate need for seeds, so please send any you can spare. The Seed Bank mailing address appears in each issue of *The Seed Pod*.

The Board asked Mr. Carran to include an AHS membership brochure with every seed request filled.

With no further business, on motion made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned.

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SECOND BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, 4:45 P.M., NOVEMBER 12, 2005

Chairman Sam Andrews called the meeting to order and Recording Secretary Pat Merritt called the roll. Present: President Rita Hall, 1st VP Randy Cox, 2nd VP Eddie Griffith, Secretary Pat Merritt, Chairman of Directors Sam Andrews, Treasurer Walter Bisselle, Executive Secretary Val Longson; Directors Ed Flory, Dave Flanders, Linda Hagenson, Bernard Pages, Don Schermerhorn; Immediate Past National President Roz Merritt; Chapter Presidents' Coordinator Rick Landers. Absent: Directors Carl Benninger, Don Mixon.

Seedling Evaluation Committee

At the SEC meeting held earlier today only four members were present. Three members had sent absentee ballots, for which there was no provision for or against. The Parliamentarian confirmed that the bylaws state that a majority of members in good standing present at a meeting constitutes a quorum. A chairman is elected or re-elected at the Fall Membership Meeting in odd-numbered years. Nominated for chairman were Annelle Cox and Roz Merritt. Roz Merritt was elected Chairman of the Seedling Evaluation Committee. After much discussion it was agreed that the vote of the four members present constituted a legal vote, and the Board ratified that vote unanimously.

The four blooms ranking highest on the semi-final evaluation form are, in alphabetical order, Climax, June's Dragon, Nan E and Paper Moon. A final evaluation will be made in early spring to determine the Hibiscus of the Year winner for 2006

Election of a Chairman of the Board

After a discussion of Board Chair eligibility, all eight Board members may be considered. Although the Chair is elected at each Fall Membership meeting, and four Directors might have only six months of eligibility left to serve, if a Director is elected Chairman whose term expires in June of the following year, then a new election will be held at that June Board meeting. Sam Andrews was nominated to remain as the Chair, and a motion was made, seconded and unanimously carried that nominations be closed. Sam Andrews was elected Chairman of the Board by acclamation.

Amendment to Second President's Committee Meeting Minutes, June 17, 2005, Re Seedling Evaluation Committee

After discussion, on motion made, seconded and unanimously carried, the Minutes of this meeting were amended to read "...If no plants are available to a MAJORITY of the SEC members by June of the year following the win, the cultivar will be dropped from HOTY consideration." The Minutes had read "...If no plants are available to ALL SEC members by June of the year following the win...."

With no further business, on motion made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned.

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Fall Membership Meeting
November 11 – 13, 2005

SECOND GENERAL SESSION, 9 A.M., NOVEMBER 13, 2005

President Rita Hall called the meeting to order and Recording Secretary Pat Merritt called the roll. Present: President Rita Hall, 1st VP Randy Cox, 2nd VP Eddie Griffith, Secretary Pat Merritt, Chairman of Directors Sam Andrews, Treasurer Walter Bisselle, Executive Secretary Val Longson; Directors Ed Flory, Dave Flanders, Linda Hagenson, Bernard Pages, Don Schermerhorn; Immediate Past National President Roz Merritt; Chapter Presidents' Coordinator Rick Landers. Absent: Directors Carl Benninger, Don Mixon.

The president thanked everyone for coming to the meeting, with special thanks to Executive Secretary Val Longson who scrambled to secure a hotel with the proper meeting facilities when Hurricane Wilma put the Embassy Suites Hotel in Boca Raton out of business for a while. She also praised the many people who work so diligently above and beyond to improve the AHS and to keep it running smoothly.

Disaster Relief: Although this was a noble effort, after lengthy discussion it is not a function of the AHS's Mission Statement and will not be continued. Thanks to all members who contributed to the fund, and be assured that the monies distributed were deeply appreciated.

Show Dates and Chapter President Changes: As soon as your Chapter's show dates are set, send them to 2nd VP Eddie Griffith and to President Rita Hall. When you elect new officers, send the changes to Ms Hall for *The Seed Pod*.

Show and Judging Rules/Judges' Committees: Randy Cox, Chairman

A Judges' Seminar was held at this meeting, and judges attending will receive credit.

To standardize rules among the regions that sponsor shows, a change was made in the Judges' Manual. On Page 3, Number 2, strike the last sentence: "NOTE: Senior Judges will not receive credit for clerking or observing at their own Chapter's show." This is no longer in effect. Page 7, Number 1, should be changed to read "Judges may judge at their own show with permission of the Judges' Chairman."

A discussion of miniature blooms led the Committee to try an experiment. At the State Fair Show in February and at the first Lone Star Chapter show in Houston, the Miniature List will be set aside and blooms may be entered as they bloom on show day. Any bloom 5" or smaller may be entered as a miniature. The rule of entering only one variety per garden still applies.

At the June 2004 Convention held in Punta Gorda FL, the Show and Judging Rules Committee put hybridizers on an honor system of keeping track of their own seedlings as to how many times they have been entered in shows. The form for tracking seedlings was never removed from the Show Packet. The Committee voted to remove this form from the packet.

The Committee voted to have the Publications Manager send out Show Packets to all Chapter Show Chairmen, with an invoice, as soon as show dates are known. This should prevent last minute scrambling for those who forget to order a show packet.

A new numbering system for Gold Seal Blooms, in place for a year, produced some confusion for some judges. The Committee voted to switch to a system devised by Rick Landers of the Acadiana Chapter. The new forms will be included in the Show Packets for the 2006 show season.

SECOND GENERAL SESSION, 9 A.M., NOVEMBER 13, 2005 (con't.)

Nominating Committee: Connie Roush, Chairman

The slate of officers and directors agreeing to run are:

President: Sam Andrews
Randy Cox
1st VP: Eddie Griffith
Roz Merritt
2nd VP: Rick Landers
Secretary: Pat Merritt
Directors: Wayne Cameron
Bradley Christian
Fred Roush
Donna Schneider

Nominations were open from the floor. Paul Felsberg was nominated for 2nd VP. There were no other nominations from the floor and a motion was made and seconded that the nominations be closed. Motion carried unanimously.

This will be the first election of directors on a regional basis.

New Business

Damon Veach was elected Chapter Presidents' Coordinator to serve through the Fall 2006 Membership Meeting.

There are several new Chapter Presidents:

Gulf Coast Chapter: Wally Neef
Space City Chapter: Roger Friend
Red Stick Chapter: Damon Veach
Harry Goulding Chapter: John Pelk
Lone Star Chapter: Marti Graves

Keep Secretary Pat Merritt informed of any change in email addresses so that the new AHSBiz@yahoogroups.com email list can be kept current.

With no further business, on motion made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Merritt, Secretary