

AMERICAN HIBISCUS SOCIETY

**Sheraton Safari Hotel
Orlando, FL**

**Annual Convention
June 16 – 19, 2005**

FIRST PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE MEETING, 3:30 P.M., JUNE 16, 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 Walter Bisselle, Secretary Pat Merritt, Treasurer Penny Benninger, Executive Secretary Val Longson. Absent: Chairman of Directors Sam Andrews. It was noted that Mr. Andrews came to Orlando for the meetings, but became ill and could not attend this meeting.

Executive Secretary Val Longson presented engraved gavels to both President Rita Hall and Immediate Past President Roz Merritt with their names and the respective dates of their service as president of the American Hibiscus Society.

The Minutes of the President's Committee meetings held November 13 – 14, 2004 were accepted as written, mailed, and posted to the AHS web site.

The president reminded the Committee that the only agenda item was carried forward from the Second President's Committee meeting on November 13, 2004. This was a request by the Seedling Evaluation Committee Chairman to remove Rod Hendrick from the SEC. SEC Chairman Annelle Cox was asked to join the meeting. First VP Randy Cox went over the results of a survey that Chairman Cox had sent to all hybridizers and SEC members about the operation of the committee. A copy of this survey and the results are filed with these Minutes.

After a lengthy discussion about the Seedling Evaluation Committee and its governance, the chairman stated that she wanted the committee to make its own rules and choose its own members. She stated that she has a waiting list of those who wish to be appointed to the committee. She also stated that many on the President's Committee did not fully understand the function of the SEC and the evaluation process. After discussion, a motion was made and seconded that the Seedling Evaluation Committee Chairman be empowered to formulate committee rules and choose its own committee members, subject to approval by the Board of Directors. The motion was approved. This is a bylaws change and will be submitted to the membership.

The secretary next read the motion passed at the Second President's Committee meeting in November 2004. Chairman Cox told the President's Committee that Mr. Hendrick's performance had not improved during the six months since that meeting. She also stated that another member, Roz Merritt, had again been late with his evaluation forms. She repeated her request to remove Mr. Hendrick from the SEC. A suggestion was made that Mr. Merritt should also be removed from the committee for similar infractions. The chairman stated that she would talk to Mr. Merritt about his lateness. A motion was made and seconded to remove Rod Hendrick from the Seedling Evaluation Committee. After discussion, the vote was three for removal and three against. The motion failed and Mr. Hendrick remains a member of the Seedling Evaluation Committee. Second VP Bisselle suggested that the motion be presented

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again at the Second President's Committee meeting on Friday when the full Committee is present.

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

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FIRST BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, 4:30 P.M., JUNE 16, 2005

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

The Minutes of the meeting held November 13, 2004 were accepted as written, mailed, and posted to the AHS web site.

Old Business

Membership Brochure: 10,000 copies were printed and are available from Publications or the 2nd VP. These were sent to Chapter presidents and many have been supplied to commercial growers. The treasurer reported that about 15 new memberships have been received from this brochure since it became available during the first quarter of this year. Although Chapters may use the brochure to attract new members, it is probably geared more as a tool for gaining new Members-At-Large.

Handbook Wholesale Price

A grower requested a wholesale price for the Tropical Hibiscus Handbook. After discussion, on motion made and seconded, a wholesale price of \$10 each, plus shipping, with a minimum purchase of 24 books was approved.

By laws changes: Five changes have been published in the April/May/June issue of *The Seed Pod* and will be presented to the membership at the First General Session. These changes cannot be amended, only voted up or down. Second VP Walter Bisselle went over each amendment and the Board discussed them at length.

New Business: A discussion about the method of choosing the National Nominating Committee, now determined by telephone area codes, resulted in the Board requesting the By Laws Committee to study different methods and report to the Board in November.

The AHS 2005 National Nominating Committee was presented to the Board, and on motion made and seconded, approved. A copy of this list is filed with these Minutes.

Using the Internet for discussion and votes of the President's Committee between formal meetings was briefly discussed. This agenda item was deferred to the November Membership meeting when the Chairman would be present.

With the change in fiscal year only one chapter has sent in its dues and membership list, so it will be impossible to calculate the Chapter membership growth to determine a winner for that award. This award will not be presented this year.

FIRST BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, 4:30 P.M., JUNE 16, 2005. (con't.)

2006 Convention Site: Executive Secretary Longson reported that the reconstruction of the Best Western Hotel in Punta Gorda, FL is coming along very slowly. The management would not give her a quote until July, so the Board members thought we needed to delay returning the convention to Punta Gorda until a future time, and should choose another site for the 2006 convention. She discussed the increasing difficulty in finding hotels that meet our room price range that also offer free or reasonably priced meeting space. Most hotels' charges are based upon the amount of food and beverage consumed and/or the number of room nights booked. Ms Longson will present properties to the membership at the First General Session, to be voted on at the Awards Banquet on Saturday night.

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

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SECOND PRESIDENT’S COMMITTEE MEETING, 3:30 P.M., JUNE 17, 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 Walter Bisselle, Secretary Pat Merritt, Treasurer Penny Benninger, Executive Secretary Val Longson. Absent: Chairman of Directors Sam Andrews (who had to return to his home in Alabama).

The Minutes of the President’s Committee meetings held November 13 – 14, 2004 were accepted as written, mailed, and posted to the AHS web site.

President Hall announced that Treasurer Penny Rose-Benninger has submitted her resignation effective July 1, 2005. This is an appointed position. The president appointed Walter Bisselle as AHS Treasurer effective July 1, 2005, to replace Ms Rose-Benninger. This appointment necessitates replacing Mr. Bisselle as 2nd VP. After discussion and on motion made and seconded, in accordance with the by laws’ provision on page 13, section 5 c, the president appointed Eddie Griffith to replace Mr. Bisselle as 2nd vice president, and Walter Bisselle as Treasurer to replace Penny Rose-Benninger. All appointments are effective July 1, 2005. The motioned carried unanimously.

A calendar was discussed, but the Committee decided that more thought needed to be given to this, and it would be placed on the agenda for the November Membership meeting.

President Hall made several committee appointments: Roz Merritt to the Budget Committee and By Laws Committee, Dr. David Tate to the By Laws Committee, Paul Felsberg to the Show and Judging Rules Committee, and Damon Veach to the Nomenclature Committee.

Shipping Hibiscus Plant Materials Intrastate

A two-page report authored by Dr. C. P. Hegwood, Jr. of Baton Rouge, LA was provided to the Committee for the discussion of shipping scion wood of hibiscus cultivars for the evaluation procedure. First VP Randy Cox led the discussion and stressed some of Dr. Hegwood’s points in the report:

“Hibiscus plant material (rooted cuttings, rooted grafted plants and scion wood) is being shipped within and between states by professional nurserymen and hobby enthusiasts. If this plant material isn’t inspected and certified to be pest free prior to shipment, the risk of spreading dread pests is greatly elevated. Currently, the pests of concern are:

- ∞ Pink Hibiscus Mealy bug
- ∞ Hibiscus Flower Bud Midge
- ∞ Burrowing Nematode
- ∞ Resistant Whitefly (California)

“It is absolutely imperative that we do something to prevent swapping and trading infested hibiscus plant material. This is all about our very future/survival.”

Suggestions contained in the report and discussed in this meeting included having all scion wood inspected by the local Division of Plant Industries (DPI) inspector and certified for shipment to

SECOND PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE MEETING, 3:30 P.M., JUNE 17, 2005 (con't.)

the appropriate certified professional nurseryman for propagation and subsequent dissemination to the evaluators. First VP Cox stated that in Florida, a nursery fee to cover these inspections may be obtained for about \$25 per year. A motion was made and seconded that "The AHS, to the best of its ability, will encourage all of its members to comply with the law as it applies to the movement of wood and plant material within and across state lines." The motion carried unanimously. A copy of Dr. Hegwood's report is filed with these Minutes.

Seedling Evaluation Coordinator

A discussion about eliminating the Seedling Evaluation Coordinator and using a bid system for collecting seedling wood, grafting it and distributing plants to the evaluators followed. First VP Randy Cox resigned as coordinator last fall effective with the June 2005 convention. He stated that the Chairman of the Seedling Evaluation Committee can handle many of the duties of the coordinator, and that keeping a bank of plants for replacements to the evaluators was too expensive. After discussion, an announcement will be made at the First General Session on Saturday morning that any commercial grower who wishes to submit a bid to perform this service may do so by 4 p.m. on Saturday. At that time, a special President's Committee meeting will be held to consider any bids received. Mr. Cox provided the President's Committee with his bid for this service at \$3.50, plus shipping, per plant.

Seedling Evaluation Committee: At its meeting earlier, the SEC voted to change the timetable for submitting wood from Best of Show Seedlings to the Committee. Scion wood must be submitted to the designated recipient by December 1 of the year of the win. A four-inch plant must be in the evaluators' hands by June 1 of the following year. Example: a bloom wins Best of Show Seedling at a show in June 2005; scion wood must reach the AHS grafter by December 2005; four-inch plants must be in the SEC members' hands by June 2006. If no plants are available to all SEC members by June of the year following the win, the cultivar will be dropped from HOTY consideration. A motion was made and seconded to accept this recommendation from the Seedling Evaluation Committee. The motion carried unanimously.

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

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SECOND BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, 4:30 P.M., JUNE 17, 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 Walter Bisselle, Recording Secretary Pat Merritt, Treasurer Penny Benninger, Executive Secretary Val Longson; Directors: Ed Flory, Don Mixon, Dave Flanders, Linda Hagenson, Bernard Pages, Don Schermerhorn; Immediate Past National President Roz Merritt; Chapter Presidents' Coordinator Rick Landers. Absent: Chairman of Directors Sam Andrews, Director Carl Benninger.

Old Business

Show packets have been sent to Chapter Show Chairmen and often the invoice has been overlooked or not included. In one case, the Chapter Show Chairman failed to request the show packet, which caused some problems. In other cases show packets and boxes of handbooks were shipped without invoices. Several options were discussed, including making the show packet available as a pdf file on the AHS web site on the Internet that can be printed using Adobe Acrobat, with which all computers come equipped, and automatically shipping a show packet to each show chairman as soon as the show dates are published. After discussion, on motion made and seconded, the publications manager is instructed to send show packets, with an invoice, to each Show Chairman as soon as the show dates are published in *The Seed Pod*. The motion carried unanimously.

The Seed Pod: The study last fall to determine if we could mail *The Seed Pod* first class to everyone revealed that this would be too expensive. The new mailing house is more efficient, and the printer's fees seem to have stabilized.

New Business

Executive Secretary Val Longson discussed the format of the Convention and November Membership Meetings, citing the number of meetings crowded into one day. There followed a general discussion of changes we can make to streamline the meeting schedule, such as eliminating the Chapter reports at the fall meeting, moving some of the Saturday meetings to Sunday morning, and not scheduling meetings of committees that have no business to conduct.

President Rita Hall presented to the Board the appointments of Walter Bisselle as Treasurer and Eddie Griffith as 2nd Vice President. The Board ratified these appointments unanimously.

Seedling Evaluation Committee Rule Change: On motion made and seconded, the Board unanimously ratified the rule change submitted to the President's Committee at its second meeting to change the timetable for submission of scion wood for Best of Show Seedlings (see Minutes of the Second President's Committee meeting June 17, 2005).

The president next called on Christopher Noble, the former Hibiscus rosa-sinensis international registrar visiting from Australia, to speak on cultivar registration. He gave a detailed analysis of past problems and steps that need to be taken to remedy current problems.

SECOND BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, 4:30 P.M., JUNE 17, 2005, (con't.)

President Hall next called for Committee reports from those committees needing Board approval of actions proposed or taken.

Show and Judging Rules Committee: Chairman Randy Cox reported to the Board that this committee recommends the following rules change: A judge who is also an exhibitor will not vote in final Gold Seal judging in his/her exhibition classification if he/she has a bloom/blooms in the competition. This includes the miniature category, also. The judge may vote in all other classifications. This is the same rule now in effect for judging seedlings. In the final four judging for Best of Show, a judge may not vote if he/she has a bloom in that competition. The Board ratified this rules change.

The president reminded the Board that a Special President's Committee meeting is scheduled for 4 p.m., Saturday, June 18, to consider bids submitted for grafting seedling evaluation plants. Other items needing Board approval may be brought to that meeting.

Slide Bank: Chairman Eddie Griffith reminded those present that the slides are stored in an air-conditioned unit, and that slide programs are available for those requesting them.

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

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FIRST GENERAL SESSION, 8:30 A.M., JUNE 18, 2005

President Rita Hall welcomed everyone to the First General Session and asked Rae Flanders to deliver the Invocation, and Wally Neef to lead the Salute to the Flag. Recording Secretary Pat Merritt called the roll: Present: President Rita Hall, 1st VP Randy Cox, 2nd VP Walter Bisselle, Secretary Pat Merritt, Treasurer Penny Benninger, Executive Secretary Val Longson; Directors Carl Benninger, Ed Flory, Don Mixon, Dave Flanders, Linda Hagenson, Bernard Pages, Don Schermerhorn; Immediate Past National President Roz Merritt; Chapter Presidents' Coordinator Rick Landers. Absent: Chairman of Directors Sam Andrews.

President Hall recognized new members and first-time convention attendees, and thanked all the committee members who arrived a day or two early for preliminary meetings.

Treasurer's Report: Penny Rose-Benninger provided a financial report covering the period June 1, 2004 – May 31, 2005, a copy of which is filed with these Minutes. Chapter dues remain our largest income source, followed closely by publications. Our membership is slightly lower this year because of the closure of the Indian River Chapter in Vero Beach, FL. Some of those members became Members-At-Large and others joined the Conrad Sunrise Chapter in West Palm Beach.

Budget: Don Schermerhorn, Chairman. The AHS Budget Committee met in Bradenton on May 28, 2005, where the 2005-2006 budget was drafted. A copy is included in the financial report provided by the treasurer. We anticipate a slightly larger shortfall than the budget for the year just ended. The need for additional sources of revenue is apparent.

By Laws: Walter Bisselle, Chairman. There were five by laws changes published in the April 2005 issue of *The Seed Pod*. These changes cannot be amended, only voted yes or no.

1. Dues year for Chapter membership changed to June 1 – May 31 to bring it in line with National's fiscal year. After discussion, this change was approved.

2. Directors: Election of four directors on a regional basis and four elected at-large in alternating election years. After discussion, this change was approved.

3. Eliminate the Advisory Board position. After discussion, this change was approved.

4. The terms of committee chairpersons and committee members whose status is not designated by these by laws shall expire at every National election. After every National election, the president will appoint chairpersons of committees whose chair is not designated by these by laws, and that chairperson will appoint a reasonable number of committee members with the approval of the President's Committee. Most of the committee chairs are designated by the by laws. After a lengthy discussion, this change was not approved.

5. Chapter dissolution. Most of the older Chapters have misplaced their charters. This wording makes the charter null and void when a chapter dissolves. After discussion, this change was approved.

In connection with this, AHS Archivist Barbara Hagan-Smith asked that all Chapters send her any historical items they no longer want to store and she will archive them.

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Membership & Publicity: Walter Bisselle, Chairman. The AHS web site and the Tropical Hibiscus Mail List (THML) should be used more to publicize chapter shows. Many more people surf these sites and lurk on the List than ever make themselves known. Show information and driving directions for every show should be posted using these resources.

The Seed Pod: Rita Hall, Editor. Approximately 300 copies of each issue are printed at no extra cost to the Society. These extras are being sent to each chapter for use as membership recruiting tools. Chapters wishing to do so may make a contribution to the AHS for these extra copies. We are always looking for advertisers. The inside covers in full color are available for \$300 each, and a full color one-half page ad is \$150. Billing for advertisements is current. There was a tear-out page in the April issue in connection with the convention. The feedback was that members did not want to use this tear-out page that defaces the magazine.

Chapter Presidents' Coordinator: Rick Landers. Most of the Chapter presidents and/or their representatives were present. Discussed forming a moderated Internet site similar to the Tropical Hibiscus Mail List limited to Chapter presidents as a tool for quick dissemination of information among this group. It would also afford Chapter presidents a way to share ideas and assist one another. Most Chapters that publish newsletters are sending them to other Chapter presidents, and a request was made that these also be mailed to the editors of other Chapter newsletters. Also, reprinting information contained in a newsletter was encouraged, with attribution. The Golby-Reasoner Chapter makes its newsletter available on the Internet at <http://www.4hibiscus.com>. Randy Cox demonstrated the Harry Goulding Chapter's WOW, a Styrofoam pyramid on which hibiscus blooms are mounted for display at their shows and other events. Discussed ways to attract and keep members. One Chapter assigns its newest member the task of greeting members at meetings and passing out nametags. Rick Landers reminded Chapter presidents to follow up with their treasurer and/or membership chairman to make sure that all new members were timely reported to National and were added to their newsletter distribution. Other ideas presented were contact the Master Gardeners, place Chapter and AHS brochures with Welcome Wagons, Chambers of Commerce and Welcome Centers to let new people moving into the area know you exist.

Nomenclature: Rick Osgood, Chairman (Pat Merritt representing). There are currently 7,206 records listed in the AHS Nomenclature Database. In the last two years, 20 hybridizers or growers submitted approximately 373 new registrations. Until the update process is complete (merging the old nomenclature file, a new database file, and a stack of paper forms must be merged into a single data source) the numbers will be approximate. Data entry and posting of the current registrations is expected to be complete by the end of June 2005. The existing online Nomenclature Database is being redesigned to accept data from electronic forms, accessible from any Web Browser. Some features of the new electronic entry forms are: Entry of duplicate names is not allowed; popup menus will standardize and speed-up much of the data entry; help fields and help pages to explain features and requirements; user name and password issued for each record will allow corrections and changes; Nomenclature Committee members will be able to remotely access records using a password. As this project uses donated Internet access and equipment, there are no expenses to report. Hybridizers will be treated as customers at a service business. If a particular service or feature is requested, I'll do my best to provide it, subject to direction from the AHS Board.

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Seedling Evaluation: Annelle Cox, Chairman. Eight of 10 members were present. We reviewed the evaluations for 2004 (15 plants), 2003 (17 plants) and 2002 (21 plants). Also reviewed were the surveys from this committee and hybridizers. Several changes were suggested. The following recommendations were presented to the President's Committee:

1. Deadline for scion wood – December 1 of the year of win.
2. Deadline for a 4" plant – June following year of win.
3. Drop any cultivar not in Committee members' possession by June following year of win.

This meeting was a very non-productive meeting due to the lack of decisions from our governing body at the fall meeting and since. It left too many "what ifs" for this Chair to properly plan. This Committee needs to be able to formulate its own workable rules and be represented on the Board by the Chairperson. The Chair needs the authority to do what the general membership expects of this Committee. I now know why this Committee has a history of many chairpersons. The lack of authority to remove members that are not doing a fair and honest evaluation, lack of support from the President's Committee, and even an officer allowing them self to be blackmailed by geographic threats. Come on folks, let us demand AHS be the best it can be.

Show and Judging Rules: Randy Cox, Chairman. All members were present. Paul Felsberg was appointed to the Committee to replace Ann Buchanan, who resigned. Permanent exhibitor numbers may be requested at any time during the year for the following show season by contacting Chairman Cox. Discussed the need for better training for show clerks, probably the most important person at the judging table. Conduct training sessions at meetings before shows instead of waiting until judging starts at a show. The Committee expanded the rule covering seedling judging to include all classifications. If a judge at a show is also exhibiting at that show, he/she may not judge in a classification where they have a bloom or blooms in contention during final Gold Seal judging. For example, if a judge exhibits in the Collector Class and he/she has a bloom or blooms that have won Gold Seals and are, therefore, in contention for a head table honor, the judge may not vote in that classification. This includes the Miniature Class, also. This rule has been in place for seedlings, and is now expanded to cover all classifications. The Board ratified this rules change at its meeting yesterday.

There followed a spirited discussion about this rules change by the membership present at this First General Session. A vote was called for and a motion presented from the floor. Motion: Not to accept the rules change passed by the Show and Judging Rules Committee. The motion passed and the rule was defeated. The rule in effect for judging seedlings remains unchanged.

Seed Bank: Bob Carran, Chairman. In 2004 I sent out a total of 1800 seeds. So far in 2005 I have sent out 1,293 seeds to such places as India, Guam Viet Nam, Malaysia, Philippines, England, France, Serbia, Belgium, Holland, Croatia, Sweden, Italy, Greece, Brazil, Uruguay, Canada, Mexico, Africa and South Africa. I have received seeds from a few people, but mostly these are seeds produced by my own crosses. Seed requests are responded to within 48 hours, and I include information on planting and raising seedlings, and helpful and colorful picture web sites. I ask the recipients to email me when the seeds arrive and if they have any questions or problems. Please keep the Seed Bank in mind when you are harvesting your pods, and send any extras to me to share with the world.

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Slide Bank: Eddie Griffith, Chairman. All slides are in one location, a climate-controlled, air-conditioned environment. The best way to contact me is by the email address shown in *The Seed Pod*.

New Business

Treasurer Penny Rose-Benninger has resigned and Walter Bisselle has been appointed AHS Treasurer. Eddie Griffith has been appointed AHS 2nd VP to replace Walter Bisselle.

Seedling Coordinator: This position has been eliminated. The Board will take annual bids from commercial growers who wish to receive and graft seedling wood to provide evaluation plants to the Seedling Evaluation Committee members. Shipping of the plants to Committee members will continue to be paid by the AHS. Growers wishing to submit a per-plant bid for this service to the AHS Board should do so by 4 p.m. today, when the Board will consider any bids received.

Scissoring Blooms: First VP Randy Cox next addressed a Show and Judging Rules Committee question about whether or not to allow the scissoring of blooms at shows. After discussion, on motion made and seconded, the membership present voted to allow scissoring.

Spreading Pests: Mr. Cox next discussed the continuing threat of the gall midge, pink hibiscus mealy bug, burrowing nematode and resistant whitefly being spread by the exchange and shipping of plants and plant materials. We, as a Society, do not need to promote the spread of pests. To the best of our ability, this organization should encourage every member to comply with the applicable state laws as they pertain to plants and plant materials. To protect its citrus and other food crops, the State of Florida has in place some stringent laws covering this subject. We as a society must be as conscious as we can of these laws and comply with them. The AHS asked Dr. Pat Hegwood of Louisiana State University to prepare a report on this (see Minutes of the Second President's Committee meeting held June 17, 2005, for a full discussion). In Florida, if you are going to share your hibiscus plants or plant material with anyone other than your next-door neighbor (adjacent property owner), you need to spend the \$25 and get licensed and inspected. A copy of Dr. Hegwood's report will be sent to each Chapter President.

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

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**SPECIAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS/PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE MEETING
4 P.M., JUNE 18, 2005**

President Rita Hall called a Special Joint Board of Directors and President's Committee meeting to order with all present except Chairman of Directors Sam Andrews. The only agenda item was consideration of bids for receiving seedling wood, grafting, growing to a 4" size and shipping some 200 evaluation plants per year to Seedling Evaluation Committee members, and the funding thereof. Two bids were received, one from Tried and True Hibiscus and one from Pine Island Tropicals. Tried and True bid \$3.50 each for 4" plants and Pine Island Tropicals bid \$4.00 each for 4-1/2" plants.

After discussion, on motion made and seconded, the Board voted to accept the bid from Tried and True Hibiscus, effective immediately, to receive wood, graft, grow and distribute Best of Show Seedling winners to members of the Seedling Evaluation Committee at a cost of \$3.50 per plant, plus shipping, which will be paid by the AHS. Bids for this service are to be submitted each year.

There next followed a discussion about the funding for this program. SEC members receive approximately 20 evaluation plants per year of the newest show winners. Hybridizers who are commercial growers receive the benefit of advertising a Best of Show winner when selling their plants. It was decided that these two groups should bear some of the costs.

After discussion, and on motion made and seconded, effective with the current show season, the hybridizers will be assessed \$25 for each Best of Show Seedling winner that they wish to be entered into the Hibiscus of the Year competition, and each Seedling Evaluation Committee member will pay \$50 per year to receive evaluation plants. This contract and fee schedule will be valid for one year and will be subject to annual review. The motion carried.

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

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SECOND GENERAL SESSION, 9 A.M., JUNE 19, 2005

President Rita Hall welcomed everyone to the Second General Session and asked Jane Flory to deliver the Invocation, and Jack McClain to lead the Salute to the Flag. Recording Secretary Pat Merritt called the roll: Present: President Rita Hall, 1st VP Randy Cox, 2nd VP Walter Bisselle, Secretary Pat Merritt, Treasurer Penny Benninger, Executive Secretary Val Longson; Directors Carl Benninger, Ed Flory, Don Mixon, Dave Flanders, Linda Hagenson, Bernard Pages, Don Schermerhorn; Immediate Past National President Roz Merritt; Chapter Presidents' Coordinator Rick Landers. Absent: Chairman of Directors Sam Andrews.

Auditor's Report: Treasurer Penny Benninger reported that the accounting firm of R. Thomas Brown had conducted the annual audit of the AHS and found everything to be in order within generally accepted accounting principals. This report is included in the Financial Statement.

President's Remarks:

President Hall announced that the vote to determine the location of the 2006 Convention was held last night during the Awards Banquet. The winning location was the Holiday Inn Riverfront in Bradenton, Florida, June 15 – 18, 2006. She reminded the membership that the location of the fall membership meeting November 12-13, 2005, is the Embassy Suites Hotel in Boca Raton, Florida. Details will be in the October/November/December issue of *The Seed Pod*. She also thanked the Central Florida Chapter for their great hospitality during this convention.

The president next called for Chapter reports.

Michael Bernard Acadiana, Rick Landers, President

Our membership continues to grow. A donated laptop computer will enable us to create and view Power Point presentations, and we hope to build a library of hibiscus topics to educate our members and share with other chapters. Lake Charles and Alexandria, two nearby cities, have indicated an interest in starting an AHS chapter and we will assist in this endeavor. We will give a presentation for a Garden Club Association holding its convention in Baton Rouge next month, and will have blooms and membership information available. Our annual show and sale is next Sunday in Lafayette, LA. You are all invited!

British Virgin Islands, Linda Hagenson, President

At our potluck supper in the park in late October we planned our schedule for the next year. We planted in our hibiscus garden and guest speakers taught us grafting and potting tips. President Linda Hagenson took off on a four-month sailing trip so Barbara Ray and Laverne Thomas took over the chapter leadership. Weather and air craft problems kept our annual show very small in attendance and number of blooms exhibited, but it was a financial success.

SECOND GENERAL SESSION, 9 A.M., JUNE 19, 2005 (con't.)

Central Florida, Fred Fallman, President (Rick Landers representing)

We met monthly except for August when Victor Zeno hosted the chapter for an outstanding dinner. Our two plant sales at Leu Gardens in June 2004 and March 2005 were successful. Officers for the coming year are Victor Zeno, VP; Priscilla Burns, Secretary; Patti Schwindt, Treasurer; and the same old President Fred Fallman. We lost one of our longtime members James Wiley who died in early May. We plan to name an amateur award at our show in his honor. Our annual show is next Saturday and you are all invited.

Conrad Sunrise, Jo Conrad/Bernard Pages, Co-President (Eddie Griffith representing)

Two hurricanes in less than a month provided a challenge to our chapter members, but we participated in 12 events throughout the year with plant sales and information booths. One of these was the world renowned Palm Beach Tropical Flower and Garden Show where one of our members walked away with two best of show awards. One of these awards was the best cut flower, beating out roses, orchids, bromeliads, and gingers, among others. We average about 40 attendees at our monthly meetings, and our speaker's bureau has given demonstrations on propagation and other hibiscus-related matters to garden clubs in Palm Beach County. We are proud that the AHS' roots were established in Palm Beach County, Florida, and we feel obligated to keep a strong, healthy organization that is accessible to all members of our community.

Dr. Jack Hoffman/South Dade, Gloria White, President

We have been gaining new members and retaining our newest members, with membership standing at around 20 members. Our annual show was cancelled because of a hurricane, but our plant sale made a profit. Some of our speakers were from other plant societies such as the Orchid and Begonia Societies. Two of our judges completed the requirements to become Senior Judges, and with the recent re-marriage of my mother Maria Balmaseda to my father Julio Balmaseda, we have gained a new clerk. Our show is the last one of this year and we hope you all can attend, exhibit and enjoy the lovely setting of Fairchild Tropical Garden.

Golby-Reasoner, Dave Flanders, President

A hurricane last fall necessitated the cancellation of our show and forced us to choose a new show date. High rental costs of the Bradenton Auditorium necessitated a change in location to the Family Life Center, which the First Baptist Church allows us to use for custodial charges only. The new show date of the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend increased our bloom count to 822 blooms, a three-fold increase from the last show. Membership continues to be a major challenge, as our membership is aging and physically declining. Our newsletter *Petal Power* continues to provide an excellent resource and news source for our members. Receipt of newsletters from other chapters is greatly appreciated.

Gulf Coast, Sioux Hurley, President (Jim Courtright representing)

We began the year with strong finances and 71 members. Our chapter has been successful in establishing a Friends of Woodmere Park group, and they in turn have promised us a permanent home for our annual shows, free of charge. We have agreed to participate in an upcoming community support project to restore an historic house. We shall provide hibiscus

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plants, mulching material and installation labor for the landscaping. We are also providing hibiscus plantings at Woodmere Park and at an upcoming Habitat for Humanity project. We had over 900 blooms at our show, and giving a free plant to those who joined the chapter at the show proved successful.

Harry Goulding, Randy Cox, President

Three words that best describe our chapter are membership, membership and membership. With membership in mind we participated in two local home shows, two sales at Punta Gorda's History Park, the Hibiscus Festival, and programs for other chapters and for the Cooperative Extension Service. These activities generated community interest that made this year and this year's show such a huge success. More than 30 members attend each meeting and the meetings are alive with questions and answers on hibiscus care and culture. We are working to establish a hibiscus garden at Punta Gorda History Park, with presently over 100 varieties planted. We are collecting HOTY winners and as many of Harry Goulding's cultivars as we can for a Goulding garden in the park. We would appreciate a donation of any of these plants. Remember, the most important committee in any Chapter is Membership.

James Hendry, Karla Holmes, President

Our officers were all reelected, but we added new Directors Joyce Comingore and Eldora Nagel to the Board. We lost two treasured members, Frank Nagel and Woody Watson. Our 54th Annual Show had 716 blooms exhibited, and we sold about 500 plants. We had to change our meeting date, and change the location to the Garden Council's new place to which we will donate some hibiscus plants for the landscaping. We made donations to the soup kitchen, and helped raise funds for the Garden Council Building. Our Christmas party and picnic were well attended and fun. Make plans to attend our 55th Annual Show next June!

Lone Star, Greg Graves, President

Our very active year started with two shows, one in May in Fort Bend County, and our regular show in Bellaire in June. Our third show will be July 24, also in Bellaire. With good publicity, including a picture of Black Dragon in the gardening section of the newspaper on the Saturday before, our June 12th show was the best in several years. We welcomed Chris and Patricia Noble from Australia, and Dick Johnson from Tahiti. Our membership is at 173 households, including 10 new memberships added at this show. Hibiscus presentations were made to local garden clubs, civic associations, home and garden shows and Master Gardener meetings.

New Orleans, Fr. Bob Gerlich, President (report arrived too late to read)

Our show on June 5th was a huge success, with the majority of plants sold out within the first 90 minutes. We will continue to work with our plant supplier to increase the number and variety of cultivars available for our shows. Eight new members joined at the show, and membership checks continue to come in. Our new web site appears to have had a positive impact on recruiting new members. Our membership is at 70, including five associate members from other chapters. We are working with the New Orleans Botanical Garden to develop a small

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hibiscus area starting with about a dozen plants. Our success in promoting hibiscus has been a two-edged sword, causing the demand for plants to far exceed the supply. Please visit our chapter's new web site at <http://loyno.edu/~gerlich/NOHS/index.html>

Red Stick, Rod Hendrick, President

Our first year was very successful with the chapter gaining 26 members from three countries and 13 associate members. We participated in several plant events, and our first official show had almost 400 blooms exhibited and an excellent plant sale. We continue to support the International Hibiscus Garden at the Burden Center at LSU, and we have room for more hibiscus and will gladly accept donations. We were pleased to have Chris and Patricia Noble from Australia, as well as our National President Rita Hall and Maralyn Tumelty from Florida at our June meeting.

Space City, Grace Macek, President (Marti Graves representing)

Our Chapter is undergoing some leadership changes. Roger Friend will be the new president, and he is looking for someone to take his current job as newsletter editor. We have completed two successful shows and our third show will be July 17th. Due to the good response to our exhibition in Webster last year, we made this year's show at that location a sanctioned show. Plant sales were good, but more publicity is needed.

Sunset, Don Mixon, President

We have had a full year to date with two shows under our belt and one coming up. Our membership is holding steady, we have money in the bank and the best members of any chapter.

Unfinished Business

President Hall reported to the membership the actions taken by the Board at its Special Meeting on Saturday afternoon (see Minutes of the Special Board Meeting, June 18, 2005). The fees approved at that meeting are intended to defray the cost of operating the Seedling Evaluation Committee so that it will not be a drain on the budget. These fees will be accounted for separately from the general funds. After discussion, on motion made and seconded, the recommendations of the President's Committee and Board of Directors were approved.

A motion from the floor to eliminate the monetary award for the top three Hibiscus of the Year winners was made and seconded. After discussion, on motion made and seconded, this motion was tabled until the November membership meeting when it can be more fully explored and discussed.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia B. Merritt, Secretary

AWARDS BANQUET

SATURDAY, JUNE 18, 2005

HARRY GOULDING GRAFTING AWARD

Presented by Marti & Greg Graves

KATHY GRANDOFF AND DON MIXON

NORMAN BRUBAKER TROPHY FOR 2004 JUDGES' FAVORITE BLOOM

Presented by Zelma Neef

RUTH WATSON

Hybridized by Dale Dubin

Accepted by Donna Schneider

**NORMAN REASONER TROPHY FOR THE CHAPTER WITH THE MOST AMATEUR
EXHIBITORS FOR THE 2004 SHOW SEASON**

Presented by Dave Flanders

GULF COAST CHAPTER

Accepted by Karen Courtright

**A. B. MORRISON MEMORIAL AWARD FOR THE MOST BEST OF SHOW
SEEDLINGS WON IN THE 2004 SHOW SEASON**

Presented by Barbara Schermerhorn

Again this year, a tie

BOBBY & BOOTSIE DUPONT and NOLA & CARLOS REYNOLDS

(accepting for the Reynolds', Jo Conrad)

SWEEPSTAKES AWARDS

Amateur

Presented by Eddie Griffith

Florida: John & Janet Pelk

Texas/Louisiana: Rick & Loretta Osgood

Islands: Barbara & Dave Walling

Collector

Presented by Ed & Jane Flory

Florida: Irene Collins

Texas/Louisiana: Janice McNatt

Islands: Roger Downing

Open Collector

Presented by Roz & Pat Merritt

Florida: Nola & Carlos Reynolds

Texas/Louisiana: Dr. & Mrs. David Tate

Islands: Audrey McCarthy

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SWEEPSTAKES (continued)

Commercial

Presented by Curt Sinclair

Florida: Don Mixon & Kathy Grandoff

Texas/Louisiana: Ann & Dave Mitchell

Islands: Jim & Jean Burns

HIBISCUS OF THE YEAR

Gwen Adams Memorial Award

Presented by Audrey McCarthy

First Place: BLACK DRAGON

Hybridized by Bobby and Bootsie Dupont

Second Place: ETOUFFEE'

Hybridized by Bobby and Bootsie Dupont

Third Place: BARRY SCHLUETER

Hybridized by Barry and Susan Schlueter

Fourth Place: LEMON TREE

Hybridized by Barry and Susan Schlueter

PRESIDENTIAL CITATION FOR MERITORIOUS SERVICE TO THE AHS

Presented by Rita Hall

KATIE McCLAIN