

## AMERICAN HIBISCUS SOCIETY

Lafayette Hilton  
Lafayette LA

Annual Convention  
June 19 – 22, 2014

### FIRST PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE MEETING, 4 P.M., JUNE 19, 2014

President Damon Veach called the meeting to order and Recording Secretary Pat Merritt called the roll. Present: President Damon Veach, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP Joanna Schimek, Secretary Pat Merritt, Chairman of Directors Carolyn Cormier-Stoute, Executive Secretary Ann Peltier. Absent: 1<sup>st</sup> VP Rita Hall, Treasurer Walter Bisselle.

There was no business that needed to be voted on but President Veach brought the Committee up to date on items that had occurred since our fall meeting:

Nomenclature web site has been renewed

Carolyn Stoute resigned from the Seedling Evaluation Committee and Damon Veach volunteered to take her place.

Although we plan to continue the AHS Nomenclature web site, the International Hibiscus Society is the official cultivar registration authority and all seedlings need to be registered with them. Damon is the AHS liaison with this group and will register your seedlings for you. He will need a completed copy of the registration form that can be printed from our database web site [www.hibiscusdb.org](http://www.hibiscusdb.org) and a digital picture of the bloom. It is important that your seedlings be registered both places. You can do both of these registrations or Damon will do this for you.

Two suggestions sent to the Committee were referred to the proper committees for their consideration at their respective meetings on Friday.

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

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**FIRST BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, 4:20 P.M., JUNE 19, 2014**

Chairman of the Board Carolyn Cormier-Stoute called the meeting to order and Recording Secretary Pat Merritt called the roll. Present: President Damon Veach, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP Joanna Schimek, Secretary Pat Merritt, Executive Secretary Ann Peltier; Directors: Carolyn Stoute, Mary Bridges, CJ Melebeck, Fred Roush. Absent: 1<sup>st</sup> VP Rita Hall, Treasurer Walter Bisselle; Directors Mario Francis, Julliette Frasier-Salter, Lillian Farara, Wally Neef; Immediate Past President Don Mixon, Chapter Presidents' Coordinator Jeanette Elliff.

Chairman Stoute polled the Board members and none had any business to be brought before this committee at this time.

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

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### COMMITTEES AS A WHOLE, 8:30 A.M., JUNE 20, 2014

President Damon Veach welcomed everyone to the Convention and called for Committee Meetings to begin.

#### **Budget Committee: Walter Bisselle**

The chairman furnished copies of the Annual Report for the Fiscal Year June 1, 2013 through May 31, 2014, which included the proposed budget for the fiscal year June 1, 2014 through May 31, 2015. A copy of this report will be made a part of these Minutes.

After discussion with the President's Committee it was determined that the AHS was over-insured and the excess liability policy was dropped, resulting in a savings of approximately \$1,000 per year. The existing liability policy is more than adequate to meet the Society's and its Chapters' insurance needs.

Two of the exhibitor cards had to be reprinted at a cost of \$1,000, which offset our publications profit. The treasurer requested that each Chapter, prior to ordering its show packet(s) for next show season, inventory its supply of exhibitor cards and only order the number needed. These cards are expensive to print, please do not waste them.

The measures we have taken thus far are chipping away at our deficit and we must continue to find ways to cut our expenses and raise our income.

#### **Bylaws Committee: Joanna Schimek**

The chairman read a request sent to Rita Hall from the St. Croix Chapter to consider a bylaws change that would only allow voting for Directors from one's own area. After discussion, the Committee did not see any merit to the request and declined to send it out of committee.

The bylaws have been updated through this convention and are posted on the AHS web site at [www.americanhibiscus.org](http://www.americanhibiscus.org) A copy may be printed from this site.

#### **Publications Committee: Paul Felsberg**

We have approximately 4,900 Tropical Hibiscus Handbooks in inventory. Committee member Roland Gaudet sent an email to Mr. Felsberg suggesting that if we could reduce our inventory quickly by about 500 books, we could eliminate one of our two storage units thereby saving us some money. He suggests lowering the wholesale price to \$5 or \$6 per book when ordered in lots of 12 or 24. The wholesale cost of these books to the AHS was \$3.45 each. This could be a one-time sale or a permanent reduction. Chapters pay \$8 per book and can sell them for any price they choose. A motion was made and seconded that we permanently reduce the wholesale price of these books to Chapters and bookstores to \$6 per book, plus shipping, when purchased in the numbers shown above. After discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

The "51 Years of Hibiscus History, 1956 through 2006" is now available on a 32-gb flash (thumb) drive. These are available from Walter Bisselle, AHS Treasurer, for \$125 domestic, \$145 foreign, which includes shipping

## **Meetings As A Whole, Page 2**

We still have about 25 Hibiscus Catalogue CD's that will be kept to give to new Members At Large. Pat Merritt volunteered to investigate the possibility of a new catalogue with all new images published on a flash drive. .

## **The Seed Pod: Pat Merritt for Rita Hall**

This is the first Convention Rita has missed since 1996. The January issue was very late getting out, but the April issue was almost on time. Our printing job is small and it keeps getting pushed back for bigger, higher profit jobs. If Chapter presidents are not receiving a separate envelope containing several issues for membership use, please contact Rita. Articles on hibiscus culture are always needed.

## **Publicity and Membership: Joanna Schimek**

Chapters need to consider using their show ads in The Seed Pod to invite exhibitors to their shows. Fred Roush reminded everyone that the Florida State Fair Show is an AHS show, not just a Sunset Chapter show. It draws an audience from many surrounding states. The Epcot show sponsored by the Central Florida Chapter was a major publicity event for the AHS, as people from all over the world were exposed to hibiscus, some for the first time. Thanks to the Roushes and the Mathews' family for orchestrating these two events.

## **National Nominating Committee Chairman: Jeanette Elliff**

In accordance with the Policy and Procedures Manual, Page 730-1, the chairman announced the names of those who would count the election ballots at 8 a.m. Saturday: Sandra Theall, Todd Alvis, John Webster, John Newton, Cindy Wilson and Jeanette Elliff.

## **Members-At-Large: Sam Andrews**

Although Mr. Andrews wrote a column in The Seed Pod for MALs for several years, he is now a member of the New Orleans Chapter. There are currently 186 MAL memberships. At one time MALs constituted about 40% of our total membership from all over the world. Mr. Andrews recounted several anecdotes about the people he "met" while writing his MAL column "Hibiscus...without a net." These columns can be accessed in back issues of The Seed Pod.

## **Nomenclature: CJ Melebeck**

An app is being created to allow the [www.hibiscusdb.org](http://www.hibiscusdb.org) to be accessed from iPhones and Androids. The registration form is now simpler to use. Please include a digital photo of your bloom with the registration form. If anyone has suggestions for improving the site, please let Mr. Melebeck know.

## **Chapter Presidents' Coordinator: Jeanette Elliff**

Every Chapter was represented by its president or designee except those from the Virgin Islands. The Chapter reports will be presented at the First General Session on Saturday.

## **Show and Judging Rules: Marti Graves for Rita Hall**

A quick poll of those at the meeting indicated that no problems had surfaced using the new miniature rule that anything that blooms 5" or less on show day can be shown as a miniature.

A proposal was submitted for the committee's consideration that Number 4 on Page 5 be rewritten to clarify that the concurring opinions of two of the three judges were needed to award a ribbon to a bloom.

### **Meetings As A Whole, Page 3**

After discussion, on motion made, seconded and unanimously carried, Number 4 on Page 5 was changed to read:

4. The Judge Captain is the last one to handle the blooms. After discussion of each bloom, he or she circles on the entry tag the type of ribbon any two of the three judges agree should be awarded.

After discussion and on motion made, seconded and unanimously carried, a Number 17 was added to Page 8:

17. Judges do not judge their own blooms at any time. Exception: the Miniature category during **initial** Gold Seal judging.

With the above changes, the 2013 revision of the AHS Show Judges Manual, as amended, was unanimously approved.

A Judges' Seminar was conducted immediately after this meeting was adjourned.

### **Seedling Evaluation Committee: Cindy Adkins**

Nine of the ten members were present.

Curt Sinclair read a lengthy proposal that is made part of these Minutes. Summary: the current SEC system of seedling evaluation is broken. Plants or wood are not in the hands of the evaluators on a timely basis and this leads to only two or three committee members evaluating some of the plants. The process of grafting or rooting plants for each member is time-consuming and leads the two suppliers, Don Florus and Curt Sinclair, to ship plants that are too small and soon die. Then they have to be replaced, which takes more time. Even if each evaluator has a plant of each Class winner, at least a year has passed, losing valuable evaluation time. This is not a fair trial.

The following motion was made and seconded: Before a hybridizer can enter a seedling at an AHS sanctioned show, he must agree to supply within 30 days a plant to each SEC member, or enough wood to the two growers to graft or root 10 to 12 plants. If he/she cannot guarantee this the seedling will not be accepted for competition. After discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made and seconded that the price paid to the two growers for producing SEC plants be increased to \$7 per plant, from \$6, to be effective with the 2014 seedling winners. After discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made and seconded that unless a hybridizer can ship a plant of his/her Best of Show Seedling winner to each SEC evaluator within 30 days of the win, he/she will pay to the AHS \$50 to help defray the cost of providing the plants from wood sent to the two growers. After discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion of the Class of 2011 from which the SOTY for next year will come: Keep all in evaluation until the fall meeting.

Discussion of the Class of 2012: Drop Treasure Hunt and Blackberry Jam because only three evaluators have the plants and the growers do not have any to ship.

Discussion of the Class of 2013: Drop 13-24-3, H8-2013, Mayan Princess and Show Time, There are no plants or wood available.

#### **Meetings As A Whole, Page 4**

The committee discussed the makeup of the evaluators, noting that the Islands had two representatives but they constitute only 2% of our membership. After discussion, on motion made, seconded and unanimously carried, Bradley Christian, St. Croix USVI Chapter was replaced on the committee by Don Florus from Texas. With this change the ratio is now: Florida 3; Texas 3; Louisiana 2; Alabama 1; USVI 1

All meetings were adjourned upon completion of their business.

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**SECOND PRESIDENT’S COMMITTEE MEETING, 4 P.M., JUNE 20, 2014**

President Damon Veach called the meeting to order and Recording Secretary Pat Merritt called the roll. Present: President Damon Veach, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP Joanna Schimek, Secretary Pat Merritt, Chairman of Directors Carolyn Cormier-Stoute, Treasurer Walter Bisselle, Executive Secretary Ann Peltier. Absent: 1<sup>st</sup> VP Rita Hall.

The motions passed by the Seedling Evaluation Committee at its meeting earlier in the day were read and unanimously approved by the President’s Committee to be sent to the full Board. See committee meeting Minutes for details.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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### **SECOND BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, 4:20 P.M., JUNE 20, 2014**

Chairman of the Board Carolyn Cormier-Stoute called the meeting to order and Recording Secretary Pat Merritt called the roll. Present: President Damon Veach, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP Joanna Schimek, Secretary Pat Merritt, Treasurer Walter Bisselle, Executive Secretary Ann Peltier; Directors: Carolyn Stoute, Mary Bridges, CJ Melebeck, Lillian Farara, Fred Roush; Chapter Presidents' Coordinator Jeanette Elliff. Absent: 1<sup>st</sup> VP Rita Hall; Directors Mario Francis, Julliette Frasier-Salter, Wally Neef; Immediate Past President Don Mixon.

The motions passed by the various committees at their meetings earlier in the day were presented to the Board for ratification. After discussion, on motions made, seconded and unanimously approved, all motions were ratified. See committee meeting Minutes for details.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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### FIRST GENERAL SESSION, 8:30 A.M., JUNE 21, 2014

President Damon Veach welcomed everyone to the First General Session and asked Carolyn Stoute to deliver the Invocation.

**Please see the Minutes of the various committees for details of the actions taken. Only new discussions will appear in this section of the Minutes.**

#### **Financial: Walter Bisselle**

With the cost-cutting measures we have taken over the past year, we hope to reduce our deficit to \$2,000 or less next year. The storage facility in Zephyr Hills is full of archived material, and we are facing the rental of an additional unit. Much of the material stored there is now digitally available or can be digitized to save space. President Veach will contact AHS Archivist Barbara Hagan-Smith for a list of what is in storage, with the goal of saving our important history digitally and getting rid of the duplicated and unnecessary items.

#### **Bylaws: Joanna Schimek**

The Bylaws have been revised through the 2011 Convention (no changes since that time) and are available for printing on the AHS web site [www.americanhibiscus.org](http://www.americanhibiscus.org)

The convention attendees thanked Cindy Wilson for the many hibiscus plants she donated for the raffle and auction.

Turn in your show dates to the new Second Vice President Damon Veach as soon as you know them so that they can be published in The Seed Pod on a timely basis.

#### **Seed Bank: Paul Felsberg for Don Bernard**

I am thankful to the late Bob Carran for the many and congenial growers both requesting and supplying seeds. During my short tenure (since December 2013) I have mailed out over 1300 seeds to many countries including England, South Africa, Spain, Barbados, Uruguay, Chile, Mexico, Argentina, Columbia, Panama, Romania, Australia and even in the USA. To facilitate seedling success, I include a short introduction sheet, in English or Spanish, with the mailings explaining seed prep, planting and seedling maintenance as well as also including a list of Internet hibiscus links for further reference. Thanks to the many hybridizers for supplying our Seed Bank with their super seed crosses: Jo Conrad, M. DeMello, Sonny Stollings, Frank Heffernan, Todd Alvis, Gary Mathews, Fred Roush, and the forwarded seeds of both Bob Carran and Joe Ludick.

#### **2014 Fall Membership Meeting and the 2015 Convention: Ann Peltier**

On a vote taken by the membership in attendance, the 2014 Fall Membership Meeting will be held at the Tampa Garden Inn in Brandon FL November 7 - 9, 2014.

The 2015 Convention will be held at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel in Punta Gorda FL, June 25-28, 2015. The room rate is \$100 per night.

## **FIRST GENERAL SESSION: Page 2**

The president next called for Chapter reports:

### **British Virgin Islands: Esther Georges, President No Report**

### **Central Florida: Gary Mathews, President**

The place where our monthly meetings are held raised the rent to \$500 for a two-hour meeting, so we moved to South Seminole Farm where we meet for free. Even though our regular show on March 29 saw rain in the morning and a tornado warning in the afternoon, it was successful with 225 plants sold and 334 blooms entered. The following week on April 5<sup>th</sup> the First Annual Hibiscus Show at EPCOT was a spectacular event with 443 blooms entered plus 30 seedlings. The EPCOT people were even acting as bloom runners. Thanks to all of the exhibitors and others who came and helped make this show so successful.

### **Conrad Sunrise: Paul Felsberg for Jo Conrad**

Like all other chapters we wish we had more money in our treasury, more volunteers, more members and a few more people who would run for office. We count our blessings, we're still solvent and we try to keep hibiscus education at the forefront. We have 40 members with about 30 or so at our meetings. We have two actions a year to help defray expenses from our April and November shows. The plant sales help, but the auctions really bring in the money. Our programs are on planting rootstock, grafting, hybridization, seed planting, pest control, fertilization and show and judging. We have some "laid back" meetings with our great pot luck dinner, garden strolls in our Mounts Botanical Garden, Christmas party and sometimes just questions and answers.

### **Gulf Coast: Walter Bisselle, President**

The Gulf Coast Chapter has resurged from a low of about 10 overworked members to 24 today. The seven associate members from the Goulding Chapter also contribute a great deal to our activities. Our programs included speaker Dr. Fred Santana, the retired county entomologist, grafting, hybridizing, the value of garden varieties and social events. We have decided to gamble with our 2015 show and move it to the more expensive venue of the newly renovated Venice Community Center, which is in the center of things.

### **Harry Goulding: David Wallin, President**

We presently have 30 members. We participated in three Home and Garden Shows where we are able to sell plants and recruit new members. Our annual Mother's Day show was a success. We sold 300 plants donated by members. Our annual Christmas Party was with the Gulf Coast Chapter, and we have several other social events during the year. We are trying to make this a social group to have fun learning about hibiscus.

### **James E. Hendry: Wanda Schmoyer, President**

We have 60 memberships and 95 members. At our June show we sold 447 plants and gained four new memberships. Publicity is still working for us and we opened our doors to a huge crowd of over 600 visitors. We lost our "free" meeting place and found a wonderful one at the Salvation Army Building for only \$50 per meeting. That's where we held our 63<sup>rd</sup> Annual Show, also. Our fine newsletter continues to go out to all chapter presidents and we hope they are passing it on to their members. A new feature,

### **FIRST GENERAL SESSION: Page 3**

Member of the Year, went to Vivian Gibson who made the beautiful hibiscus quilt for the chapter to raffle. The quilt was won by Carlos Reynolds, and we made a wonderful profit on this event.

#### **Lone Star: Marti Graves for Jeanette Elliff**

We have been meeting in the Hermann Park Garden Center since 1976, and this year the City of Houston Parks Department bulldozed it to build a bigger and better facility. We moved our meetings to another facility and hope to be back at Hermann in the new building next spring. Our memberships stand at 64, but this will drop off next month after all the dues are counted. We gave several garden clubs hibiscus programs, and continue to have educational programs for our members and guests.

#### **Michael Bernard Acadiana: Ann Peltier, President**

Our chapter is on the grow as we picked up 13 new full members and four associate members during our recent membership drive. We strive to make growing hibiscus fun as we learn and share. We participated in Plantest with an information booth, and introduced our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual calendar compiled from our monthly member photo contests. This spring has been a busy one with a two-day Festival des Fleurs in April, our annual show in May, followed by hosting the National Convention. We will kick off our New Member Barbecue in July at the home of Buddy Short.

#### **New Orleans: Jim Gedicke for Bob Gerlich**

In May we celebrated our 17<sup>th</sup> annual hibiscus show and sale with high membership participation resulting in a successful show. The need for training more judges and continuing the training of the existing ones is a high priority. Chapter events include an ice cream social and mini show, two grafting parties, a Christmas party, and continuing education at our meetings. Our grafting party at Houmas House Plantation is a tri-chapter event the first Sunday in October. We are hoping to attract some of the Houston chapters' members to join us. Our biggest challenge is to bring in sufficient numbers of new, healthy, sought-after hibiscus plants to sell to the public. Another challenge is developing chapter leadership. NOLA Chapter has had the same president for 19 years, but a transition is necessary to guarantee the future stability of the chapter. No chapter should depend on any one person for too long.

#### **Red Stick: Damon Veach, President (Janelle Alvis reporting)**

Our chapter has continued to grow and we had two very profitable shows this season. We had a huge booth at the LSU Spring Garden Show in March. The three Louisiana chapters had their annual gathering at Dupont Nursery. We awarded our second scholarship to a deserving horticulture student, Anna Ribbeck, an LSU student. We will continue to work with all the state colleges and universities to assist junior, senior or graduate student with scholarships. This is an important program and one that brings good publicity to the Society.

#### **Space City: Joyce Melebeck, President**

Our membership totals 45 with 75 members and 7 Associate Memberships with 14 members. Our monthly meeting attendance averages 40 members. Programs are given to educate our members on the care and maintenance of hibiscus. Associate member Jim Gedicke gave a judges' seminar that was well received. We sponsored three very successful hibiscus shows and plant sales, two in Pasadena where we meet, and one in Texas City, a few miles south. Our growers provided a wide variety of plants for sale, which helped our sales, and using the Square Card for credit card sales was also very profitable.

**FIRST GENERAL SESSION: Page 4**

Unfortunately, we are losing one of our growers due to poor health, but we have other growers who will fill the void. We expect our membership to continue growing.

**St. Croix: Joel Gumbs, President No Report**

**St. Thomas: Sandra Tate, President No Report**

**Sunset: Fred Roush, President**

The Florida State Fair show in February is hosted by the Sunset Chapter, but it takes every member of every other chapter to make it a success. We can't say enough about these hard-working friends and how they work together at our shows for the common purpose of presenting the Hibiscus to the public. Our Memorial Day weekend show was again ablaze with red, white and blue to honor our service men and women. Four new members are enthusiastic and hard workers. Our meetings are on the fourth Saturday of each month at the Pinellas Park Library and focus on educating new members and visitors on the care and propagation of hibiscus.

**ELECTION RESULTS**

President:	James Bridges
1 <sup>st</sup> VP	Joanna Schimek
2 <sup>nd</sup> VP	Damon Veach
Secretary	Krista Mathews
Directors:	
	Bradley Christian
	Paul Felsberg
	Pat Merritt
	Ann Peltier

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**SECOND GENERAL SESSION, 9 A.M., JUNE 22, 2014**

After the invocation and salute to the flag, President Veach welcomed everyone to the last session of the 2014 Convention. He thanked the Michael Bernard Acadiana Chapter for their matchless hospitality in hosting this convention.

Executive Secretary Ann Peltier reminded everyone that the Fall Membership Meeting would not be in Houston but in Tampa FL, at the Hilton Garden Inn, November 7 – 9, 2014. The 2015 Convention will be held at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel in Punta Gorda FL, June 25 – 28, 2015.

Incoming President Jim Bridges announced that Marti Graves of the Lone Star Chapter in Houston TX will be the new Executive Secretary, and he thanked Ms Peltier for her service.

Treasurer Walter Bisselle reported that the raffle and auction added greatly to our treasury.

With no further business, on motion made, seconded and unanimously carried, the 2014 Convention was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia B Merritt  
Recording Secretary