



HIBISCUS INTERNATIONAL

Pages 3-8

**A TRIBUTE TO
BOB CARRAN**
featuring a video!

TECHNIQUE DE GREFFE
par Veronique Demailly
Pages 9 - 13



An interview with
HIDDEN VALLEY HIBISCUS
Pages 14 - 26

HIBISCUS INTERNATIONAL



**Tah. Trop. Splendor
2004 HOTOY**



**Grand Slam
2006 HOTOY**



**Tah. Baby Bonfire
2005 HOTOY**

**SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST :**

> **Presidents Message
Page 1**

>

> **Editors Report Page 2**

**INSIDE THIS
ISSUE :**

Inside Story

[In Memory of Bob Carran](#)

Page 3-6

Inside Story

[Some Bob Carran Best of](#)

[Show Seedlings](#) Page 7

Inside Story

[Some Registered Cultivars](#)

[Hybridized by Bob](#) Page 8

Inside Story

[Technique de Greffe par](#)

[Veronique Demallly](#)

Page 9-13

Inside Story

**[A New Series on Hibiscus Nurseries
Begins....](#)**

Inside Story

[Interview: Charles & Cindy](#)

[Black of Hidden Valley](#)

[Hibiscus](#) Page 14-25


[2014 HIBISCUS CALENDER](#)

Page 27



Welcome to a new year and to our “new look” newsletter or should I say our “news magazine”. Starting with this issue of *Hibiscus International*, we have created a magazine like cover to introduce the articles included within the publication. This is due entirely to our newly appointed “Graphics Editor” Wendy Williams. Without her expertise as a graphic artist this would not have been possible; her creative cover page marks the first of many changes we will be introducing.

Another first that we have added to our publication is the addition of a video in the article celebrating Bob Carran’s life. Originally we had hoped to embed the video directly into the page but this unfortunately made the size of the PDF unmanageable. We opted instead for a link to the video where you learn about Bob’s achievement as a softball pitcher.

Yet another first in this issue is making the index to the left an interactive one. By clicking on the name of the article you wish to read, you will immediately be taken to the beginning on the article of your choice. At the end of each article you will see a small “return” button  similar to that found in a video player which will return you to the index. Hopefully this will make navigating a PDF file easier, more efficient and enjoyable for the reader.

And we have yet another first for you. This issue includes the first bilingual article that we have published as far as we know. Veronique Demallly presents her grafting expertise in the third chapter of our continuing look at how different hybridizers and collectors approach grafting. Her article was written in French which is her native tongue and we hopefully have done her proud with our translation into English. This is a trend that we see as a positive step forward as we embrace our international character.

And if there were not enough firsts, we are pleased to present the first of a series that will take a look behind the scenes and at the history of well-known commercial nurseries that provide so very many hibiscus enthusiasts around the world the opportunity to add to our collections. The initial in-depth look is of Hidden Valley Hibiscus in California owned and operated by Charles & Cindy Black. This up close and personal look is presented in the form of a question and answer format where the owners respond to the questions of the “interviewer”. We anticipate that in the future we will be able to take a look behind the scenes of other commercial nurseries.

We are constantly striving to present an educational and informative news magazine to every hibiscus enthusiast be they beginners or master hybridizers. Much of what we have achieved in this newsletter is due to people like Wendy Williams sharing their skills. The more people we have sharing the work the more we will achieve, just think of the possibilities.

As an international organization we are very aware of our linguistic limitations to date. English may be the “universal language” but we recognize the need to make this publication truly reflective of our society by including other languages.

In addition to the inclusion of other languages, we need to hear from our readers. Let us know how we are doing, what stories you have found informative or useful to you and most importantly what topics should we be featuring in the future that would be of interest to other hibiscus lovers.

Would you take a few moments of your time to follow the link below on our online survey form and give us your thoughts, opinions and ideas on how to make this publication even more beneficial to all readers? This is your society and your news magazine and we can make it better with your help.

The editorial staff looks forward to your support, concerns, criticism, praise but most of all to your ideas for improving this publication for everyone.



Click the button to participate in the survey

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

OFFICE BEARERS

President— : Kes Winwood : Vice-President : Ian Rabenda : Sec./Treasurer : Marie Rabenda :

Past President : Richard Johnson :

Board Members

European : Françoise Levavasseur : Asian : Pushpa Suresh: Oceania : Alan James de la Torre

N. American : Randy Cox : S American : Elizabeth Jordan : Australia : Jim Purdie :

African : Gail Cahi : Wild Card Reps : Clay McGee (Deceased 2013) : Doyle Williams

Editor : Kes Winwood : Graphics Editor : Wendy Williams :

Web Master : Ian Rabenda :

Web Address— www.internationalhibiscussociety.org

E-mail Address— InternationalHibiscusSociety@yahoo.com

Facebook— <https://www.facebook.com/groups/264254086998088/?fref=ts>

I.H.S. PATRON— DAVID FRANZMAN

1937-
2013

In Memory of.....



Hibiscus International
A Memorial Supplement
1937-2013

In Memory of
Robert D Carran



August 15, 1937 - October 16, 2013



Robert "Bob" Dale Carran, (1937 - 2013), was born August 15, 1937 in Lakewood, Ohio. His parents moved to Florida when he was 3 months old, so he had always considered himself to be a true Floridian. He attended Saint Petersburg High School, then transferred to Northeast High School when the school was erected. Robert was in the first graduating class of Northeast High School.

Robert enlisted in the United States Air Force on February 21, 1958, serving four years and studying at the University of Hawaii to become a teacher. He was discharged from the U.S.A.F. on August 9, 1961 and finished his final college year at the University of Florida. Bob was always proud to be a Gator. He began his first teaching job at Pinellas Park Junior High on August 26, 1962.



Robert Carran met Maribeth Kulp on Halloween night 1963, and they married eight months later on June 19, 1964. Together they raised three daughters and one son. Robert taught at Pinellas Park Junior High School until June 8, 1983, then continued his teaching at Seminole Middle School from August 20, 1984 until retiring on June 7, 1996.



Maribeth





Upon retirement, Robert Carran joined the American Hibiscus Society Sunset Chapter. He became a board member and was Chairman of the Seed Bank. Bob sent hibiscus seeds around the world. He spent a lot of his time on his acre of land, crossbreeding hibiscus blooms, creating amazing new colors and varieties. Mr. Carran was even given a nickname of "Pollen Duster". Bob's mellifluous voice can be heard on many of the hibiscus show videos.

Also upon retirement, Bob played for several softball teams. He had played softball when he was much younger and continued his pitching career as a part of the St. Petersburg Half Century Club. Notable were the Clearwater Reds team. He then joined the World Renowned St. Petersburg Three Quarter Century Club, better known as the Kids & Kubs. Robert Carran won over 400 softball games and was even recognized on local news channels for his accomplishment. He had a keen wit, a sharp sense of humor and a love for life.



Bob kept a positive attitude, even when he was diagnosed with prostate cancer, at his time of retirement, in 1996. He received radiation treatments, which put him into remission for five years, and he never let his health slow him down. When his cancer returned, he underwent other procedures and once again, he staved off cancer for another five years. Recently, when his PSA levels increased, he chose to try chemotherapy, but the treatments weakened him. Bob was admitted into the hospital on Thursday, October 10, 2013. His health rapidly declined, and he passed away on Wednesday, October 16, 2013 at 7:12 AM.

Robert "Bob" Carran is survived by his wife of 49 years, Maribeth Carran, his three daughters; Debra Vanhaerents, Kimberly Carew and Christina Carran and his three granddaughters and two grandsons.

Written with love by his daughter Debra Vanhaerents

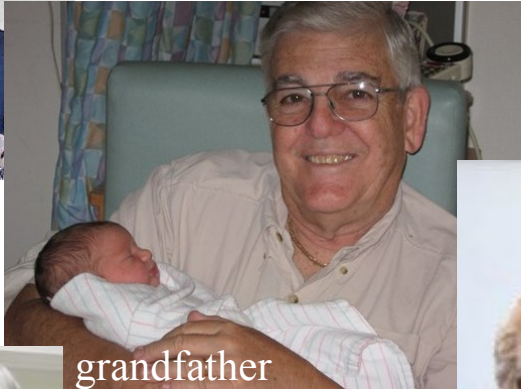
Bob was chairman of the AHS Seed Bank and sent seed to anyone that requested them. Many of those seed were sent to IHS members. Bob was also active in exchanging scion wood, and is responsible for many varieties being available to IHS members. You are probably aware that he served as a director for the IHS. Bob's interest was in producing seed and seedlings and only showed in the seedling class at AHS shows. He signed his name as Robert Carran MPD (Master Pollen Duster). He would sometimes rush home from a show with a bloom he had picked out of the trash just to use the pollen. He was one of the first AHS members to bridge the union of AHS and IHS. It has been our pleasure to grow many of his cultivars.

Randy Cox, Tried and True Hibiscus

We celebrate our friend...



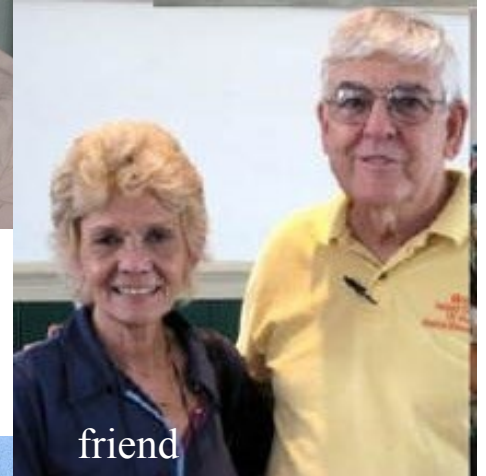
husband



grandfather



hibiscus lover



friend



joker



To see a video of Bob's baseball achievement, click the picture.

NOTE: This might take a long time to load depending on your internet speed, the file is very large so please be patient



2005 Gator Magic



2010 Rendezvous



2008 Lucky Lady



2005 Pillow Talk



2010 Moonlight Rose



2009 Slam Dunk

***SOME
BOB CARRAN'
BEST of SHOW
SEEDLINGS***



2005 Lady Roz



2009 Beauty Mark

Did you know that Bob Carran has 104 registered cultivars in the IHS ICRA database?



American Splendor



Antique Lace



Gray Goddess



Idolize



Liberty Belle



Sand Castles

*As well as the HOTY 2006
'Grand Slam'*



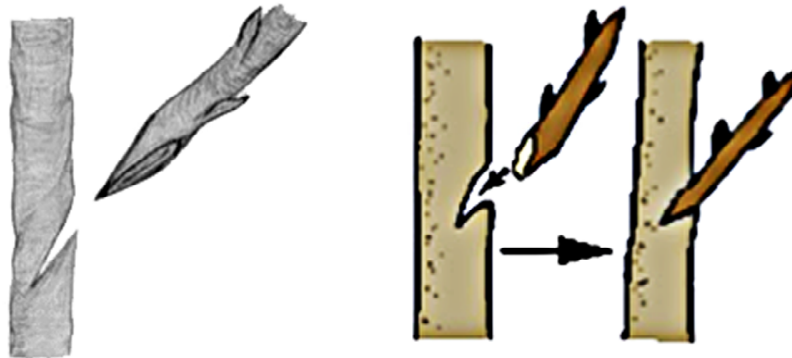
Technique de Greffe – *Grafting Technique*

par Veronique Demailly

Je pratique presque tous les types standard de greffes, mais voici la méthode que je préfère:

I practice nearly all the standard types of grafts, but this is my favorite method:

Fig. 1. A Side Graft



Pour ce qui me concerne, je n'ai pas des conditions climatiques favorable en région Parisienne, la vigueur des plantes en est diminuée, et donc généralement je pratique mes greffes plutôt en mode "progressif" qu'en mode "radical" ...
I do not have a favorable climate in the Paris area. Plant vigor is reduced and therefore I usually practice my grafts in a "progressive" way rather than a "radical" one ...

PREMIÈRE PARTIE : LA GREFFE EN ELLE-MÊME *PART ONE: THE GRAFT ITSELF*

- Je vais donc choisir autant que je peux un porte-greffe adulte avec pas mal de feuilles en tête pour faire tire-sève.
I choose an adult plant to use as rootstock. One with a lot of leaves at the tip which will draw sap upwards.
- Comme il est généralement déjà dit, il faut harmoniser en terme de maturité le porte-greffe au greffon, selon que ce dernier soit plutôt "bois" ou plutôt "vert".
There must be harmony in terms of maturity between rootstock and graft, matching wood to wood or green to green.
- Les greffons ne devraient jamais être trop longs, la sève aura plus de difficulté pour l'irriguer complètement, donc privilégier des greffons entre 3 et 4 yeux.
The cuttings should never be too long because it will be harder for the sap to irrigate them completely. Choose pieces with just 3 to 4 eyes.
- Penser à désinfecter à l'alcool tous les outils notamment ceux pour couper.
Disinfect all tools with alcohol including those used for cutting.
- Faire des coupes franches ensuite et pas comme si on taillait un crayon :-)
Make bold cuts, not tentative ones as if you were sharpening a pencil :-)
- Les coupes doivent être plates et longues pour offrir le plus de surface possible.
The cuts should be long and flat to provide the best possible surfaces.
- Après avoir taillé le greffon tel que sur les illustrations, je le mets à tremper au tiers dans une tasse remplie d'eau additionnée et mélangée de poudre d'hormone (pour bouture). Photos 1-3.
After having shaped the scion as in the illustrations, I put it to soak in a third of a cup of water mixed with rooting hormone powder. Photos 1-3.



PHOTO 1



PHOTO 2



PHOTO 3

- Je pratique une incision en biais à peu près au milieu du tronc, en laissant glisser le cutter et en appuyant à peine (sinon vous allez couper le tronc en deux !)
- *I make a sloping incision towards the middle of the trunk, letting the cutter do the work rather than applying much pressure (otherwise you will cut the trunk in two!) **Photo 4.***



PHOTO 4

- Autant que possible je pratique cette incision à l'arrière d'un bourgeon du porte-greffe parce qu'il y aura déjà davantage de cellules favorisant la croissance
- *I aim to make this incision behind a bud on the rootstock because here there will be more potential for cell growth.*
- Ensuite il faut secouer le greffon pour enlever l'excès d'eau, il aura trempé quelques minutes, 3-4 pour 1 petit ou 6-8 mn pour un porte-greffe plus gros, et l'insérer proprement.
- *Now you have to shake the cutting to remove excess water. (A small cutting will have been soaking for 3-4 minutes, a larger one for 6-8). Then insert it snugly.*
- Ligaturer avec du ruban à greffe en faisant attention à bien serrer, mais ne pas déplacer le griffon. **Photo 5.**
- *Tie with grafting tape, being careful to wrap it tightly without displacing the graft. **Photo 5***



PHOTO 5

• Ensuite un sac en plastique dans lequel on aura versé un peu d'eau pour l'humidité (puis enlevée), puis un lien en pour refermer le tout. **Photo 6**

• *Then cover the new graft with a moistened plastic bag and tie it shut. **Photo 6.***



PHOTO 6

• Enfin je coupe les plus grosses feuilles du porte-greffe, diminue celles qui restent de moitié, et j'enlève tous ses départs de bourgeons afin de canaliser la sève dans le griffon

• *Finally, I cut the larger leaves off the rootstock, and reduce the remaining ones by half. I also remove any remaining rootstock buds to channel the sap into the graft.*

2ÈME PARTIE:

ELLE DEMANDE UN PEU DE PATIENCE : LA GESTION DE LA PLANTE GREFFÉE

PART TWO: PATIENCE IS NOW REQUIRED WHILE THE GRAFT TAKES

• J'enlève méthodiquement tous les nouveaux bourgeons pouvant apparaître sur le porte-greffe.

• *I methodically removed any new buds that can appear on the rootstock.*

• Jamais je n'enlève le sac d'un seul coup, dans ma serre, les petites feuilles ne supporteraient pas le choc thermique et la différence d'humidité.

• *I never remove the plastic bag suddenly. In my greenhouse small leaves do not tolerate the temperature shock or the change in humidity.*



- Donc au fur et à mesure de l'apparition sur le greffon des bourgeons , puis des nouvelles feuilles, je raccourcis les feuilles du porte-greffe puis je le raccourcis de nœud en nœud,
- *Gradually buds will appear on the scion, followed by new leaves. As this happens I trim back the leaves of the rootstock and finally cut it back from node to node to let the scion take over.*

- J'entr-ouvre le sac quand les petites feuilles à l'intérieur sont significatives au moins un cm de diamètre, et je continue a ouvrir le sac progressivement au fur et à mesure des jours
- *When the new leaves on the scion are at least 1 cm wide I partly open the plastic bag, and continue to open it more and more over several days.*

- À la fin du process, le sac est enlevé, sur la petite plante les jeunes feuilles se sont adaptées et il reste généralement un petit tronçon de tronc sur le côté du porte-greffe, qu'on peut laisser ou enlever à la bonne saison.

- *At the end of the process the bag is removed and the young leaves will have now adapted. There is usually still a bit of a stump left on the rootstock beside the graft, and this can either be left or removed in due course.*



...and the results



AN INFORMATIVE INTERVIEW WITH HIDDEN VALLEY HIBISCUS

How did you two get started in the hibiscus business?

Charles: Back in the mid 1990's I was already growing lots of different plant species as the head propagator in a commercial greenhouse when I discovered exotic hibiscus. I was really taken by the size and beauty of the flowers and started collecting as many varieties as I could find. This pursuit led me to other private collectors and hybridizers in Los Angeles, Florida, and Texas. These people were all very generous and were willing to share their enthusiasm for hibiscus by sending me "wood" (pieces of the stem that can be grafted onto root stock to make new plants of that variety). In that way I was able to collect over 1000 varieties in less than 2 years. Talk about an amazing sight! As those varieties started to bloom the beauty of all those gorgeous flowers was overwhelming!



My next step was to determine which of these varieties might make good commercial plants. They needed to be good overall performers with good bushes and reliable blooms. That posed something of a problem because not all "show hibiscus" make good garden plants. As I found varieties that fit what I was looking for, I began to sell them both online and wholesale to local garden centers. I did this for several years but found the wholesale side of the business to be challenging since lots of trucks, employees, and other investments are needed to do this successfully. Eventually I decided to move out of wholesale to concentrate on the online side of the business - selling directly to gardeners and collectors around the world.

It was about this time that Cindy entered the picture, first as my website

developer, then as my wife, marketing expert, and customer service person at HVH. She's quite the wonder woman and has made a big difference in the growth of HVH, as sales have more than tripled over the last 7 years.



[How do you decide which varieties to keep and sell?](#)

Charles: Deciding which varieties to grow and offer to an ever more knowledgeable customer is a key part of what we do. It actually takes us several years to decide whether a once promising new variety is performing well enough to continue to offer it. The flower is the most important consideration for our customers - its size, color, and form - but it's not the only criteria. The plant must grow well, with attractive appearance, reasonable vigor and good health. It must bloom reliably - the more flowers the better! If it shows increased resistance to insects and cold - the two biggest problems with growing hibiscus - then that is a plus as well.

Experience has taught us that the original seedling plant grown from a seed will not necessarily perform and look the same as cutting-grown plants or grafted plants. (Virtually all plants available from commercial sources are grown from cuttings or grafted).

Cindy: We like to watch many plants of each variety grow in large pots, instead of just relying on one specimen of each variety. We look at how well the plant grows roots in propagation, how vigorous the baby plants are, how well the bush shapes up as the plant matures, how strong the branches are, and of course, how well it blooms and how pretty the flowers are. Ideally, we like to see the plants bloom in different weather conditions, and we even bring some plants home to our house and yard to see how they perform inside a house and outside in a garden. I get a lot of feedback from customer email that tells us how different varieties perform in different climates and conditions, which also helps.

In recent years we have also learned a lot about our varieties from comments and photos posted on the HVH forum. We take all this information into account in deciding whether to go ahead with more propagation of each variety.



[How big is your greenhouse and how is it set up?](#)

Charles: The current greenhouse is a type called "gutter connected" and covers 45,000 square feet which is just over 1 acre. The greenhouse is basically a large rectangle 200 feet by 225 feet made up of individual "houses" that are 22 feet wide, 200 feet long, and connected to the next house by a gutter that moves rain water off the roof and also provides a place to walk on the roof to do repairs and replace the greenhouse cover.



Inside the greenhouse we use mostly flood and drain tables to grow the hibiscus on. These allow the table to be flooded with water about an inch deep, the water is then absorbed up into the pots through holes in the bottom and sides of the pot, and then the table is drained. We also have some tables with drip irrigation and some floor space used for larger stock

plants. We use a large fertilizer injector to inject an exact amount of fertilizer into the water every time we water the plants.



One of our biggest challenges is organizing the 700 or so varieties that we sell. We have to know how many we have of each variety at any one time, and then be able to locate them quickly when we receive an order. Easier said than done! But we do our best to keep all the plants in alphabetical order so that we can count and find them as needed.



The greenhouse is heated by about 10 powerful propane heaters. Heating is one of our biggest expenses since getting plants ready for spring shipping cannot be done without heating the hibiscus through the winter months. There is a 1000 gallon propane tank outside the greenhouse that must be refilled weekly during the coldest months of the year.

We also have a large electric sprayer with a tank that holds 50 gallons of spray along with a 200 foot long hose. We use 5 to 7 tanks of spray when applying any kind of spray treatments to all the many plants in the entire greenhouse. We do this weekly through the growing season. Another very large expense but necessary to grow clean, super healthy hibiscus for shipping around the US and the world.



[What do you see as the future of hibiscus?](#)

Charles: One area that has a lot of potential is growing hibiscus indoors. People in Canada and most of Europe are already growing potted hibiscus indoors during the long cold season and placing them outside for the summer months. This is becoming more popular in the US and throughout the world and I think we will see this continue.



People will always want to grow hibiscus outdoors in temperate and tropical areas. Since I started with hibiscus, we have had inquiries from over 100 countries and shipped to lots of them. In addition to the traditional centers of hibiscus in the USA and Australia, we've seen newer hibiscus enthusiasts develop very active growing communities in Canada, India, Japan, the Philippines Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Africa, many European Union countries, Russia, Ukraine, Brazil, and Uruguay, as well as individual collectors active in Israel, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Micronesia, Guam, Costa Rica, Mexico, Jamaica, Martinique, Vietnam, Suriname, and no doubt others that slip my mind. I expect this spread of modern, exotic hibiscus to continue around the world as people learn that they can succeed in growing them in lots of different situations.

[Why are exotic hibiscus superior to other flowering plants \(or unique characteristics\)?](#)

Charles: That question makes me smile. Of course hibiscus are superior flowering plants! In my opinion hibiscus feature the most beautiful flowers nature has ever made. Surely the most variably colored and some of the largest blooms of all plants are found among the cultivated hibiscus. Constant flowering during warm weather is another great feature of hibiscus. So is the tendency of the blooms to change with changing weather and the fact that they can be influenced by the grower through water and feed and light adjustments. This makes for a dynamic relationship between the grower or collector of hibiscus and the flowers that reward their efforts.

Cindy: Hibiscus have more genetic variability than almost any other flower. Every kind of pigment shows up in hibiscus flowers. Double flowers are genetically compatible with single flowers, making a huge range of petal numbers possible. Pigment patterns range from spots to speckles to rings to stripes to rays to splotches... too many to think of all the different possibilities! Size variability is amazing too. All of these makes up a truly unique flower.



What have been some of the biggest surprises for you with growing & hybridizing hibiscus?

Charles: Hibiscus will often surprise the hybridizer. It is very satisfying to plan a cross of 2 varieties with a result in mind and then see that result actually come to pass in the new plants that grow from the hybrid seed. But, as often as that happens it is just as common for the result to be a total surprise. I've seen 2 blues give me a yellow flower, 2 reds give me a nice gray, 2 medium sized flowers give me Giganormous, the only flower I have grown that often opened 11 inch flowers.

Every time we think we have seen just about everything, something new pops up with the new hybrids. I don't think this will stop anytime soon. For most of the time that people have been crossing hibiscus, the main focus has been on the flowers. This is natural but also ignores other traits such as number of flowers, cold hardiness, longevity, and so forth that I think future hybridizers will also select for.



What are some of the most memorable interactions/results you have experienced selling hibiscus?

Charles: My first experience selling exotic hibiscus is probably the one that made the most difference. I was pretty sure these newly discovered plants would sell to garden centers but was not certain until I tried it. I took a nice plant of 'Donna Lynn' with several big open 8 inch flowers to one of the better independent garden centers in southern California. As I walked into the plant area first one and then another of the employees spotted me with the plant, dropped what they were doing, and came over to ooh and ahh over the gorgeous flowers.

Now, employees of garden centers are much used to plants and are usually not easy to impress. That fact that everyone in this place came over to remark on the flowers told me that hibiscus were indeed going to be a winner. And so it turned out to be. During the period after that when I concentrated on sales to garden centers, I'm pretty sure almost every garden center in southern California and several in the San Francisco area became a customer at one time or another.



'Donna Lynn'

What would you say have been your biggest successes/ accomplishments to date?

Charles: Well, popularizing hibiscus outside of the traditional growing states of Florida and Texas has probably been the most rewarding success. Early on, when exotic hibiscus were new to the gardening press, we were able to interest several of the most influential magazines to run stories and photos about them. The Los Angeles Times did a great story, and such magazines as Sunset, Traditional Home, Flower and Garden, and California Horticulture ran excellent stories with photos. The Sunset article was a real challenge in that they insisted on growing our plants in their test garden before completing the story. Once they committed to it they sent both a reporter and a photographer to our greenhouse and spent quite a bit of time taking photos and talking to us. After this, Sunset updated their very influential guide to western gardening to include info about exotic hibiscus.

Also, early on I was fortunate to find a good webmaster, Yvonne Forsling, who was also a lover of hibiscus. Yvonne lives in Sweden where she grows hibiscus inside her home. She visited HVH every year while she was webmaster and was able to take her experiences both here and at home and use them to build a very nice website and store during the early years of HVH. Later on Cindy took over the site and continued to add features and develop it into the wonderful site that it is today. We have a huge amount of traffic to both the site and the online store. This has helped a great deal to spread the word about hibiscus all over the world.



What are the biggest obstacles in your opinion with selling/the future of hibiscus?

Charles: Honestly, only cold weather keeps hibiscus from becoming the most popular flowering plant on the planet. Efforts have been made to genetically combine exotic hibiscus with hardy hibiscus but with no positive results so far. Short of that accomplishment, we simply have to live with the fact that hibiscus cannot survive and thrive in temperatures much below freezing. Indoor growing and greenhouse growing are the best solutions for now, and we spend a fair amount of time discussing these in our newsletters and on the HVH website and forum. We've heard from quite a few people who have opted for one or the other of these techniques for growing hibiscus successfully in areas where it freezes.

What do you think about the current popularity of the darker colored hibiscus blooms?

Charles: I like them. There is nice contrast to be had with the darker and lighter or brighter colors that provides for a very nice visual effect. You do see a lot of fading with some of these colors but that is something we can continue to work on.



What is the biggest joy you get out of growing hibiscus?

Charles: There are two aspects that I enjoy the most. Connecting with nature, with our history as human beings who survived by being able to grow things, is part of it. The other aspect – the enjoyment of pure beauty, is the other. Hibiscus are complex plants that require some thought and some learning in order to grow well. It is very satisfying to learn to do this successfully. Then, when you do succeed, you are rewarded with flowers of tremendous power and beauty. It's a great combination in my opinion, and something I would recommend to anyone looking for a new experience that is satisfying on many levels.

What is your take on how far the world of exotic hibiscus has come since you started? Are you surprised/satisfied/disappointed with the rate of progression over all?

Charles: Sure, the world of exotic hibiscus has come a long way. The number of new varieties being shown around the world each year is astounding. The internet has had a lot to do with this growth, allowing people to communicate freely and to inspire each other.

Where are some of your fastest growing new customer bases located?

Charles: There are quite a few of them but far and away the collectors in Russia have been the most active in the last 2-3 years. They've given a boost to every hibiscus grower in the world. There is an amazing group of entrepreneurial women in Russia who import hibiscus, orchids, and other exotic plants into Russia and a group of enthusiastic collectors there who obtain these plants from them. We salute these fine folks and wish them the best for the future.

If you had to choose just two cultivars to start the exotic hibiscus industry on another planet which would they be and why?

Charles: That's a challenging question! I'd have to look at it this way – you need one variety that would give you the genetic potential for the primary hibiscus colors of orange, red, and yellow and another variety that would preserve the genes for the blue, brown, and silver flowers. I also like the deeply lobed leaves that are featured with the Fascinating Foliage line we developed at HVH. So, based on our hybridizing results at HVH over the years I would take with me to Planet X the well tested seed setting varieties named Saffron and Crème de Cacao. By crossing them back and forth and with their offspring in creative ways I would hope to end up with some

strong plants in the full rainbow of colors that hibiscus are known to be capable of, some of which would have the deeply lobed leaves.

Saffron



Crème de Cacao



I'm sure other hybridizers would pick differently, but the challenge would be to preserve the genes that give us the 2 color groups that are mostly exclusive of each other and to do so with good, strong plants. Another pair that comes to mind that would do the job is Rainbow Sherbet and Fifth Dimension, also seed setters. Lots of possibilities but in reality I would want to take at least 4 varieties. At least.

Cindy: Hmm... There are so many different types of genetic spectrums in hibiscus flowers - solid colors vs. multiple rings of colors, stable carotenoid pigments that give a few strong colors vs. changeable anthocyanins that give many colors depending on many variables, ruffliness vs. flatness, doubles vs. singles, size of course..... And we're not even talking about the bush! If we had to choose only 2 hibiscus to hybridize with, our flower world would be very, very sad! It is the genetic diversity of native and early cultivated hibiscus from all over the world that has made the modern hibiscus so spectacularly varied. There are very few genetic studies about hibiscus, but what little information there is has shown that the modern hibiscus is actually a blend of genes from many native species plants from all over the world. We would never want to give that up! So I think we would have to do a Noah's Ark thing and take many, many varieties



ICRA 2014 Calendar Picturing Recently Registered Cultivars



January

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

2014



February

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

2014



March

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

2014



April

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

2014



May

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

2014



June

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

2014



July

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

2014



August

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

2014



September

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

2014



October

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

2014



November

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

2014



December

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

2014

Can you name the hybridizer?

