

# THE PLUMERIAN

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VOL. V, ISSUE 4

THE PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF SOUTH TEXAS

OCTOBER, 1997

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## Notice of Next Meeting:

Date and Time: Wednesday, October 15, 1997, 7:00 p.m.

Place: Corpus Christi Botanical Gardens, 8545 South Staples

Program: John Murray from Houston, Texas, and member of the Plumeria Society of America, Inc. will tell us about his journey into Mexico in search of Plumerias.

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## COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Wow! --- What a successful year PSST is having for 1997. For just a proud moment, I would like to review these accomplishments. First and foremost, we installed the French drain under the Plumeria beds at the C. C. Botanical Gardens. Whatever was in the soil used to fill in the trenches, the Plumerias just love it. I've never seen a happier bunch of Plumerias. To accent the Plumeria beds, Paul Thornton planted periwinkles around the boundary which makes quite a display. The meetings and programs this year continue to draw the interest of our members. When you have a chance, pat them on the back and say many thanks for organizing and running the most successful Plant Sale ever. I'm, of course, referring to Jocko Taylor, Chairman, Ann Yeager who worked all day at the cashier's table, and Johnny Smolik, the keeper of the "chips". For your information, proceeds to PSST came to \$1,856.00, which will fund the C. C. Botanical Garden Collection and future programs.

We had a pleasant surprise in August when the Plumeria Society in Houston chose to take a bus trip to Corpus Christi to see our Plumeria Collection and attend the Plant Sale. Earlier this summer, Mrs. Lee Jacobs, 1996 President of the Plumeria Society of America, contacted me to help them set up an itinerary for their C. C. trip. After check-in at Sandy Shores Hotel on Friday, August 22, I escorted them to the C. C. Botanical Gardens to view the Plumeria Collection. They were very complimentary and impressed. From there, they toured two yards with Plumerias - Barbara Gill was gracious enough to show off her back yard full of Plumerias, and Jocko Taylor allowed the Houstonians to inspect his "taylor" made greenhouse. On Saturday the bus unloaded our guests at Padre Staples Mall to attend the Plant Sale. They eagerly purchased some of our Plumerias! In fact, Lee Jacobs bought a Bob's Mexican Pink, which originated as a cutting from Mary Lou Klatt's stock and reported to me recently by letter that her plant was already blooming! One of the benefits from the Houstonian's trip is they want to contribute mature plants of a variety we do not have in our collection. I am happy we got to know them better.

Again I urge you to come to John Murray's program at our October meeting. You won't be disappointed. Save up your questions on Plumerias. He is an expert on Plumerias. As you may recall, John was scheduled to give his talk at the May meeting but couldn't make it because of illness. In talking recently with John, he had an interesting story to tell about the Plumeria pudica cultivar. It seems that Harry Leuzinger, owner of the Plumeria People, gave John some cuttings of this cultivar, sometimes referred to as the "Bride's Bouquet" from Puerto Rico. Harry gave him stem cuttings 3" to 4" in length and narrow diameter. John surmised from the looks of the cuttings, they would never make it. But, to his surprise, they rooted faster, grew more rapidly, and now are 2' tall, blooming profusely all in one season! The leaves have an unusual spoon shape. The blooms are 2" wide, white with yellow center, in clusters like a bouquet. Currently, John is working on a Plumeria identification project with the Plumeria People. The format will be a color photograph of a named variety with detailed description on a glossy printing that can be collected in a 2-ring notebook. In case you want a catalogue or information, The Plumeria People's address is: 910 Leander Drive, Leander, Texas 78641.

I'm not too pleased to report that in 1997 we have 40 members who have paid dues and 12 members have yet to pay. Surely you have just overlooked payment. Otherwise, we will just have to drop you from the rolls.

If you don't have one, you should own a Bob's Mexican Pink. I was so profoundly moved by Judy Henderson's anecdote, so humorous yet lifelike, of their "original" Bob's Mexican Pink as told by Judy in this newsletter. Thanks Judy, everybody wanted to hear the story.

I wish to give new members Cheryl Ann Paraskevas, Thomas and Debra Winstead, and Jane Nely a big ALOHA! We are pleased you joined PSST.

Now comes the hard part in writing this Newsletter. With a big lump in my throat, I am having difficulty in saying that I am resigning as your President after this growing season is over. It is time that I step down. It's just not right for a fellow to have so much fun and enjoyment for such a long time. Actually, I have been President since our beginning in September, 1993. I am so proud that our Society has grown to where it is today. We could not have accomplished so much without the work, talent, and dedication of so many people. My life has been richly rewarded by my friends in our Plumeria Society and, most of all, by the love affair with the gorgeous Plumeria. I will continue to be a good member. Thank you all for a wonderful experience.

Happy Plumeriaing,

  
Bob Owen

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#### THE MURRAY CUTTING TECHNIQUE

John Murray shared with me his favorite technique of taking cuttings. In November when the temperature approaches 40° F, the Plumeria must go into storage for the winter. Before storage, John takes the cuttings, removes the leaves, and places them in a dark spot on a shelf in storage and leaves them for the winter. Keep the temperature above 40° F. During the winter the cuttings will callous over, a process so important to rapid development of roots. In late spring, April or May, pot the cuttings for a fast start.

#### PLUMERIA PHOTO CONTEST

## THE PLANT SALE – WHAT EXPOSURE!

On the hot and humid Saturday morning of August 23, 1997, some 16 excited Plumeria growers and accomplices descended upon Center Court at the Padre Staples Mall. Hurrying to unload vans, trucks, and car trunks, plants suddenly appeared from all different mall entrances, and before 9:30 a.m. about 500 plants were ready to find new homes. At that time I thought to myself that this was truly the largest quantity we had ever had ready for sale and wondered how we were ever going to sell all these plants! It was just about overpowering, but with everything and everyone in place, sales started briskly at 9:45 a.m. with Billy and Willie Liles first cashing in on their bargains for the day. A few minutes later, the Houston Plumeria Society busload touring delegation appeared and suddenly I found myself engulfed in meeting lots of folks and answering lots of questions. Shortly thereafter, Lloyd Holmes and Patricia Bibbs showed me Darlene Locke's newspaper article from the morning press. Looking around now, I noticed about 250 plus people attracted to Center Court and felt like we were under attack!

Having recently been to the Botanical Gardens on Friday afternoon, the Houston Society wanted to buy all the "Bob's Mexican Pink" we had for sale. Of course the other hot colors were the Rainbows, Reds, and Aztec Golds. Another conversation piece were Johnny Smolik's 1-1/2 year old, 8" seedlings that had stems the size of a Big Chief pencil.

By 5:00 o'clock that afternoon, things had begun to slow down and the crowds must have decided to check out the Blue Angels after Plumeria shopping at the mall. All in all, the Plant Sale was truly a great success with gross sales exceeding \$6,700 for the day. The Society was able to enlist about 10 new members and over 400 plants did find new homes! (Man, what exposure!)

Many, many thanks go out to all the growers, including Lucian Willoughby selling a whopping 70 plus plants, Barbara Gill, Lloyd Holmes, Team Hollowell, Leatrice Koch, Bob Owen, Team Merriman, Rosa, Meilleur, and Leonard Howard. A special thanks goes to Ann Yeager and John Balcar, who allowed the growers to keep on selling while they worked laboriously most of the day serving as cashier. And, of course, a great big thanks to Phil and Linda Anderson, Mary Lou Klatt, Ann Yeager, Bea Fischer, Bob Owen, and John Balcar who contributed plants directly to the Society for 100% profit.

Also, I want to thank Darlene Locke for taking the time to get the newspaper article in the paper and Fred Allon's support with advertising. And last, I want to thank Padre Staples Mall for making the facility available to us and making the arrangements. I sincerely appreciate everyone working together to make the sale the best ever and, if I forgot someone, I thank you, too (and you know who you are).

Full details of the Sale's financial situation are to be presented at the next meeting by Johnny Smolik. Thanks again for everyone's support.

Jocko Taylor  
The Chairman

PLUMERIA CHECKLIST: Please indicate which of the following you have in your collection.

\_\_\_ Angus #3  
 \_\_\_ Angus Selection  
 \_\_\_ Aztec Gold  
 \_\_\_ Bob's Mexican Pink  
 \_\_\_ Canary  
 \_\_\_ Candy Stripe  
 \_\_\_ Carmen  
 \_\_\_ Carter #2  
 \_\_\_ Carter Selection  
 \_\_\_ Celadine  
 \_\_\_ Cerise  
 \_\_\_ Cerise #2  
 \_\_\_ Charlotte Ebert  
     (' J.L.Giant Pink')  
 \_\_\_ Cindy Moragne  
 \_\_\_ Common Yellow  
     (' Graveyard Yellow')  
 \_\_\_ Conch Shell  
 \_\_\_ Courtade Pink  
 \_\_\_ Daisy Wilcox  
 \_\_\_ Dean Conklin  
 \_\_\_ Donald Angus Red  
 \_\_\_ Doris Yvette  
 \_\_\_ Duke  
 \_\_\_ Dwarf Deciduous White  
 \_\_\_ Dwarf Singapore Pink  
 \_\_\_ Dwarf Singapore White  
 \_\_\_ Edi Moragne  
 \_\_\_ Elena  
 \_\_\_ Elizabeth  
 \_\_\_ Espinda  
 \_\_\_ Evergreen Singapore, White  
 \_\_\_ Evergreen Singapore,  
     Yellow ('Mele Pa  
     Bowman')  
 \_\_\_ EWC #3  
 \_\_\_ Florida Rose  
 \_\_\_ Frosted Pink  
 \_\_\_ Gold ('Peterson's Yellow')  
 \_\_\_ Grove Farm  
 \_\_\_ Hausten White ('Willows  
     White')  
 \_\_\_ Heidi ('Pure Gold')  
 \_\_\_ Hilo Beauty  
 \_\_\_ Hollywood Pink  
 \_\_\_ India  
 \_\_\_ Intense Rainbow  
 \_\_\_ Iolani  
 \_\_\_ Iris Sunset  
 \_\_\_ Irma Bryan  
 \_\_\_ Japanese Lantern ('Flower  
     Basket')

\_\_\_ Jean Moragne, Jr.  
 \_\_\_ Julie Moragne  
 \_\_\_ J. L. Big Red  
 \_\_\_ J. L. Bridal White  
 \_\_\_ J. L. Dark Red  
 \_\_\_ J. L. Hawaiian Sunset  
 \_\_\_ J. L. Giant Plastic Pink  
 \_\_\_ J. L. Pink Pansy  
 \_\_\_ J. L. Starlight  
 \_\_\_ J. L. Trumpet  
 \_\_\_ Kanehoe Sunburst  
 \_\_\_ Katie Moragne  
 \_\_\_ Kauai Beauty  
 \_\_\_ Kauka Wilder  
 \_\_\_ Keiki ('Miniature Lavender')  
 \_\_\_ Key West Elizabeth  
 \_\_\_ Key West Honeysuckle  
 \_\_\_ Key West Red  
 \_\_\_ Kimi Moragne  
 \_\_\_ Kimo  
 \_\_\_ King Kalakaua ('Miniature  
     White')  
 \_\_\_ Kona #26  
 \_\_\_ Laguna Pink  
 \_\_\_ LaJolla Sunset  
 \_\_\_ Lei Rainbow  
 \_\_\_ Lemon Chiffon  
 \_\_\_ Loretta  
 \_\_\_ Lurline  
 \_\_\_ Madame Poni ('Corkscrew')  
 \_\_\_ Madame Yvonne  
 \_\_\_ Marino's Rainbow  
 \_\_\_ Mary Moragne  
 \_\_\_ Maui Beauty ('Manoa  
     Beauty')  
 \_\_\_ Mela Matson  
 \_\_\_ Mele Pa Bowman  
 \_\_\_ Miami Rose  
 \_\_\_ Moiliili Gold  
 \_\_\_ Moir Pink  
 \_\_\_ Moonlight  
 \_\_\_ Moragne #9  
 \_\_\_ Moragne #23  
 \_\_\_ Moragne #27  
 \_\_\_ Moragne Yellow  
 \_\_\_ Nebel's Gold ('Nebel's  
     Rainbow')  
 \_\_\_ Old-Fashioned Pink  
 \_\_\_ Painted Desert  
 \_\_\_ Pauahi Alii ('Donald Angus  
     Gold')  
 \_\_\_ Paul Weissich

\_\_\_ Peachglow Shell  
 \_\_\_ Penang Peach  
 \_\_\_ Peppermint  
 \_\_\_ Petite Pink ('Dwarf Pink  
     Singapore')  
 \_\_\_ Pink #93  
 \_\_\_ Pink Shell  
 \_\_\_ Pinwheel Rainbow  
 \_\_\_ Plastic Pink ('Royal Hawaiian')  
 \_\_\_ Pompano Pink  
 \_\_\_ Pudica  
 \_\_\_ Pure Gold ('Heidi')  
 \_\_\_ Puu Kahea ('Fiesta')  
 \_\_\_ Reddish Moragne  
 \_\_\_ Red Shell  
 \_\_\_ Ressman Pink  
 \_\_\_ Ruffles ('Vanda Ruffles')  
 \_\_\_ Sally Moragne  
 \_\_\_ Samoan Fluff ('Tahitian Pink')  
 \_\_\_ Santa Barbara ('Classic White')  
 \_\_\_ Schmidt Red  
 \_\_\_ Scott Pratt ('Kohala')  
 \_\_\_ Sherman White ('Polynesian  
     White')  
 \_\_\_ Singapore  
 \_\_\_ Slaughter Pink  
 \_\_\_ Small Yellow Eye  
 \_\_\_ Sunshine Texas  
 \_\_\_ Tampico Red  
 \_\_\_ Teresa Wilder ('Teddy')  
 \_\_\_ Thornton Cranberry  
 \_\_\_ Thornton Lemon ('Courtade  
     Lemon')  
 \_\_\_ Thornton Lilac  
 \_\_\_ Tillie Hughes  
 \_\_\_ Tina  
 \_\_\_ Tomlinson Pink  
 \_\_\_ University Cherry Pink  
 \_\_\_ Vanda Ruffles  
 \_\_\_ White #93  
 \_\_\_ White Shell  
 \_\_\_ Yellow Shell

List others: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
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# THE TALE OF A WANDERING PLUMERIA

or

## BOB'S MEXICAN PINK

During the 1970's a favorite place to spend an afternoon was at Bob's Nursery on South Padre Island Drive. It was a wonderful place with all sorts of weird flora unknown to the ordinary Corpus Christi gardner/housewife. Bob was from Mexico and made collecting trips into Mexico and Central America a couple of times a year. The exotic things he imported were barerooted or in the form of cuttings. Usually with a friend I would spend an hour or two every month just wandering around through the jungle, and I do mean jungle, in the main greenhouse and then slip outside to browse the smaller houses, stop and make noises at the caged birds, and make my way slowly all the way to the back of the lot. After jumping puddles of water, miss stepping in mud, and admiring the huge pile of potting soil and jumble of pots, my friend and I would always pause and speculate about the smallish Phoenix palm growing in the ground near the end of the main greenhouse. It was larger than a Phoenix robelinii and much smaller than a Phoenix canariensis, with beautiful lustrous and graceful soft green leaves. Bob's wife said it was a hybrid between two Phoenix palms, but she could never tell us which ones and neither could he. By that time we were ready to step back into the main greenhouse and settle down to making serious decisions on plant purchases, for, you see, the rule was that we never, never, never left Bob's empty handed. To do so would to have been to deny food for the soul.

One year during the Spring nesting season (most women suffer from nesting urges, at least until they are little old ladies) I discovered this wonderful small tree right in the middle of Bob's greenhouse. The leaves were a large lush green and the plant was so top heavy, that even in it's large clay pot, to keep it from falling over, it needed to be tied to one of the large telephone poles that served as a roof support in the greenhouse. The nine foot plant in itself was very attractive, but what made it spectacular, were the blooms - and oh what blooms! They were in large bold clusters of flat flowers with full petals, a soft rosey pink with a pale yellow center. My soul did have a craving. After much conversation with Bob's wife, after learning that Bob had brought the plant out of Mexico, after learning that it was an unusually good Plumeria, and, after learning the price was \$80.00, I gasped and said that I would think about it. Well I'll tell you, that plant is all I thought about for the next several days.

The next week I drove our old beach truck out to Bob's, marched in and announced that I was there to purchase the large Plumeria, then clamped my jaw and wrote a check. I supervised as three men heaved a heavy pot with a tall plant into the bed of the pickup and tied it to keep it upright. Fortunately the wind was out of the southeast so a 15 mph drive down Ennis Joslin and Ocean Drive into South Shores barely ruffled the leaves.

My husband Tom, and I managed to slide the pot out of the bed of the truck down a board and onto a hand truck. From there it was taken from the pot and planted in a 6' wide bed between the end of the patio and the driveway. This was a protected spot, and the Plumeria with other companions wintered there several years until it was nipped back by a hard freeze. At that point in my plant growing experience I didn't really know how tender or hardy plumerias were. Anyway, the injured plant was cut back to live wood. It recovered nicely. A young friend then told me that his mother had a couple of small plumerias that she just jerked out of the ground, stored in a towsack, and placed in the garage every winter. It seemed remarkable, that they didn't need water over the winter and roots could be treated in such a way.

Growing so near Corpus Christi bay, and on the southside of the bay at that, gave the plant a winter climate that rarely threatened it with freezing. It was left in the ground unless a hard freeze was forecast and then it was put bareroot in the garage. In 1985 it was moved to Flour Bluff. There it overwintered outside inside a temporary wooden frame warped with greenhouse plastic. The top was left open and only closed if frost or a hard freeze was threatened. A burning 100 watt light bulb was used for heat. The plant was growing in Flour Bluff sand so it was watered and fed more often than it was in town. It loved it and thrived. 1991 was the year it moved back to town, this time almost all the way downtown on Furman Avenue, a couple of blocks from the bay. The first winter there it spent just lying on the ground bare rooted. I think we did cover it when a freeze threatened. We were so busy, that the poor thing wasn't planted in the ground until April. It did acquire a handsomely designed raised bed, constructed out of landscape timbers, for its Summer home. It shared the bed with pink caladiums and an un-named smaller Plumeria plant, that has large white blooms with a yellow center. After living in this spot a couple of years it was moved to make way for a greenhouse. It is now, raised bed and all, in another temporary location. Hopefully, when Tom and I finish playing THIS OLD HOUSE with our 1926 Furman Avenue bungalow, Bob's Mexican Pink, will have a permanent bed to share with a few other Plumeria friends.

If any of you should come by for a visit with this particular Plumeria, I would appreciate it if you would not discuss Plumeria practices in front of it. It doesn't know that it is not to be stored on a concrete floor, or that is to have fancy fertilizer, (it usually eats 12-24-12 with a little ironite thrown in), or that it not supposed to root in the heat of the Summer. Don't tell any of it's clones, either.

It takes three strong adults to carry it, bareroot onto a 16' flatbed trailer for a move to a warehouse. It is moved only if a freeze is threatened. Every time the plant is moved I realize just how much my dear sweet husband must love me to take the time and the effort to care for this big heavy thing, and I resolve that when it comes out of winter storage it will find another home. Come spring and it is nesting time again, it just goes back in the ground in our garden.

The fall of 1997 finds Bob's Mexican Pink, about 14' tall, a healthy dark green, with a jicama vine twining up the trunk.

My \$80.00 was well spent.

Judith Wood Henderson  
(Mrs. Thomas B. Henderson, Jr.)

P.S. I love you too Tom.

Just another reminder, the October 15 meeting is the deadline for entries in our first Plumeria Photo Contest. The rules are as follows:

1. The entry photos must be 8" x 10" or larger. Larger sizes welcome.
2. Entry photos must be mounted on a mat or foam board suitable for gallery display.
3. Entries of quality will be used to make up a display on the walls of the meeting room at the C. C. Botanical Gardens. Mary Jane Crull, CCBG, has set aside the months of November, December, 1997, and January, 1998, for displaying our photos.
4. The entry photos become the property of the Plumeria Society of South Texas.
5. Label variety name on back of photo. Do not print your name as you will be assigned an entry number.
6. The photos will be judged the evening of October 15 and awards given for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, or 4<sup>th</sup> place, depending on number of entries.
7. Those desiring reimbursement, PSST will offer \$5.00 per photo mounted that are used for CCBG exhibit to help cover your expenses.
8. To complete the exhibit, we need 15 to 20 photos.

#### "AUNT FLORA'S" FALL PLANT SALE, OCTOBER 25, 1997

If you have any Plumerias left over from the Plant Sale, "Aunt Flora's Fall Plant Sale" at the C. C. Botanical Gardens, Saturday October 25, 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., is another opportunity to sell your Plumerias, as well as any other plants. Members only of CCBG can sell or buy their plants on Friday from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. To participate you must transport your plants to the Botanical Gardens and bring your own table. In other words, you run your own sale. You cannot bring your plants and leave them unless you give them to CCBG where they get 100% of sales proceeds. The split of sales proceeds is 75% grower, 25% CCBG on the honor system.

#### CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEA

We have an inventory of merchandise left over from the Plant Sale which we would like to offer for purchase to the members that could be used as Christmas gifts or a gift to a friend. Below is a list of items from Island Soap Co. in Kauai, Hawaii:

|   | <u>Member Price</u> | <u>Non-member price</u> |
|---|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Single Plumeria scent soap bar, 2 oz.           | \$2.00              | \$2.50                  |
| Single Plumeria scent soap bar, 4 oz.           | \$3.40              | \$4.00                  |
| 4-pack votive candles, Plumeria scent           | \$7.50              | \$10.00                 |
| Coconut Beeswax candle, large                   | \$15.00             | \$20.00                 |
| Gift pack, 4 soap bars, diff. scents, 2 oz. Ea. | \$9.50              | \$11.00                 |
| Scented bath oil                                | \$3.30              | \$4.00                  |
| Gift pack, bath gel, soap bar, lotion           | \$9.00              | \$11.00                 |

#### WORK PARTY SCHEDULE AT BOTANICAL GARDENS

Calling all able-bodied PSST members to report to the Botanical Gardens on Saturday, November 15, for the purpose of digging up the Plumerias and hauling to storage for the winter. Storage will be the Larken Greenhouse adjacent to the Orchid House.

#### PLUMERIA INVENTORY LIST

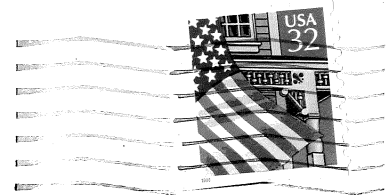
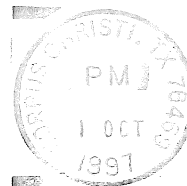
The Executive Committee has deemed it beneficial if all members would make an inventory of the varieties in their collection by filling out the enclosed Plumeria checklist and returning to Leatrice Koch at the October meeting. We are encouraging this project as a way to effect trading cuttings among members.

1997-98 BOTANICAL GARDEN SCHEDULE

Every member should take his or her turn for one week caring for the Plumeria Collection at the Corpus Christi Botanical Gardens. Care means to: (1) Water only when moisture meter indicates but not more than once a week; (2) Fertilize with Super Bloom once a week, ½ tablespoon per gallon of water; (3) Remove any weeds; (4) Look for signs of fungus or other problems and report to curator Jocko Taylor (887-0252) for proper treatment. Contact Paul Thornton for moisture meter and Super Bloom at the Botanical Gardens Office. Listed below is the schedule. Notice, there are openings. Please pick a date and call in to Fred Allon (993-2554). A hearty thanks to those that have volunteered. Keep up the good work.

| <u>Week of</u>                             | <u>Member</u>   |
|--|---|
| October 5                                  | Lloyd Holmes  |
| October 12                                 | Bob Owen  |
| October 19                                 | Rose Meilleur & Ann McCord  |
| October 25-November 2                      | _____   |
| November 2-November 16                     | _____   |
| November 15, 1997<br>9:00a.m. to 1:00 p.m. | Work Day: Remove plants, put in greenhouse  |
| Month of December, 1997                    | _____   |
| Month of January, 1998                     | _____   |
| Month of February, 1998                    | _____   |
| March 14, 1998<br>9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.   | Work Day: Remove plants from greenhouse and install in beds. Make ready for '98 growing season. |

The Plumeria Society of South Texas  
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