



**November 2007  
BSSF OFFICERS 2007**

**President Sandy Roth**  
**VP Sharon Biddix-Maessen**  
**Sec. Peggy Fisher**  
**Treas. Robert Meyer**

**DIRECTORS**

**Lori Weyrick '07**  
**Peter Kouchalakos '07-'08**  
**John Lazarus '07-'08**  
**Alan Herndon '06-'07**

**Editors**

**Moyna Prince**  
**Robert C Meyer**  
**Lynne Fieber**

**Door Prize: Alan Herndon**  
**Education: Nat DeLeon**  
**Hospitality: Elaine Mills**  
**Library: Lynne Fieber**  
**Membership: Moyna Prince**  
**Member Plant Sales: Anthony Arbelaez**  
**Raffle: Peter & Clara Kouchalakos**  
**Refreshments: Patty Gonzalez**

What	Who
Sales Table	Antonio Arbelaez MONTH OFF

**DECEMBER 4, 2007 MEETING 7:30 PM**

**SPEAKER: NONE**  
**RAFFLE: NOPE**  
**WHEN: 7:30PM**  
**WHERE: Back to old room**  
**WHEN: Last Meeting of Year – December 4**  
**WHAT: Holiday Party**  
**Bring in a plant. Why?**

We annually hold a present exchange where you go in and pick up a packaged or wrapped bromeliad (no peeking) in exchange to those who bring in a packaged or wrapped bromeliad. You could be the winner of something huge.



**CHEERS TO ALL !!**  
President's Message

As you all know....this will be my last President's Message and I want to thank you all for your involvement and hard work ! And that is what it takes to have a successful society.

Friends working together and enjoying it !! We now need YOU to help make OUR holiday party the best ever ! Bring in your best recipes so we all can enjoy them and bring in your friends too...so they might want to be members too ! Please call me or Mike Michalski to let us know what food you will be bringing for the dinner and how many guests will be attending. Please send a check to me ahead of time to Sandy Roth at 12670 SW 102 Ave 33176 made out to BSSF.

It is \$15 a guest and remember to bring in a wrapped bromeliad for the gift exchange if you want to participate.  
HAVE A HAPPY HEALTHY HOLIDAY !

Peace and Love  
**Sandy Roth**

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**Biographical Review of Nat DeLeon  
by Moyna Prince**

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Ms. Prince has written an extensive piece about Nat – whose name and accolades are known to most everyone in our society. His history and how he became involved are not as well known. The BROMELIADVISORY will divide this account over the next several months. Enjoy this beautifully written piece about one of the pillars of our Bromeliad Community.]

Late last year I sat down with Nat DeLeon, one of the founding members of the Bromeliad Society of South Florida. I was curious about the early years, when these exotic plants were first arriving from Latin America and sometimes from Europe. And I also wanted to hear about the beginnings of BSSF and the people who got it started.

Like most people in South Florida, Nat came from elsewhere. I asked him what brought him to Miami. He told me that he got out of the navy following WWII service and wanted

to go to college, but all the colleges around Pennsylvania were already filled. "I sent letters all over the state and wasn't able to hook up with anything. Then I had a friend who played quarterback for our high school. He came down to UM to play quarterback, then transferred to West Point. He always raved about the climate in Miami. So in 1947 I sent a letter and got information about enrolling in the University of Miami and that's where I went. I didn't want any more of the northern cold and I thought going to a warmer climate would be just right for me. Even before I enrolled I knew this was the place I was going to stay after I graduated.

"After I graduated I took a job at the Miami Daily News in advertising but I wound up in circulation. Circulation meant having a lot of spare time. And I met a fellow who was doing a lawn business on the side so I went to work with him building up a clientele. After a year or so - he was not the working type - he intimidated me that he was thinking of getting out. I said, 'I'll buy you out.' And I did. I quit the newspaper and decided to do this full time.

"I felt I needed to learn about these plants. I went to Fairchild Tropical Garden a couple of times a week. I also sent away for all kinds of catalogues. In those days some of the better nurseries had catalogues and sold a lot of things besides orchids. I did a lot of self-studying. There were no societies at that point.

"I met my wife Eileen at UM when we were in a marketing class together. I think by that time I knew a fair amount and there was an opening at Parrot Jungle. It may have been a long courtship because at that time Parrot Jungle was at the end of the world and whenever I had a date with her I made sure my tires were in good shape, because it would have been a long walk to go anywhere else - probably in the dark.

"Parrot Jungle was at the point of expansion and they needed somebody and I dove into tropical plants, even more so because I didn't want anyone saying I got the job because I married the boss's daughter. There was plenty of room to make the grounds of Parrot Jungle as interesting as the birds. It was at the time when there was a boom in tourism

and that put Parrot Jungle on the map. What they had there were mostly birds. The grounds were waiting to be worked on.”

I asked Nat how he got started in bromeliads. He replied that he wanted Parrot Jungle to have interesting plants. “Most of the other tourist attractions used annuals and I wanted something different. I wanted people to stop in their tracks and say, ‘Gee, what’s that? That’s beautiful.’ The first bromeliad I found was *Aechmea fasciata*, and it lasted so long and was so easy to grow. I said ‘Gee, I’ve got to get into this group of plants.’

NEXT MONTH: Nat after acquiring the botanical bug moves forward to making a stake.

#### DATES IN THE FUTURE:

**April 17-20, 2008** - Our annual Show  
Thursday bring plants  
Friday judges come  
Sat and Sun is public show

**June 24 - 29, 2008**  
18th World Bromeliad Conference  
Cairns, Australia  
Cairns International Hotel  
More Information can be found.  
<http://www.bromeliadsdownunder.com/>

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#### IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Thomas Wolfe engaged us with his wife’s incredible photographs of the plants within the confines of their humble nursery located on the west coast of Florida.

The slide presentation showed vibrant colors which made the pictures jump out – reminded me at times of the neon effect depicted by sports artist Leroy Neiman. Beautiful.

And, Tom delighted us with folksy humble humor which reminded me of a stand up comic of years ago – George Gobel. Thanks for the fun.

A Goebel moment on Hollywood Squares:  
Peter Marshall: True or false,  
George...experts say there are only seven or eight things in the world dumber than an ant.  
George Goebel: Yes, and I think I voted for six of 'em.



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#### A NEW HOLIDAY IDEA

Last month we attached a copy of a tree and said to all readers – what a great idea. Well, the novelty of bromeliad Christmas (Holiday) Tree is not so novel. Above is Sandy Roth’s masterpiece delivered last year to the Deering Estate. Artist and creative mind extraordinaire, the Sandy Tree bests the commercial party’s creation shown last month.

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#### THIS YEAR’S HOLIDAY MASTERS

The two heads are **Sandy Roth** and **Mike Michalski**. Anyone wishing to become involved should immediately contact these people. We always need to coordinate the *main* dishes – large birds, pork or maybe beef. In the past, the delivery of these items has been wonderful and we are sure it will happen again.

If you would like to bring a side dish – do not worry.

And, rumor has it that the new chiefs are thinking about creating a liquor department for the celebration. Oh, to the holiday spirits.

If you can't get around to cooking, buying a bottle and opening a cork should not be too much a chore.

But, this last call to duty is our greatest annual event. The BSSF delivers you to the annual Holiday fete at the amazing cost of , and this is not a falsehood – nothing. Nothing? Yes, nothing! Just for showing, you get a free plant worth over \$10 – a large percentage of your annual dues.

And, if you bring a present plant, you receive another – free! And, the plants on the tables, if there are any (there are), yup. . . you guessed it – free.

All we ask is two things – make the satiating festivity a potluck. So bring one dish in exchange for your gorging on 20 others. All you have to do is call Mike (305)279-2416 or Sandy (305)256-2886. The other thing? Bring your appetite.

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***MAKE A NOTE: No Meeting In January***

January's first Tuesday is – you guessed it – a holiday. So, we will NOT meet. Our next meeting will be in February when president Karl Green will take the helm. See you all in February at Fairchild.

***MAKE ANOTHER NOTE – Meeting in January for the Show***

The Annual Show is charging around the corner like a freight train down a mountainside. By the time we have our next meeting – it will be time for the show – or practically.

So, we will have a meeting in January at Robert Meyer's house: 6601 SW 73 Ct., Miami, FL. E-mail Robert and vote for the day you prefer. Choices are: Tuesday the 8<sup>th</sup> or Wednesday the 9<sup>th</sup>. Same time: 7:30 PM.

Anyone interested, merely e-mail Robert at [meyerrobertc@cs.com](mailto:meyerrobertc@cs.com).

Anyone who receives his e-mail for the dates, reply with the date of your choice PRIOR to December 30, 2007. He will use the date which accomodates the most.

**First Chance to Volunteer for 2008**

By Robert Meyer

The Annual Show is an exercise of great reward, and like any exercise, it comes after working hard and absorbing much time. It will come on April 18, 2008. Your plants will need to be at the show by April 17, 2008. It is closer than thought.

Our annual event is conceivably one of the greatest held at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. It uses many of the venues and the show is one of the best, if not the best, held in the state of Florida.

A large percentage of our society is involved in this annual activity. And, we have fun each year. One great benefit is the food which Sandy, Judy, Patty and others prepare to feed our judges and staff for the three-day event – of **April 18-20, 2008**.

As the chairman of the event, I open my e-mail to you to enlist in any activity. Reach me at [meyerrobertc@cs.com](mailto:meyerrobertc@cs.com).

**BROMELIADTOID:**

**aech-me-a** /ik'miə, 'ikmiə/ Pronunciation Key  
- Show Spelled Pronunciation[eek-mee-uh, eek-mee-uh]–noun – any of various epiphytic bromeliads of the genus *Aechmea*, native to tropical America, having stiff, spiny leaves and clusters of red, yellow, or blue flowers: popular as a houseplant.  
[Origin: < NL (1794), prob. based on Gk aichmeis armed with a spear, deriv. of aichm spear point, spear]

Some other names come from surnames of people who triumphed in botany:

**Tillandsia:** Elias Tillands, 17th-century Finno-Swedish botanist

**Vriesia:** W.H. de Vriese (1806–62), Dutch botanist