



## January 2009 BSSF Officers 2009

President Robert Meyer  
VP: Pepe Donayre  
Treasurer: Alan Herndon  
Secretary: Barbara Partagas

## DIRECTORS

Past Pres.: Sandy Roth  
Directors:  
Lori Weyrick '09  
Peter Kouchalakos '09  
Judy Pagliarulo '09-'10  
Ofelia Sorzano '09-'10

**Editor**  
**Robert C Meyer**

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

What	Who
Sales Table	Antonio Arbelaez

JANUARY 6, 2009, 7:30 PM

SPEAKER: ALAN HERNDON: "New Beginnings and Hopes for the Future"

RAFFLE TABLE: Peter Kouchalakos

FOOD TABLE: Surely there will be chow

## FEATURED SPEAKER

Alan Herndon is a trained botanist graduating from Florida International University. Alan is a true native having been born here in Miami. He has worked with people in the bromeliad industry for decades and has two brothers also located in Miami-Dade County specializing in bromeliad nursery/sales. He and wife Rhonda have a steadily growing nursery in the Redlands which has expanded significantly over the past few years.



Alan writes more than we may know. He has been published as far back as 1969 –

"A Rainage Evaluation of the Miami Reflectivity-Rainfall Rate Relation." Many numerous other articles can be found in the library or on the internet. Anyone who reads the advisory can see the influence he has had by contributing never less than one major article each month (or many more like this month). Alan will be the featured speaker this month.

LARGE ISSUE – TOO MANY ARTICLE TO OUTLINE HERE. ENJOY.

## ED PRINCE DAY – November 22, 2008

by Robert C. Meyer

The society met at Sunset High School on November 22, 2008 at 10 AM, to prepare the garden in Ed Prince's honor. A previously commissioned plaque was made and paid for. It was lifted and thrust onto the spot with much muscle – weighed more than Peter Kouchalakos or Robert Meyer wish to know. Numerous plants were donated by numerous members. Appearances were made by: **Judy Pagliarulo, Mike Michalski, Jose "Pepe" Donayre, Shirley Berckmans, Jorge Rodriguez, Sara Donayre, Robert Meyer, Desiree Meyer, Moyna Prince, Alan Herndon, Rhonda Herndon, Karl Green, Sandy Roth, Peter Kouchalakos, Lavinia Acton, Peggy Fisher, Irwin Futerfas and Charlotte Futerfas.** Sweat equity abounded. Enlisted members received answers to their prayers with a cool weather adventure – actually able to wear long sleeves.



Lifetime member Moyna Prince stands behind Ed Prince plaque.

When it was over, Fisher, Pagliarulo and Roth went out to hunt down some indigenous rocks for additional show.

On behalf of the others, I think I can say to the Prince family that this project was fun for us, and we would do it again in a moment's notice.

VARIOUS AWARDS SHOULD BE GIVEN OUT:

*Most Intense Labor:* Jorge Rodriguez

*Prettiest Donation:* Moyna Prince (*Neoreglia* Prince)

*Pig Pen:* Robert Meyer

*Most Freckled:* Tie – Judy Pagliarulo, Alan Herndon and Rhonda Herndon

*Ugliest Mulch:* Sandy Roth

*Stealth Eveready Worker:* Tie – Peggy Fisher and Shirley Berkman

*Three Rock Hunting Amigas:* Fisher, Roth and Pagliarulo

*Most Spirited:* Lavinia Acton

*Longest Traveled:* Jose and Sara Donayre

*Most Jokes:* Tie – Mike Michalski and Irwin Futerfas

*Most 'Loved Just Being There and Loved for Being there':* Tie – Karl Green, Irwin Futerfas and Charlotte Futerfas

*Most Underappreciated:* Alan and Rhonda Herndon



Left to Right: Judy Pagliarulo, Mike Michalski, Jose "Pepe" Donayre, Shirley Berckmans, Jorge Rodriguez, Sara Donayre, Robert Meyer, Desiree Meyer, Moyna Prince, Alan Herndon, Rhonda Herndon, Karl Green, Sandy Roth, Peter Kouchalakos, Lavinia Acton, , Peggy Fisher, Irwin Futerfas and Charlotte Futerfas



## In Case You Missed It By Robert Meyer

The Holiday Party became victim to plumbing. Huhh? And, in the end half missed it. Hence, the title to this monthly column unfortunately seems more appropriate than one would have ever imagined.

As the commonly early bird arrivals of **Sandy Roth** and **Judy Pagliarulo** were terminated by police barricades and orders which detoured their northerly trek to the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Gardens (FTBG) to a southerly entrance, they encountered a second barricade which prohibited their arrival. Burst pipes, they were told, prohibited travel on the road. When police badges were flashed (Judy knows where such are kept), Gables police ignored fraternal favor and relayed them to the relegated role of common citizen, from which they whisked themselves and their supplies to Judy's house where she graciously offered her home as an impromptu venue for the party. A million thanks to Judy for this sudden imposition.

Thereafter, Sandy reached for her cell phone and called the numbers on memory dial to inform members of the problem and the detour and the new venue. The warning saved this author and spouse of large chunks of valuable holiday time from gridlocked Miami traffic created by bursting pipes on Old Cutler Road believed to be caused by an unknown – but suspiciously believed to be man-made malfeasance – sources.

Thirteen or more people congregated at Judy's home where her oven reheated the dishes and at 8:00 PM the festivities proceeded forward with only one obstruction – phone calls from other members that they, unlike the early birds, were capable of entry to the garden as the police prohibitive instructions relaxed for reasons remaining unknown to all. In short, the later you left, the earlier you would be to arrive – LOFI (Last out first in). Judy, already having one rug swept out from beneath her, invited all from the garden to come to her home. Some accepted.

The inequitable result of the calamity is that our organization was more divided than the pipe's connections. And, the home of Judy held supplies and other items which the FTBG group did not have. The Orchid Society's caterer rescued those at FTBG and two separate events

miraculously proceeded contemporaneously. Holiday spirits abounded and made a viciously depressing occurrence manage to become a time of good cheer. Twice over.

I cannot assert to know what happened at FTBG, but the booze-influenced banter at Judy's home delivered great gaiety and cheer. People remained at her home until past 11:00 PM, a sure indication of unanimous excitement and good times provided at such a uniquely stressful and impetuous invitation. Others attending were: **Desiree Meyer, Juan Espinosa Almodovar, Barbara Sparling, Robert Meyer, Craig Morell, Alan Herndon, Rhonda Herndon, Michael "Mickey" Gallander, Steve Smutny, Joy Parrish, and Lori Weyrick.**



Directly behind the monument stands the maroon-colored *Neoreglia* Prince, a seemingly rare hybrid which was donated by one of its designated honorees – Moyna Prince.

### Civically Richer, Financially Poorer

This year, the organization released some of the accrued growth of its revenues and delivered a few great contributions to the area: the VA garden (two) at the hospital, the great Nat DeLeon party, and last – but far from least – the great planting of the Ed Prince Garden at Sunset High. We clearly met Article II section 2's objective which recites as follows: "The primary objectives of the society shall be . . . [T]o promote wider public appreciation of bromeliads, by participating in, or sponsoring, public displays or other means of promotion and public education." To the society, and to President Karl Green who reigned over this tributary time, congratulations.

## **A Preliminary History of the Bromeliad Society of South Florida (BSSF)**

by Alan Herndon

The organization now known as the Bromeliad Society International (BSI) was officially organized in 1950. The next year, publication of The Bromeliad Society Bulletin (later changed to Journal of the Bromeliad Society) began. Pages of the early Bulletin provide glimpses of BSSF prehistory. By 1952, bromeliad displays by Miami area residents Mrs. Robert H. Montgomery (wife of the founder of Fairchild Tropical Garden, in later years better known as Nel Jennings) and Helen Cutten (a charter member of BSSF) were noted. Fantastic Gardens, the nursery of Bob and Catherine Wilson (also charter members), began to advertise in the Bulletin in 1955.

Alex Hawkes, a staff member at Fairchild Tropical Gardens and prolific author on tropical plants, as well as another charter member of BSSF, makes his appearance in 1952 with a passing reference to one of his writings in an article on Benevolent Bromeliads by Racine Foster. Hawkes showed up again 1958 by advertising for participants in a plant collecting expedition. Over the next two years, he appeared several times in the pages of the Bromeliad Society Bulletin. In 1959, the first notice of publication for Bromeliad Notes (coauthored by Edward A. Flickenger) appeared, along with an article (Pitcairnia heterophylla at Home). Later that same year, a new plant collecting expedition was advertised and an article on Growing bromeliads in Tree Fern kept his name in front of bromeliad enthusiasts.

It was only a matter of time before those interested in bromeliads found each other. BSSF was organized in 1959 by a core group of active growers. According to Nat DeLeon, the participants at the initial organizational meeting included Helen Cutten, Ralph Davis, Nat De Leon, Ed Flickenger, Alex Hawkes, Lucy Rosing, Catherine Wilson and Robert A. (Bob) Wilson. The first regular meeting was held in May 1959. Early meetings were held at members houses on a rotating basis, but soon the membership grew to a point where larger meeting venues were required. For a time, the society met in a local bank, then moved to the

Garden Center in Simpson Park, where meetings were held for many years. It should be noted that this early group of members was a no-nonsense bunch. Membership was by invitation only; requiring sponsorship by two current members, and an affirmative vote by the Board of Directors. Membership could be stripped from anyone who missed three monthly meetings without an excuse deemed satisfactory by the Board of Directors. Monthly meetings were working affairs; members were assigned to research specific topics related to the biology and culture of bromeliads and expected to report on the results of their researches.

One of the first orders of business for the new society was applying for affiliate status with the BSI. The successful conclusion of this effort was reported in the Bromeliad Society Bulletin (May-Jun 1960). BSSF was the fourth affiliate accepted by the BSI and the second affiliate from Florida, behind the Florida West Coast Bromeliad Society (centered in St. Petersburg). However, the Florida West Coast Bromeliad Society lapsed into inactive status a few years later, so BSSF partisans can still claim to be the oldest continually active affiliate in Florida.

In 1961 the BSSF was credited with 24 members. By 1966, there were 45 members. Membership grew to a peak of just under 200 members during the early 1980's. This peak in membership coincided with the time when bromeliads were just becoming widely known and availability was still limited. BSSF was attractive as source of plants and information about those plants. Now, people who are only interested in including a bromeliad or two in their garden can find plants easily in local stores. With potential membership limited to the more fanatic section of the gardening population, the BSSF roster has receded to approximately 100.

Promotion of bromeliads to the public was one of the continuing aims of the young BSSF. In 1961, the society placed a bromeliad display in the Twelfth Annual Metropolitan Miami Flower Show. By 1964, the society staged an all-bromeliad show at Fairchild Tropical Garden. Another major bromeliad show was staged in 1970. The current series of annual shows started in 1978 (more detail on this

series of shows in the February Advisory). In addition, individual members continued to display bromeliads in more general flower shows or garden shows, often carrying home major awards..

The largest show ever organized by the BSSF was the World Bromeliad Conference in 1988. As the name suggests, this was an international affair, with visitors from 17 countries. The number of plants entered for competition was a staggering 725. I hope to have a detailed report on this show in a future issue of the Advisory.

Another continuing aim of the society was promotion of scientific studies on bromeliads. BSSF has been a frequent contributor to the Bromeliad Identification Center at Selby Botanical Gardens from its founding in 1979 through the present day. In 1981, Sue Gardner (now Sue Sill), a graduate student at Texas A&M University, received a grant to assist her study of *Tillandsia* subgenus *Tillandsia*. Sue Sill still publishes the results of new research in the Journal of the Bromeliad Society. Later, a collaboration between the University of Florida and BSSF helped fund the research of Reed Beaman on *Tillandsia* subgenus *Pseudalcantarea*. Most recently, BSSF has donated generously to the 'Evil Weevil' project of J. Howard Frank (University of Florida). This project primarily looks to determine whether (and how) natural predators can be used to control the introduced beetle, *Metamasius callizona*, that has been attacking *Tillandsia* species native to Florida.

Today, the society is moving into even more wide-ranging activities. The clone preservation project discussed elsewhere in this issue is an example. BSSF also planted two bromeliad gardens accessible to the general public in 2008 (entrance planting for VA Hospital and Ed Prince Memorial garden at Sunset High School). These activities indicate BSSF is still flourishing despite reaching its 50<sup>th</sup> year.

**AUTHOR'S NOTE:** This is a preliminary history because only a fraction of the available material has been studied. I have relied on a nearly complete set of the BromeliAdvisory from April 1981 (a few issues are missing from the period Dec 1990-Nov 1993), BSSF rosters from 1965-66, 1986-1992 and 1994-present, and the early BSI publications. Many other sources of information remain to be studied. In

particular, early issues of the FCBS quarterly publication and the garden pages of the Miami Herald from the 1960's and 1970's would contain much useful information on the activities of both the society and its individual members. There are also files of correspondence between some of the most important early members of BSSF and Lyman B. Smith in the archives at the Smithsonian Institution that should provide much interesting information on the early sources for the bromeliads we now grow in southern Florida. Finally, I still hope to find some key documents, such as more rosters from the early years or a copy of the original application to become an affiliate of BSI, tucked away in some overlooked folder.

### **BSSF Annual Show closer than you think**

In January, we need to start organizing for the Annual Show and Sale (setup Apr 16, judging Apr 17, open to public Apr 18-19). We need help from many members to put on the superb show others have come to expect from BSSF. It is time to start thinking about your own contribution. On Apr 16, we need volunteers to help with setup in the morning, getting plants entered and placing the entered plants in the afternoon and evening. If your interest runs more to art, Sharon Biddex-Maessen could use your help. On Apr 17, the catering crew needs as much help as possible to prepare morning refreshments for judges, a judge's lunch and a party for judges and volunteers in the evening. We also need some help setting up the head table display after judging is completed. On Saturday and Sunday (Apr 18-19), volunteers are needed in a wide variety of roles (active and sedentary positions are available.) More details on the jobs will be available during coming meetings.

In the meantime, if you are a show veteran who has been collecting crystal awards for years, and find your storage/display space becoming cramped, please consider donating some of the excess back to the Society. We will use your donations for the best of purposes: rewarding the enthusiasm of newer growers.

## Unfinished business

### Plants still Going on the Block

At the January meeting, unfinished business to be attended includes distribution of Holiday plants – some are still waiting for their new owners and new homes. Also, a few plants held back during the Auction in October will go on the block. These include the newly described *Aechmea jungurudoensis* (Journal of the Bromeliad Society 58(2):53), a plant still rare in cultivation. Also held over from the Auction are a few early complete year sets of the Bromeliad Society Bulletin. These sets are all earlier than 1972. A complete set of Grande, the picture journal published by the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies, is also available

#### MEMBERSHIP MONTH IS HERE

The last page of the BromeliAdvisory includes your new membership form.

## Growing *Orthophytum*

by Alan Herndon

Since the plant offerings at the Holiday Party this year were heavy in *Orthophytum*, we are publishing a few tips on culture for this group of plants. (Many plants that could not be distributed during the party will be available at the January meeting.) These remarks apply particularly to the *disjunctum* complex as defined by Elton Leme (Journal of the Bromeliad Society 54(1): 36-43. 2004.).

First, the species of *Orthophytum* are remarkably tough. They will survive years with the most minimal care, because they grow naturally in extreme environments. Harry Luther gave a talk on this subject during the 2007 Bromeliad Extravaganza. In general terms, *Orthophytum* species are found on very rocky ground (think solid rock forming the ground surface with small amounts of soil found in crevices and depressions or collecting around the bases of the hardy plants growing there.) Often this ground is extremely dry. During wet periods they can be shallow lakes because the water cannot soak into the rock.

Despite the ability to survive in extreme conditions, *Orthophytum* species respond wonderfully to better conditions in cultivation. Remember that the species are terrestrial; the plants depend on roots for nutrition. For best growth, repot plants every year. The ultimate size of the plant at blooming is highly dependent on the size of the pot it is in and the amount of fertilizer applied (although some species always remain small) It is generally impossible to fertilize *Orthophytum* too much, but you want the plant growth to slow down in winter to minimize the danger to damage during cold spells. All species that I have tried grow perfectly well in full sun. For show plants, however, the leaves are easier to maintain in shade.

Distribution plants came from the world-class collection of **Karl Green**, and are often unavailable from any other source. Enjoy your plants. Also, it's not too early to start planning how you will use them in your entries for the 2010 BSSF Show.

## Clone preservation project gets underway

by Alan Herndon

A few baby steps were taken towards starting the clone preservation project outlined in the October Advisory when Nat DeLeon and I visited the collection of **Lavinia Acton** recently. Lavinia graciously led us through the plants brought together by her late husband George and provided us with the notes made by George detailing the purchase of each plant.

Our intention was to find out what kind of effort will be required to carry out the project. Major questions to be answered included: How difficult will it be to identify unlabelled plants (particularly non-blooming plants) in different collections? How long will it take to survey a collection in detail? .

We would like to advance the project significantly in the spring of 2009. More surveys of collections are planned. Lists of plants of special interest will be generated. We will also encourage other societies to start similar projects since the overall project is far too large for a single society.

In the meantime, all members of the BSSF can help with this project. Even if not expert on the intricacies of Bromeliad taxonomy, you can help. If you have a listing of plants in your collection (the names you purchased the plants under are fine), and could provide us with a copy, we could make a quick assessment of the relative abundance of different clones in collections throughout southern Florida.

If you have a plant you don't know the name of, but is not one you see frequently in other collections, you should bring it to the monthly meeting for the Show and Tell Table. It doesn't matter whether the plant is show quality; we will try to identify the plant.



It will not be possible to identify all plants at once, but we will continue to work on all undetermined plants. As a practical matter, blooming plants are much easier to identify than non-blooming plants, but non-blooming plants with distinctive leaf patterns, such as many *Neoregelia* hybrids can also be identified easily.

Feel free to bring in plants with distinctive features. If there are several possible plants that share those features, you may have to wait until your plant blooms for identification. With

plants lacking distinctive features, it is much better to wait for flowering.

You do not need to have a plant in full flower on the day of the meeting. It may be possible to identify the plants with unopened buds, or we may be able to tell you what to look for when the flowers open to pin down the identity. Similarly, it is often possible to identify plants that are recently past flower. In cases where you have to bring in a post-flowering plant it would be very helpful to make notes on or take a picture of the flower.

We look forward to seeing the plants come in starting with the January meeting.

**BROMELIAD FACTOID:** We all know **Michael Schmale** gives great photos of each show. And, most know the FCBS provides a great photo catalogue. What I did not know – and am somewhat embarrassed to acknowledge – is that within the FCBS website is a cornucopia of great photos like that to the left by our very own **Moyna Prince**. You can visit her on-line album at <http://fcbs.org/prince1.htm>

## Two Holiday Parties

News About the *Other* Party

By Jose Donayre

Not even a the cave-in blocking Old Cutler Road on December 2 as our members were coming to Fairchild Gardens prevented many from joining the now classic feast celebrating another exciting bromeliad year. Coming from the north the police blockade was set at Kendall Rd. and coming from the south the barrier was set right after the entrance to the Garden. In fact, some who tried using Red Rd. found the intersection with Old Cutler closed. And those coming from Broward made it to the party much after 8 pm. In spite of that around 40 traffic-stressed, thirsty and starved members and friends made the trip using whatever route was available.

Not only that, several members unable to reach the Garden cell-phoned each other, made light



of the situation and ended up with their food and plants at Sandy's home where they proceeded to have a grand time. So we had in fact two celebrations and both were good even with a late start.

**Karl Green** presided at the Garden and presented his "State of the Society" message recounting the many activities that had taken place in 2008, from the very successful Show to the ramble to Sarasota and the planting of the **Ed Prince** Memorial garden among other events. He introduced the new officers three of which had made the trip while the others were at party No. 2 and presented plaques to the outgoing Directors **Peggy Fisher** and **John Lazarus** for their services to the Society.



The food was abundant and good as usual with the classic braised pork this time done by Kris Green in a Cuban style with rice and beans and a finger-licking turkey, special secret recipe by **Josefa Leon**. Great salads and veggies in different forms served to balance calories with the many desserts.

As we celebrated the success of 2008, our 50th year finds us going forward with many plans. The fun will continue next year and we will learn even more about bromeliads.

#### Bad Bromeliad Joke

There's nothing like bromeliads to "spike" some interest!

#### APHIDS ATTACK BROMELIADS.

By Howard Frank

Twice in the last 7 or 8 years, I've been told about or have been shown yellow aphids attacking potted bromeliads. The aphid specialist I contacted said they were rice root aphids, not of great interest. But now there's an aphid specialist who wants to study them. If anyone has some now or in September, please mail them to me to hand over to the specialist -- maybe this will help us learn something new. --

Howard Frank

Entomology & Nematology Dept.  
University of Florida  
Gainesville, FL 32611-0630.

#### FCBS Officers for 2008

Chairman	Jose Donayre
Vice-Chairman	Juan Espinosa Almodovar
Secretary	Betsy McCrory
Treasurer	Sudi Hipsley

Recognize these names? BSSF is well represented.





## BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF SOUTH FLORIDA 2009 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

(PLEASE PRINT)

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Couples - please include BOTH first names)

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

TEL CELL TEL.

EMAIL

Include email address in the roster? (Y/N)

Email BromeliAdvisory? (Y/N)

Would you like to preserve natural resources and only receive *BromeliAdvisory* by E-mail? (Y/N)



IF ANY OF THE ABOVE INFORMATION IS DIFFERENT FROM LAST YEAR, PLEASE HIGHLIGHT OR UNDERLINE

Please renew my(our) membership in the BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF SOUTH FLORIDA for the period of March 1, 2009 to February 28, 2010.

Check the category:

Single membership	\$20.00
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Dual membership	\$30.00
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Dual members enjoy all the privileges of active membership, but receive only one copy of the *Advisory*.

Do you want to join the Bromeliad Society International? If so, add \$30/single, \$35/dual, to your BSSF dues and we will do the rest for you. Membership includes the BSI Journal, issued bimonthly. Check Yes if you do. (NOTE: New memberships only)

Make check payable to BSSF

**DUES MUST BE RECEIVED BY MARCH 1, 2009, IN ORDER FOR YOU TO BE INCLUDED IN THE 2009 ROSTER**

Please mail completed form and check to: Moyna Prince  
11220 S.W. 107 Ct  
Miami, Fla. 33176-3902