



BromeliAdvisory

January 2011
BSSF Officers 2011

WEBPAGE:
<http://www.bssf-miami.org/>

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Hospitality: Elaine Mills
Library: Ofelia Sorzano
Membership: Moyna Prince
Member Plant Sales: Antonio Arbelaez
Raffle: Mike Michalski
Refreshments: Patty Gonzalez

What	Who
Sales Table	Antonio Arbelaez

JANUARY 4 2011, 7:30 PM
 Speaker: Terrie Bert "Here's Lookin' at More Bromeliad Genera" (H,I,M,N)"
 RAFFLE TABLE: Mike Michaelski
 FOOD TABLE: Call Sandy

Speaker for the Month:



Dr. Bert has chaired symposia on ecology and aquaculture, and numerous presentations on fisheries, evolutionary biology, population genetics, and biodiversity. She has reviewed for 10 research agencies and 19 professional journals in the areas of marine ecology and biology. Bert has held the editor's title for four publications, and has helped to acquire over \$1 million in research grants. And, in her spare time, she works extensively with bromeliads. Bachelor's Math and Biology Southeast Missouri State University; Master's Marine Science Univ. South Florida, Ph.D. Yale University.

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BSSF Holiday Party 2011 by Alan Herndon

Our Holiday Party was in a new venue, the Visitor Center Ballroom. Since this is the first time we have used the ballroom for this purpose, we have to especially thank those who set up the room for our use. The arrangement worked well, although, if we use the same room in 2011 (this is under discussion), you may feel free to advance any suggestions you have for changes to improve the layout.

MAUREEN ADELMAN was primarily responsible for setting up the tables (i.e. setting the arrangement of tables in the room to provide good traffic flow, dressing the tables with covers and decorative elements, putting out place settings), and deserves as much praise as we can bestow for her efforts.

The scented pinecones were a great hit. SANDY ROTH, disobeying a strict injunction to attend solely as a guest, also helped greatly with the setup under the pretext of 'just delivering the materials'. Next year we have to impose more draconian restrictions on Sandy to make sure she doesn't stray from her role as honored guest to worker again. So efficient were these two, that when CINDY DAVID arrived to help at 3PM, the major part of the setup was already done.

MIKE MICHALSKI (undoubtedly with considerable help from Patty) coordinated the food for the party. As usual, the membership came through with a wide range of delicious dishes for us to enjoy. I only regret that as a late-arriving, not-very-attentive participant, I only know what dish(es) came with what member in pitifully few cases, so I can't give due credit to the many talented cooks in our organization.

Our newly recruited photographer, JOAN MANLEY, was busy snapping photos to document the evening. You can expect to see some of these photos in the email version of this Advisory.

A tray and pitcher set with pineapple motif was donated to the society for auction by JERI PARRISH. (Jeri was unfortunately unable to

attend our party, so the gift was brought in by JOY PARRISH.) Sandy Roth was high bidder and is now the proud new owner. We can expect to see the tray and pitcher again as serving pieces at future BSSF events.

Plants supplied by KARL AND KRIS GREEN were distributed to the attendees as an extra gift after the dinner. Rhonda Herndon supplied plants used as table decorations that were later given to one lucky person at each table. And somehow, Mike Michalski managed to find a set of matching *Billbergia* pots (all in bloom!!) to add even more decoration to the tables.

REMINDER: Last Page includes form to renew your membership

Long Time Member Allen Dies by Carl Bauer

Shirley H. Allen passed away on October 28, 2010.

For newer members of the Society, I need to remind you that Shirley was a man. Tall and handsome, with a big mustache and a beautifully maintained Dodge "muscle car", he grew some of the finest bromeliads in South Florida. He was awarded many, many crystal awards at our shows.

He called me one year to offer some plants for the member plant sale. I went to his condo in Kendall and he showed me the most amazing collection of beautiful bromeliads in a very small space.

A proud man, Shirley sold only 2 or 3 dozen plants at the sale -- all gone in the first day. He only took home his awards and winning bromeliads.

Mulching is Something We are Reminded of Each Season

by Robert Meyer

By the definition alone, you may interpret mulching as an axiomatic necessity in South Florida: "A mulch is any material used to cover the surface of the garden soil to protect plant roots from heat, cold, or drought." Until the past few years, the concentration on mulch was more focused upon heat or drought; but, the recent

influx of cold winds and cool temperatures have brought upon us a question not asked during most the last decade or to: what needs to be done to protect from the cold?

Last edition of the BromeliAdvisory outlined several tactics used by north Florida growers – heat lamps, insulation by cloths or blankets, plastic tarps and various other “tricks of the trade.” Because the cold issue here is not as pronounced as elsewhere in this state, the concern to protect is nearly nonexistent. And, so it should be – until the recent gusts remind us otherwise.

By happenstance and concern over the heat and drought, I stumbled upon yet another cheap and utilitarian method to fight the cold – mulch. And, after the season is over, I do not need to go out and remove bulbs, tarps, drop cloths or other useful items. With mulch, I can honor my steadfast concern to be the least active gardener. I choose to follow my gardening motto: “It was the least I could do.” And, mulch is the least I could do, with results.

My walkway this summer had weeds erupting with little response to chemicals. I pulled, I sprayed, and I lost. Then, I went to the recycle bin, dropped wet newspapers where the weeds were rampant, topped the paper with some soil, followed by compost and topped off with wood chips for aesthetic effect.

Months later, not only are the weeds under control, but the plants within the confines of this “lasagne garden” are thriving – irrespective of the cold. The occasional watering lasts well under the wood where papers and mulch absorb the wetness and maintain soil moisture for a significantly longer period of time. And, as the dry spells continue, I watch the top cover of wood slowly lose its color together with its aroma, knowing that decomposition is occurring – asking that I indulge the garden again in June with another newspaper, dirt/sand, mulch and wood chip layering to effectively protect from the heat and drought in June, while preparing for protection from the cold and drought in the winter.

So, while neighbors run amok in their nighttime waterings, tarp throwings, or other

cold protective measures, I can sit back and read a book knowing that my lazy ways may even be better than the energetic activities of those around me.

Garden Notes - Dec 2010 (Successor to What’s in Bloom) by Alan Herndon

This months installment is going to be unusual in that the very cold weather we experienced near the middle of December wiped away virtually any memory of what happened earlier in the month.

We were seeing plenty of action before the cold weather, of course. All the various clones of *Aechmea weilbachii* have been blooming, along with an array of species in *Aechmea* subgenus *Orgiesia*. One clone or another of *Aechmea nudicaulis*



Vriesea carinata
Photo by Neville Wood
Provided by FCBS

occasionally throws out a bloom spike, as do the species and hybrids of *Billbergia*. Species of *Canistropsis* and *Nidularium* have been in bloom or bud throughout the month. There is also something approaching a mass bloom in *Portea alatisepala*. *Guzmania sanguinea* continues to be in bloom because new rosettes have come into flower at intervals. Among *Neoregelia* species, I have only seen *Neoregelia ampullacea* in bloom, although some *Neoregelia* ‘Bossa Nova’ were beginning to show signs of future bloom before the onslaught of cold. Of course, the hybrids *Neoregelia* ‘Sheba’ and *Neoregelia* ‘Ultima’ always seem to be in bloom.

Several *Vriesea* species are currently in bud, blooming, or have recently finished blooming. These include *Vriesea carinata* and *Vriesea procera*. *Tillandsia* species are keeping pace with the *Vrieseas*.

Be all that as it may, the real drama for the month was concentrated in the Tuesday morning when the



Avoid this look of frozen plants

temperature reached near freezing and the following Wednesday morning when temperatures fell below freezing. Tuesday morning was not as bad as forecast. I did not have to turn on water until 430AM, and the local temperature may not have even reached the freeze level. Wednesday morning, in contrast, was considerably worse than reported on local weather programs. I was almost too late in turning on the water that morning because I foolishly expected the temperature at the nursery to follow the same pattern relative to reported temperatures as in the past. When I arrived at the nursery (130AM) the temperature was just about freezing (33F) in the shadehouse even though the temperature reported in Miami was still in the 40s. After getting the water on, there was nothing to do but sit up the rest of the night listening for pump failure. Interestingly, throughout the morning, the temperatures reported for Homestead stayed at 36F, the same temperature as reported on Tuesday morning. Having been out on both mornings, I can testify that Wednesday was by far the colder without reference to any thermometer readings (a few degrees can make a lot of difference when your clothes are designed for the Florida climate).

The temperature does not seem to have reached the lows we experienced last January as indicated by the lack of icicle formation on trees hit by the watering system. Also, the temperature rose nicely on Thursday, so we only had 2 days of miserably cold weather to contend with. So far the cold damage to our plants seems to be minimal. *Aechmea* 'Little Harv' was the only commercial plant suffering serious damage. These plants were exposed to open sky on the south side of the shadehouse and fell outside of the area protected by water. No extensive cold damage was seen on other plants that proved susceptible last January.

A few scattered, small *Aechmea chantinii* seedlings were burned, but none of the larger plants showed any immediate signs of damage. Mindful of our experience with secondary fungus last year, I sprayed a broad-spectrum fungicide on all *Aechmea chantinii* starting Thursday. Among other plants badly damaged in the cold last January, I have only seen 2 or 3 of our 5" *Alcantarea imperialis* with small amounts of cold damage.

However, one of our large *A. imperialis* in the open suffered considerable burning of the upper leaves. Similarly, with *Neoregelia* 'Bossa Nova', I have only seen 1 or 2 plants with any sign of cold damage.

Plants especially susceptible to cold were predictably hurt badly. In our case, these included *Aechmea fulgens* cultivars although the closely related *Aechmea miniata* and *Aechmea farinosa* showed no short-term damage.. *Aechmea blanchetiana* was also severely burned along with the related *Aechmea rubens* and *Aechmea* 'Forest Flame'. This cold spell also confirmed the susceptibility of *Orthophytum disjunctum* (specifically, the clone Leme 5026) to near freezing temperatures. Every rosette had extensive damage on all exposed leaves, even those under 70% shade. *Orthophytum maracacense*, another species that sustained considerable cold damage in January, weathered this cold period without significant damage. Other species of *Orthophytum* look no different after their encounter with near freezing temperatures than before.

Many plants that proved intolerant of cold last January were shoved into our greenhouse at the last moment. The greenhouse is not truly temperature controlled, but it keeps most of the wind out and with a heater inside can keep the temperature above freezing under any conditions we are likely to encounter during the foreseeable future. In addition, the temperature inside the greenhouse rises quite quickly when there is any available sun, so there is no question of plants having to endure several days of refrigeration.

Despite the cold, many of the plants that were blooming earlier in the month, such as *Aechmea weilbachii*, have continued without any sign of slowing down. Plants in bud, such as *Aechmea araneosa* have also continued to develop without any apparent problems.

Seemingly frail animals also came through the cold period apparently unscathed. Since the cold, I have seen essentially all of the butterflies that we can expect to see regularly at the nursery. A dragonfly was also seen two days after the coldest temperature, although not in any circumstance where identification was possible.. I know from past experience that dragonflies disappear from the interior of southern Florida for a few months during winter, but it is apparently not cold temperatures that primarily determine when they

disappear.

As we wonder whether we will wake up one morning this winter to find our gardens encased in a solid block of ice, we hope for the best. Historically, we have rarely suffered more than a single freeze each winter season. Let's hope we have the worst of this winter already behind us, but keep those blankets and sheets ready _just in case.

Questions for 2011

by Alan Herndon

As 2010 ends, we face some important decisions. Our current meeting time and place along with a resurgent orchid society next door have created a parking problem that we can expect to persist throughout the coming year. Lack of parking space has already created minor problems for our general meetings (members unable to attend), but, more importantly, makes it essentially impossible for us to hold our two special (larger) meetings at the customary time and place.

Options for mitigating this problem include holding our larger meetings (Auction and Holiday Party) in a different location or changing the days of all our meetings. For instance, we could continue to hold our meetings on the customary day (First Tuesday of the month) with the general meetings in the Corbin room but move the Auction (usually October) and Holiday Party (December) to the Visitor Center Ballroom. The Visitor Center Ballroom is more expensive than the room in Corbin, but the net effect, considering that we have been moving the Auction to a larger room for some years now, would be an increase of approximately \$100 in our yearly room rental.

The only drawback with this plan is the need to carry plants (for the Auction) or food (for the Holiday Party) to the second floor. This should be easy to correct by arranging to have carts available for anyone with large amounts to move. Also, note that we will continue to have a fight for parking space every regular meeting.

Alternatively, we could adopt a new meeting day and continue to hold all meetings at the Corbin Building. Days currently open for our meetings include the Third Tuesday of every month, the Forth Tuesday of every month and the Forth Thursday of every month. The potential drawback with these dates is that they may put the December meeting date too much into conflict with family gatherings or family travel time.

One advantage of changing the dates this way is that we would be meeting close to several local bromeliad societies in Florida, raising the possibility of bringing in out-of-state speakers cooperatively.

Of course, there is no reason we could not change the meeting day and still move the Holiday Party (say) to the Ballroom. In that case, we could reasonably have the regular meetings toward the end of the month and still schedule the Holiday Party toward the first of the month.

Until a decision is reached, we will continue to meet on the First Tuesday at Corbin, but we need to decide before the rooms we want are claimed for some other use. Please consider the possibilities presented above and come to the January meeting prepared to voice your opinion. If you can think of additional alternatives, bring them to the meeting.

BSSF Annual Show Will Be Here Sooner than You Think

by Alan Herndon

With 2011 upon us, the BSSF Annual Show and Sale is fewer than four months off. Those who have been in BSSF for a year or more know the importance of this statement: those who are new to BSSF will quickly become aware that this show is the most complicated and important event we put on each year. It is also our



b e s t opportunity to introduce members of the public to the wonders of bromeliads. This years edition is

scheduled for 14-17 April 2011. Setup and plant entry takes place on Thursday, 14 April. Judging is carried out on Friday, 15 April. During these two days the show is closed to the public. The show opens to the public for the weekend and plant sales are also open at that time.

In brief, the Show is an opportunity for local bromeliad growers to display their best plants. Plants entered for competition are judged by Bromeliad Society International certified judges with the winners claiming both bragging rights and handsome crystal pieces carrying unique images of bromeliads. The Sale is an opportunity for buying plants from both out-of-town and local growers that are hard to find elsewhere. We also have an Auction of especially choice plants during the Show. SHARON BIDDEX-MAESSEN runs a bromeliad-themed art show in coordination with the plant show. If you are as interested in paintings as plants, you should talk to her about the plans for the coming year.

We urge all members of the society to participate in the show. Those of you with beautiful plants should enter your best specimens in the competitive portion of the show. If you aren't sure your plants are beautiful enough, you can enter them as 'Display Only', but you are more likely to improve your growing skills once you get into the competitive show and start lusting after the crystal awards. Those who can spare a morning or afternoon (or a whole day) working at the show will find a wide range of important roles to fill. We need (for example), people to staff the information/membership table, people to help sell plants at the Member's Sales Table, people to arrange the plants entered in the show, people to help feed all the volunteers, and on and on and on.

Those who have a show book from the past few years can look up the committees required to make the show work. Anyone ready to volunteer to lead a committee is more than welcome to contact me. All others should start thinking about what they can do to help. Details on what jobs are most in need of volunteers and how to volunteer will be broadcast during the next three months.

Murder in Corbin A

Parts 14 and 15

© by Robert Meyer

If you have missed the previous chapters, go to: <http://bssf-miami.org/newsbulletins.htm>

14.

While large lanky boys threw relatively small orbs toward other young men holding 33-inch ash or hickory tubes inside the confines of the Joe Robbie Stadium – later named Pro Player Park, thereafter named Pro Player Stadium, afterward becoming Dolphin Stadium, which was replaced by Dolphin Stadium, and, most recently, Land Shark Stadium – Boss and Rodriguez wondered whether life could be better than where they sat that calm and warm evening. Marlene, not knowing where they were, wondered how life could be better than attending a pot luck dinner at the BSSF board meeting where the most ardent members congregated to talk about the finest topics delving almost exclusively with bromeliads.

Marlene was soon learning that her newly revived interest in the small ornamental plants was best energized when it did not entail the travails of going out every day of the seven-day week to water, weed and sell the plants beneath the horrid heat of South Miami. Plant talk, she thought, is good. She thought further, plant business is not that good – at all.

“Man, Boss could you imagine anything better than this?” Rodriguez asked not expecting an answer. “Pitching heat, warm weather, and cold beer at the ball park. Occasional perro caliente and peanuts to salt the throat, increase the thirst, and more ball – wow this is the good life.”

“Yea Rodriguez – you hit that on the nose. And, look at the situation here. Bases loaded. Two outs. Marlins have the tying run on third, go ahead run on second, and our hottest hitter at the plate.” After that pronouncement, the mildly to extremely inebriated compadres sat with intent fixation on the plate where the drama of the game was encapsulated into a single at bat. Within minutes, the eagerness of the moment wilted into the despair of the season as the Marlins again lost – this time more pronounced as their best hitter struck out.

“Man, that pisses me off.” Rodriguez blurted. “You know, when I was young, my father had one rule about the game that I never will forget. ‘Rob

a bank, and you can come home for Sunday dinner. Strike out with the bases loaded, don't think about coming home.”

Although he had never played the game, Boss knew what his associate said was true. In the culture they had lived, baseball was not just a game – it was a religion. When Cuba played the United States, the entire exiled community was at their collective seats' edge watching intently to show how the people of their new country far exceeded those of Castro's regime. Baseball, no other arena, best showed the superiority of the new land against the old land.

When the men departed to their cars, heads strewn low because of the emotional blow they felt with the final at bat, Boss felt something in his pants. “Heh man, your phone is ringing.” Rodriguez informed him.

“Hello.” Boss asked.

“Boss, this is Marlene. This was a great evening for information. I need to see you tonight or tomorrow morning. I have a lead which I think warrants a warrant. I think there is a bad apple in this bunch.”

“Seven AM tomorrow – bring Starbucks.”

“Will do.”

And, upon the cell phones ending and being returned to pockets or pocketbooks, Boss felt better. The Marlins' loss had been tempered with something positive in the case he wished to dodge more often each coming day. The case of the tree huggers gnawed at his nerves. He had to end it soon. Hopefully, Marlene could provide the solace with this warrant.

15.

The new morning sprang with great expectations. Marlene, whose news was more than deeply desired, would provide something to Boss which would divert his attention to other cases with less eclectic people and concepts. He needed to return to the normal cuffing of hoodlums and devilish felons whose day-to-day cause was merely to do something violative of the seven deadly sins.

As he walked to his desk with caffeine cup in

hand, Boss heard the Captain yell out, “Vazquez. My office. ASAP.”

Moving his little legs as quickly as they could afford, Boss walked into the Captain's office in little time. As he entered, the Captain gave a head nod relaying the message to close the door and Boss accommodated the Captain's nonverbal request. After the door shut, an outstretched Captain's hand was given toward Boss and the two sat down.

“You know why I called you in?” Captain asked.

“Not really.” Boss responded.

“Well my wife knows Mrs. Johnson – our girls played Khoury league together and summer softball leagues. The two women for years have been super with the kids, but somewhat competitive with one another. Now, they engage in dueling plants. Orchids – well Johnson holds the edge. Ferns: advantage my wife. Flowering trees – I'd call it a tie. But, in bromeliads, it is an open season. And that is where you come in. There is a new plant coming out of Bullis. Hear it is more exotic than the Blue Tango. Variegated perhaps like some of their recent Aechmea hybrids. And, you know how they send out the new plants, right?”

At this point Boss knew he was in trouble. He was soon learning that he was in charge of a case in which he knew the least about the underlying organization – less than even the wives of friends of softball playing girls. Ignorance was bliss, but revealing the same to the Captain was suicide. So he did what he could only do – he nodded up and down.

“And, after they put the plant out in the Extravaganza, they'll need a better show. Right?”

More nods of ignorance.

“I was figuring with the World Conference this year coming to Orlando, that the Bullis people would deliver to the summer's Extravaganza with the weaker model, and ‘Bam’ hit you with the bull's-eye one year later with the new superstar. Right?”

More nods.

“Me too. So I am asking that you somehow get the Bullis people to give you the test plant. See if they can deliver the newbie to you before the World

Conference. Right?"

Nods.

"Good. Then I can count on you. Meeting's over."

As he walked out, Boss thought about what his nods had committed him to. And, what would be the cost? As he strode beyond the eyesight of the Captain, he meandered toward Marlene's desk, called her to his office, and asked her to close the door. Upon her sitting down, instructions were delivered by him almost verbatim from what he had received just moments earlier, and Marlene, instead of nodding, acknowledged with exact certainty of what had to be done and how it could be done. And, in the end, she gave a price tag for the plant. When she left, she was instructed to relay a message to Rodriguez.

As she walked to Rodriguez, she relayed one short sentence, "Boss says you need to give me \$250 from your BSSF poker winnings or the Captain will have you back on the streets wearing a nylon shirt beneath the Miami summer sun." Yet another demand was made early this morning by a member of Miami's finest.

Not such a bad day after all, Boss thought, as the clock struck 9:10 AM in the morning.

President's Message

Wishing you all a Happy New Year in 2011 and a very good year for our Society.

This is my first letter and I want to express my thanks for the chance to be your President. I love the BSSF and will do everything in my power to keep it a great organization.

Thanks to our departing board members, Judy Pagliarulo and Jose [Pepe] Donayre. Both have been big contributors to our past success. Robert Meyer is stepping down from the Presidency but he will remain on the board and continue as our intrepid BromeliAdvisory Editor. He has served in the past as Treasurer, Show Chairman and President. His experience will continue to serve us well in the future.

We welcome Craig Morell as a new director this year.

Please know that the members of the board truly seek the inclusion and activity of all members of the Society. Believe me, you will be heartily welcomed!

Of course, "The Show" will be upon us quickly. [April 19 and 20] Headed by Chairman Alan Herndon, please consider volunteering in some way, or ways, as there is room for everybody. It is really a lot of fun. You can learn a lot and you are needed.

Again, thanks for the honor of being your President. I will do my best to keep this Society "The place you came to for the plants but you stayed because of the people."



Mike Michalski provided plants for tables
Photo courtesy of Joan Manley



New life members Peter and Clara
Kouchalakos
Photo Courtesy of Joan Manley

**BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF SOUTH FLORIDA
2011 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

(PLEASE PRINT)

NAME(S) _____
(Couples - please include BOTH first names)

ADDRESS: _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____

ADD'L. TEL. _____

Include e-mail address in the roster? (Y/N) Yes No

E-mail BromeliAdvisory? (Y/N) Yes No (You will not receive a hard copy)

EMAIL _____

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, 2011 to February 28, 2012.

Check the category:

- Single membership \$20.00
 Dual membership \$30.00

Dual members enjoy all the privileges of active membership, but receive only one copy of the BromeliAdvisory.

Do you want to join the Bromeliad Society International? Yes No

If Yes, add \$45 to your BSSF dues (\$60 dual) and we will do the rest for you.

Membership includes the BSI Journal, issued bimonthly. (NOTE: New memberships only)

Make check payable to BSSF

DUES MUST BE RECEIVED BY MARCH 1, 2011, IN ORDER FOR YOU TO BE INCLUDED IN THE 2011 ROSTER

Please mail completed form and check to: Alan Herndon
Treasurer
19361 SW 128 Ave.
Miami, Fla. 33177-4216



Peter and Clara Kouchalakos



Kouchalakos, Robert Meyer, Carl Bauer and Alan Herndon



Mike Michalski and Patty Gonzalez



Hon. I. Futefas and Dr. Karl Green



Craig Morrel and Sandy Roth



Another happy table



Same table, almost as happy



Doris Boiesen



Kouchalakos and Bruce McAlpin