

## BromeliAdvisory

May 2010  
BSSF Officers 2010

**WEBPAGE:**

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

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Member Plant Sales: Antonio Arbelaez  
Raffle: Mike Michalski  
Refreshments: Patty Gonzalez

What	Who
Sales Table	Antonio Arbelaez

**OCTOBER 5, 2010, 7:00 PM CAN SHOW AT 6:30**

SPEAKER: – AUCTION

Review at 7:00 AM

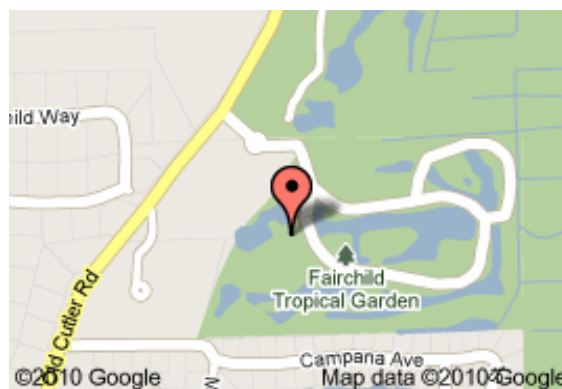
RAFFLE TABLE: Will be there

FOOD TABLE: Enormous – this is show time.

NEW SITE: the Visitor Center

**NOTE THE LOCATION IS NOT CORBIN A**

Where is the Visitors' Center? Look at map below



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## Interview with Famous Eddie O’Flaherty by Robert Meyer

Last week, while he stopped on rare visit to Miami, Eddie O’Flaherty – the master gardener of Dublin’s famous Earlham Gardens – allowed the BromeliAdvisory to speak to him about the recent events of the great horticultural venues of Miami, which he freely opined on during our interview. The interviewer is a past president of the Emerald Society of South Florida and been a friend of O’Flaherty for numerous years.

*Mr “O’Flaherty, what is it that draws you to South Florida?*

First, call me Eddie. Secondly, it has to be the air – the smell of the Ocean is common enough from where I come from. But, the warmth wraps the Ocean salt air in a manner that I believe heals my soul.

*And, Eddie what is your favorite draw in South Florida?*

First, it’s the best pubs in the south. John Martin’s, the Playwright, Clarke’s, and Quinn’s are just a few. I really die for the steak at the Hurricane Bar and Grill if I am here on a Saturday night. If I can manage to get a few moments away from the confines of dose drinkin’ establishments, I ga ta da gardens.

*What gardens please you most?*

No doubt about it – Pinecrest Garden. A piece of the past mixed with the present walkin into the future. Know what I mean? Anyway, the sight is bright with much shade available. It has everything I could ask for but a drinkin booth. City should think about that. And, the price is right.

*Well, now that you mention it – do you know that they are going to create an entrance fee in a few months of \$3 per adult?*

What? Jesus, Mary, and Joseph! A real kick in me blarney stones. I bet the lot had some babblin blaggard blowin on their Guinness at each town hall meetin, til the leaders of da pack tuckered and in their knackered state cowed to the bubblin fool who

convinced the masses that taxing a ne’er been seen garden’s with an entrance fee would save the city’s deficit. Shenanigans. Hope they sit tight in their kips and ne’er visit da place. Oh, how it would be nice to relax with a pint this very moment. Know what I mean?

*[At this time the BromeliAdvisory bought him a pint and proceeded with the interview.]*

*Well do you ever get a chance to see Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden?*

Been to the premises on many an occasion. Parts are to dream for. Stockpiles of palms clustered about, a paradise of the petiole, I say. But, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, whay must dey charge two arms and one leg for an entrance? Good god, \$20 for some poor bloke to enter the site, maybe for an hour’s time. My God.

*Let us change the subject from money, and concentrate instead on the plants, the flora, the horticulture of Fairchild. How is it a special place to you?*



I am Irish, sa ya should kno’ that I can’t avoid the discussion of money. How about another pint, lad? *[At this time the BromeliAdvisory bought him a pint and proceeded with the interview.]* As I was sayin’ – da ya rememba me last words, lad? *[At this time the BromeliAdvisory reread the question to Mr. O’Flaherty.]* Ah, yes me boy. The blumin feckin miserly louts of this ere earth are the bane of society. Do you hear me Yank? The bane, I say. And, it eez the duty of us Irish to continue the waged war upon such louts. To protect the common places for the commoner. Da ya understand me lad? So, I protest their plight. Their charge. Their

rachin into pockets of others who could use the money to feed their young, provide books for them to read, to make this earth a better place.

*At this juncture, O’Flaherty swallowed his last drips of the pint, and he and the BromleiAdvisory sat to toast a few things: the end of summer; the beginning of fall; the soon to come winter; the end of winter; the soon to come after that spring; the winter solstice; the summer equinox; the aligning*

of the planets; the Miami Marlins named Logan Morrison, Mike Stanton and Chris Coughlan; the police of greater Miami; St. Patrick; and Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. In the end, Mr. O'Flaherty left me with a parting toast: "May your neighbors respect you, trouble neglect you, the angels protect you, and heaven accept you."

## Brutal Summer

by Alan Herndon

Following the brutal weather we experienced last winter, we certainly deserved a break during the summer. As it turns out, we have gotten walloped by another season of brutal weather. Throughout the country, heat records have been falling like raindrops in a summer thunderstorm. In our particular corner of this misery, we have been experiencing temperatures consistently in the 90's for months now, and our bromeliads have noticed.

The effects on our plants have generally been a failure to develop good color. *Neoregelia* 'Super Fireball' (a hybrid between *Neo. compacta* and *Neo. 'Fireball'*), a plant that should take on the dark red color of *Neoregelia* 'Fireball' have stubbornly remained green, with only the occasional hint of red in the leaves of scattered plants, for the past several months. Now, we expect there will normally be a period of several months between the time the pups are planted and the growing plants begin to develop good color. The reddish color in these plants develops as the rate of growth slows down below some internally determined level.

We, of course, prefer to have the plants grow rapidly during the first few months after planting, so we supply them with a good amount of food in the form of slow-release fertilizer in the soil mix. Once rooted, we expect the plants to turn green and grow rapidly for 3-4 months. By six months, we expect the fertilizer to be completely exhausted, and the plants to start coloring. Typically, the plants will take a few more months to develop the full red coloration. This year plants that have been in pots since January have remained green much longer than normal and are only now beginning to color up.

I should point out that our stock plants of *Neo. 'Super Fireball'* had the typical red color by the beginning of summer. Of course, these plants have not seen any new fertilizer for at least 2 years, and most of the plants visible at the surface of the pile are 2-3 generations removed from any connection to the soil

medium. Still, this year the red colors of these plants have often bleached in the same manner as you would expect from plants placed in slightly too much sunlight. What makes this so striking is that the stock plants are grown under 50% shade. Since this is one of our full sun plants, we expect 50% shade to be more than enough.

Plants of *Neoregelia* 'Orange Crush' also showed more bleaching than expected during the middle of summer. In particular, the orange color that gives the plant its name was paler, even though we grow most of our plants under 70% shade.

*Neoregelia* 'Annck' bleached so badly under the 50% shade where we have been growing them for the past 3 years, they had to be moved to an area with 70% shade. Once moved, they regained the desired bright pink color and retained it through the rest of the summer.



Neither *Neoregelia* 'Flama' grown from offsets nor *Neoregelia johannis* grown from seeds has colored up normally this year. Seedlings of the *correia-araujo* form of *Neoregelia johannis* are showing the typical color pattern in the leaves, but the color is still subdued, even when seedlings have reached blooming size. Similarly,

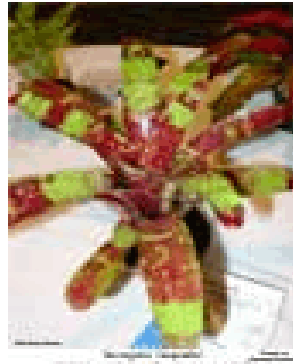
seedlings of the 'Fairchild' clone of *Neoregelia johannis* have reached blooming size with no hint of any color except green. The *Neoregelia* 'Flama' offsets have grown splendidly throughout the summer, but have remained largely green even though several plants have reached blooming size.

As far as I can tell, the extraordinarily hot weather has prodded our bromeliads into fast growth over a longer period than usual. Such rapid growth would make the plants more susceptible to heat damage (or any other kind of damage), and the air temperatures were apparently near enough the tolerance level of some plants that the additional heating from the sun's radiation on clear days was enough to cause heat damage and subsequent bleaching of some leaves.

When temperatures moderate (as we so desperately hope) in a month or so, we should see a sudden flush of color in our plants. However, as temperatures cool, you should look for any unusual growth patterns in your plants. There do not yet seem to be any major cultural problems (such as irregular growth patterns, greater susceptibility to fungal attack or permanent discoloration of leaves) associated with the hot

weather, but it is still possible that such problems will show up months after the heat subsides. Of course, it is also possible that the final effect will simply be a much more vividly colored set of plants in our show next spring.

We did see a potentially major problem with *Neoregelia* 'Gespacho'. This plant is one of the most dependable in the south Florida landscape., and, for the most part, they spent the summer growing extremely rapidly. However, a small number of vigorously growing plants were attacked by fungus and rotted without any visible prior symptoms. I want to emphasize that these were not slow-growing weaklings, but plants that appeared to be among the fastest-growing in their cohorts. Fortunately, this has not been an ongoing problem. Since a few days after the original discovery of the problem, no new cases have been discovered.



*Neoregelia Gespacho*  
Photo By Michael Andreas  
Courtesy of FCBS

Once again, extreme (in our experience, at least) weather has revealed more about the ways bromeliads adapt themselves to our gardens. Next time, we will give the special plants more shade, but, for the most part, we will simply depend on our bromeliads to take whatever nature hands out.

## A Call to Action

by Alan Herndon

Our annual Holiday party is coming soon, and we need to give SANDY, JUDY and LORI a long overdue break from the responsibility of catering all ordinary and special BSSF events. They put in more than enough work throughout the year coordinating and setting up the food table for our regular meetings (including an extraordinary effort for the Auction), the Annual Show and Sale (a four-day marathon event) and any additional special events our society may put on during the year. We owe Sandy and her friends the chance to attend the Holiday Dinner with no responsibilities beyond showing up and enjoying a great meal.

Given how quickly December will be upon us, the Holiday Dinner this year will follow the pattern of the past several years (the guided pot luck model). BSSF provides the major meats and desserts. Members prepare side dishes. In future years, we will be happy to explore alternate methods for organizing the dinner. Any suggestions for change/improvement are welcome.

MIKE MICHALSKI has graciously volunteered to coordinate food preparation this year. He will be contacting members to determine who will be attending and what they plan to bring. He may suggest specific types of dishes to ensure we get a balanced choice of foods. We still need an overall coordinator and volunteers who will be able to come in during the afternoon to set up the room. The coordinator will need to work with Mike to keep track of the number of people (members and guests) coming to the dinner, and request the appropriate number of tables and chairs from Fairchild. We need tables for people, food and distribution plants.

It is also necessary to confirm that BSSF has a sufficient supply of plates, glasses and cutlery on hand to serve the diners. On the afternoon of the dinner, the coordinator is needed 2-3 hours before the dinner to ensure the tables and chairs are adequate, and arranged properly to accommodate plants, people and food. Two or more volunteers will be needed to help cover the tables and put out any decorations. The level of decoration may be as simple as the coordinator chooses. Before the setup is started, it is also very useful to prepare a general plan for how the food should be organized on the serving tables. Since both Mike and Patty work full time, it would be reasonable to assume that food will start arriving before they do, one of the volunteers setting up the room should be prepared to handle this task.

Looking forward to the fast approaching new year, we also need you to start thinking how you can become more active in your society. We always welcome new volunteers. Two important jobs that need we particularly need to fill are Librarian and Raffle Table. More details on these and other opportunities to serve will be forthcoming next month.

## The Auction - Final Reminder

by Alan Herndon

This coming meeting is our annual auction. The location has been moved to the Visitor Center Ballroom, so you need to park in the Main Lot (by the Visitor Center) rather than the lot we normally use. Remember that we start the auction early – 7 PM. So plan to arrive at least half an hour before your normal time. (An added benefit of arriving even earlier will be the opportunity to examine the plants available for bids more closely than will be possible after the auction has started.)

There will be a short business meeting before the auction begins. The nominating committee will present their slate of nominees for officers and



directors in 2011. Nominations for these positions will also be accepted from the floor. Please be sure anyone being nominated has agreed to the nomination.

We need members to donate 1-2 outstanding plants each to help support the society. Please clean the plants some before bringing them. You don't need to clean them to show standards, but give them a washing so they show to best advantage (and attract the highest bids). Non-plant items related to bromeliads are also welcome. In the interest of concluding the auction at a reasonable hour, we ask that you not bring more than 2 plants (or items) per person unless directly asked.

If you are bringing in a plant that has a spectacular bloom, but is not in bloom right now, please try to print a color picture of the plant in bloom so bidders can be appropriately impressed. If that is not available, please write a brief description of the bloom on a card. Any other special features you wish the bidders to know could also be put on a card for the benefit of both the bidders and auctioneers.

So \_ start by listing the kinds of plants you need to fill those holes in your own collection. Come to the auction early. Bid early. Bid often. Take home plants destined to become the new treasures of your garden.

#### AUCTION NOTES:

TIME – 7:00 PM

PLACE – the Visitor Center

DATE – October 5, 2010

Everything but first Tuesday of the month is different. Take a note.

## Murder in Corbin A

Parts 8 and 9

© by Robert Meyer

If you have missed the previous 7 chapters, go to:

<http://bssf-miami.org/newsbulletins.htm>

### 8.

The monthly meeting began with sad remorse about the loss of a long time member. Other than that special obituary announcement, which was known by all by this time, the meeting ran its usual course, including the part where the president inquires about guests or new members. “So do we have any new members or guests at our meeting today?” asked President.

At this time, Marlene raised her hand. Linares pointed to her and asked that she stand up. Marlene

stood up, told her story about the family having been in the business for years, and then how her recent revival of interest in bromeliads was triggered by an advertisement in the Miami Herald, which directed her to the meeting, and now she was here. “Wonderful,” Linares told her. At which time, Marlene took this as her cue to sit down, wait for the announcement of the speaker, at which time she would heighten her hearing and other senses to see who would be the gossip she came to discover.

As the lecturer requested the lights be turned off, so that the powerpoint presentation of a trip to the Amazon could be shown – with its brilliantly taken photographs of the foliage and fauna – Marlene subtly scanned Corbin A to see who spoke to who and about what. Within minutes it was obvious. Like a classroom, the gossip sat in the back of the room. Engaged in almost vividly agitated speech with those around her, Marlene saw Linares conducting front and center stage to the discussion between she and two other women of similar age. Eventually, the lecture ended, the lights were turned on, and the crowd was directed to buy raffle tickets for some provided plants. Others immediately helped themselves to the free food provided by members – which included Marlene's pie.

“This is such a lovely spread of food.” Marlene remarked to Linares. Hoping this discussion would thaw the ice and allow the two to commence discussing more than the obvious.

“Yes, it is.” Linares politely responded. “Did you bring anything?” she asked with sincerity.

“Yes.” Marlene stated and pointed to the pie. “Well, here, take this ticket.” Linares responded. “Food providers are included in a raffle – so keep this ticket.” And, upon which she excused herself to talk to others.

While Linares spoke to others, Marlene very intentionally overheard as much of the discussion as her ears would permit. She needed to know what Linares liked, and would somehow be able to create a common topic of interest to make the two find more than short abbreviated discussion about tickets and food be the full topic of discussion between the two. Suddenly, she heard the word “poker.” And upon that word's utterance, Marlene slowly worked her way across the room to be close to Linares again.

“I have to go soon,” Marlene said to Linares “because my husband's poker group will leave such a mess that cannot be cleaned in the morning – it must be addressed before sleep.”

“Your husband loves to play poker?” Linares asked.

“Lives to play.” Marlene responded.

“Well, you should get him involved with a group I have with some of the members of this club and the orchid society. None of us are any good, but we mix and match bets with money and plants. The winners never leaves empty-handed. Plant exchanges are made in the beginning, and in the end, we can pay off debt with plants which the majority agree on for a price. For instance, if you have a debt of \$30, but a plant we agree to be worth \$20 – you can give the winning player the plant and \$10. Just recently, one of our regulars passed away. We have an opening.”



“Oh, that would be lovely.” Marlene said. And, after exchanging e-mail address and cell numbers, Marlene parted.

When Marlene entered the precinct the next day, she informed Boss that there may be a need for him to pretend to be her husband and play some poker, as this may be where people sip a few drinks, speak a little more freely, and maybe tie this ritual with the murder in Corbin A.

“Hate the game.” Boss told her. “Never saw the purpose but to pass time, shoot the bull, and maybe smoke a decent cigar until the host’s old lady gets home and rags you out.” These statements by Boss had deflated her enthusiasm. “Get Rodriguez to be a make-believe hubby. Man is a card shark who can play the game for days. Heck the Miccosukee Indians have posters of the man’s mug to keep him out of their gold mine of a casino before he bankrupts them.”

Hearing these words, Rodriguez smiled and leered at Marlene – his new wife.

## 9.

Card sharks are defined by hand delicacy and eye contact. Rodriguez knew within seconds that his mates in this bromeliad card club were amateurs – and he wanted to prey upon their naivete to make up where the union’s efforts failed with his wage scale.

But, unbeknownst to him, the large pots were apparently handled by brightly colored inflorescences of the *Guzmania* and other plants which he had no knowledge of. “I am not sure what these things are worth, so I will have to rely upon your expertise.” he

informed the crowd. “The wife does all the gardening in our home.”

“You are very assured of yourself.” Linares commented. “Expecting to take home flowers this evening, and before one card is dealt.” But, Rodriguez knew what was going to happen when watching their faces, when watching the decks being shuffled, and especially when observing the lack of strong liquor being served.

Hoping to get things loosened up, he pulled out a bottle of rum and asked if anyone knew how to make Mojitos. They did, and before minutes passed, cool tumblers adorned with mint green garnishes stood before all the players who soon pursed their lips, sucked the sweet nectar in gulps, and soon thereafter asked for another round. Before the hour was gone, discussions were relaxed. Rodriguez

congratulated himself.

“You know Rodriguez, you play a lot better than your predecessor.” Hankins offered.

“Yes,” Linares added, “he sure seems to have a better handle of the cards, and offers more to the group with a bottle of rum and inspiration for Mojitos. All those in favor of more of Rodriguez’s presence, say ‘Aye.’” Upon which a roar of ayes responded. And, Rodriguez was approved by the poker club with seemingly formal acclaim.

Knowing it was time to counter this discussion, Rodriguez asked, “Hope I am better company too. Know nothing about the other player.”

“Nothing to know.” Linares offered. “Not like the rest of us. More of a stiff shirt. She was an orchid convert who came over to bromeliads because of financial issues.”

“Financial issues?” Rodriguez asked. “I don’t buy these plants, but they can’t put that big a hole in your pocket. How many shekels can these bromeliads cost?”

“Bromeliads? Never a problem to afford. Woolworth’s prices for Macy’s quality. Orchids – always Nordstrom’s prices for any quality. They start at \$50 for a decent plant and can skyrocket to hundreds, even exceed thousands.”

“Wow.” Rodriguez honestly responded, upon which he reached for his cigar, took a puff, and focused back to the game to see how much he

could win on this hand and maybe have a few dollars in his pocket before the night ended. And, he thought further, if he had to take a plant, he would give it to his partner, whereupon she would be thankful knowing the value of the plant, and then maybe receive some of his less-than-artful advances with less restraint – and maybe even accept a dinner date before the next millennium commences.

“Anyone ever leave a plant debt like a gambling debt?” he wondered. “Are there welshers in the plant world?” Upon thinking these issues, he engaged in Plan B – get someone to bet out of their affordable range, refuse to take just any old plant, and put them in the uncomfortable position of being short on payment. Upon entering into this decision, he shifted his weight, stoked more on the cigar, rolled up his sleeves, beamed an infectious smile to his friends, and began to engage in his specialty – all the time hoping the rum had numbed anyone from recognizing what was about to happen.



The VA Garden as laid down August 2008.

## President's Message

By Robert Meyer

This coming week the organization encounters its largest fund raising event of the year. The importance of coming with intentions to purchase and deliver plants is of utmost importance to the organization.

Bring whatever different plants you have in your garden – we know there are few in every yard. The

afficionados of the organization will pique with interest beyond their curiosity, and deliver rewards to the organization.

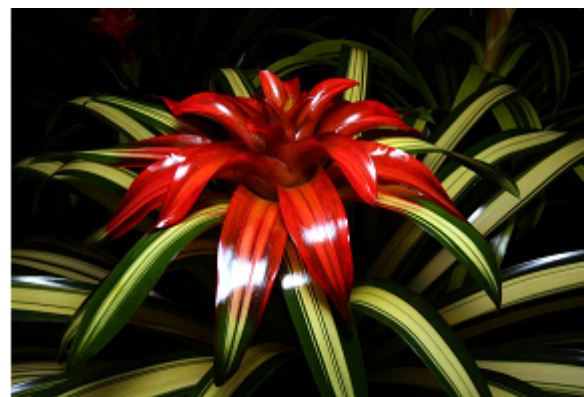
Because a number of the plants are not seen in the market, the prices are what the Madison Avenue people may call priceless. But, we accept less than that – in cash or check.

Jon Lazurus created a new concept of bring a friend. Don't bring just any friend, bring a friend who will engage in conversation and bidding. A few of these additions to the crowd can prove dramatically important to the organization and more. Now, I need to find if I have a friend.

Lastly, encouragement to bring more food is asked. We will have plenty of space for your extra potables or foodstuffs. So come on up and join the crowd.

What not to forget about the auction: THE TIME – 7:00 PM, instead of 7:30. THE PLACE – the Visitor Center, second floor at the new building at the new entrance. Note: elevators will be provided.

And, when you come bring your smile and wallet. In that order.



Nat DeLeon hybrid at 2008 Show.



*Alcantarea imperialis*