



# BromeliAdvisory

**September 2014**

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

 [http://www.facebook.com/groups/BromeliadSF/?bookmark\\_t=group](http://www.facebook.com/groups/BromeliadSF/?bookmark_t=group)  
 <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Bromeliad-Society-of-South-Florida/84661684279>

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Directors:

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 Mem. Plant Sales: Antonio Arbelaez  
 Raffle: Melissa Brail  
 Refreshments: Sandy Roth

What	Who
Sales Table	None

**OCTOBER 21, 2014 7:00 PM**

FOOD: Lenny Goldstein, Susan Muci, Joy Parrish, Barbara Sparling, Robert Meyer, Carl Bauer, Maureen Adelman, Mary Ann Iaruso, and Elaine Mills.

## ANNUAL AUCTION

WHAT to do: Clean Plants

WHERE: Bring to the auction

WHEN: **October 21, 2014 – 7:00 PM**

## ABOUT THE AUCTION

This auction represents the largest deposit-making industry of the society. The auction is the needed annual transfusion for the society. To make it work, you merely need to deliver a few good plants to the sale, and also attend the sale. When attending, bring your wallet or checkbook and let it roll. If the auction meets previous years' expectations, the plants being provided will be extremely different from what the market delivers.



Making your landscape, pool area, and trees to which you affix the lovelies, the talk of the town. Bid, and bid often. And, don't forget – bring a friend.

## President's Message

by Barbara Partagas

### PLEASE SUPPORT OUR AUCTION.

Traditionally our auction is one of the best attended and entertaining meetings of the year. We get a great



show from Peter Kouchalakos, our Mr. Auctioneer Extraordinaire. We play with paper plates, not the food bearing kind. We have some spirited competition for exceptional plants. More importantly, this auction is the major fundraiser

for the Society. The monies raised help support our educational programs, field trips, and other activities. Please plan on participating.

### BRING A FRIEND!

### New Slate for the Election

This is merely a preliminary slate. Anyone wanting to add their name are invited to become a member of our board.

Pres. .... Robert Meyer  
 Vice Pres. .... Alex Bello  
 Sec. .... Maureen Adelman  
 Treas. .. Fred Sussenberger(continues his term)  
 Past President ..... Barbara Partagas

Directors  
 2014-15 ..... Lenny Goldstein  
 2015-16 ..... Peggy Fisher  
 2015-16 ..... Rhonda Herndon  
 2014-15 . Barbara Sparling (continues her term)

### In Case You Missed It

by Robert Meyer

Robert T. McMillan, Jr.'s horticultural career happened predominantly in Florida. He attended Miami schools and completed his education at the University of Miami where he received his Masters degree in Botany.



His education culminated with a Washington State University Ph.D.

in Plant Pathology in 1967. Since that time, Mr. McMillan has been a leading authority of diseases in ornamentals, tropical fruits, and vegetables in the tropics. He patented two biological agents which touched upon his expertise – controlling numerous plant pathogens. These works delivered recognition to the IFAS Extension at the University of Florida's Plant Diagnostic Clinic.

In the 1980s, he developed protocols for regenerating plants from the callus tissue of tomato, naranjilla, cocona, and cacao.

As an Emeritus Professor to the University of Florida, he taught courses such as Botany, Biology, Plant Pathology, Entomology, Environmental Biology, Horticulture, with emphasis on Orchid disease and ornamental plant disorders.

Today, Mr. McMillan works with Kerry's Bromeliad Nursery to develop disease control strategies for orchids and bromeliads.

Delivering sheets of paper to the members, each party could view the sheet while identical visual information showed on the screen, but necessary information had to be filled in by McMillan's decades of experience. Here are some impressions.

At our meeting, Mr. McMillan essentially introduced the backyard grower to the corporate world of plant industry. Kerry's Nursery is listed as one of the largest 100 plant nurseries of the United States, so the concepts of water usage, electrical usage, pathogen agents and more are reviewed in terms of mega-gallons and thousands as oppose to the household uses of spoonfuls and gallon. To orchid people, note the following: Kerry's Bromeliad Nursery is one of the largest potted orchid production complexes in the world – and the largest in North America – growing more than 5 million orchids at its facilities in Homestead and Apopka.

It does not take long to realize that Kerry's is more like Ford than your neighborhood nursery. Kerry's holds over 1 million square feet of automated aluminum benches which push the material on railways through the 2.8 million square feet of production space. People are involved, but robotics is increasingly involved with implementing the plants' moving from place to place.

With automated irrigation, and a recovery system, Kerry's captures and stores up to 250,000 gallons of rainwater from the roofs of its greenhouses. Though the nursery only has to pump groundwater for two or three months of the year, it aims to

eventually meet all of its irrigation needs with collected rainwater.

Ecology is also seen with the plants' health. A closed-loop drench line assures that the plants requiring fungicide or pesticide never have their "medicines" touch the nursery floor. Unused chemicals that pass through the plant are recaptured off the aluminum bottom benches and pumped back to a mother tank.

Robotics even clean the premises. After unloading the plants for shipping, the soiled benches are sent by rail to a robotic washing facility. The benches are sterilized with large pressure washers and that waste water is then collected into another tank where it is disinfected. Any residual dirt and chunks of organic matter are separated. Collected piles of this very high-quality compost are given to local landscapers.

Some of the more interesting facts learned were that the fans put on the premises at Kerry's were not for regulation or prevention of mold, but rather to remove toxins produced by the plants and the power-packed sprays seeking to accelerate growth (essentially the same toxins as naturally produced but in concentrated form). The culprit: benzene. For that reason, McMillan proclaims a total misunderstanding of why others bring plants indoors where they shoot our benzene. Today, various big box nurseries have tags which assert the indoor plants being sold reduce benzene, formaldehyde and ammonia' but, after the McMillan lecture be forewarned, and opt for an open window policy before the indoor plant concept.

Mr. McMillan invited anyone to call him to coordinate a visit to Kerry's. Take advantage of this offer.

PATENTS OF MCMILLAN:  
[Source UF page on McMillan]

\* UF/S&S-29, entitled "'Novel Fungus and Process for Growth Promotion in Plants;" US. Serial No. 265, 633; November, 1988 Inventors, Robert T. McMillan, Jr., and Komaratchi R. Narayanan The significance of this patent is the fact that this is the first true biological effect on plant growth outside of hormones, regulators and nutrients to stimulate growth. In addition there is preliminary evidence that this organism can transfer genes through a plasmid system. If my research proves this to be true it will be the second such case; the other being the crown gall bacterium (*Agrobacterium tumefaciens*).

\* UF/S&S-103, entitled "Novel Methods and Compositions for the Control of Fungi and Bacteria,

U.S. Serial No. 395,625; August, 1989 Inventors, Komaratchi R. Narayanan, and Robert T. McMillan, Jr. The significance of this patent lies in the fact that the organisms are being controlled by a protein (proteinase) which has minimal effect on the environment.

## Road Trip to Kerry's Nursery

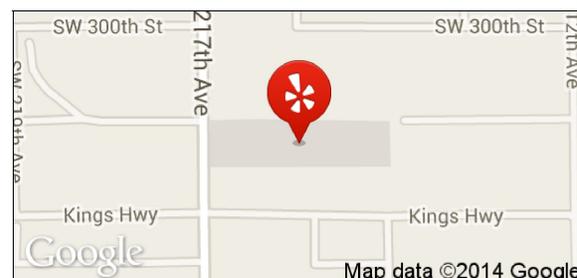
Saturday **October 18, 2014** at **9:30 am** you are invited to meet at **Kerry's Nursery** where Robert McMillan will lead people about the facility. Drive to Kerry's parking lot at **21840 SW 258th St, Homestead, FL 33031** and Bob McMillan will be there to take you around the premises.

Kerry's:

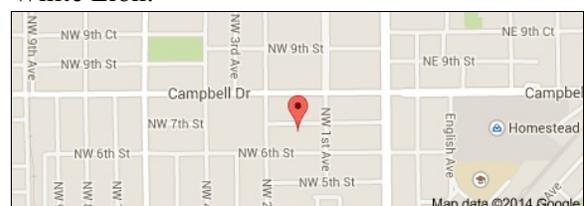


After that, the people who come will determine where to go to Schnebly's (where drink only is served)– **30205 SW 217th Ave, Homestead, FL 33030** – or the White Lion (where food is served) **146 NW 7th St, Homestead, FL 33030**.

Schnebly's:



White Lion:



## Stop and Smell the Bromeliads

by Robert Meyer

I had to recently stop and smell the . . . bromeliads. Then exhale and say “Mashallah.” Some say smell the “roses”, but roses are just as overrated as bromeliads are underrated. And, too rarely does anyone respond to catastrophe with Thank God – “Mashallah.” For that reason alone, let alone so many other pertinent and proper reasons, I adjust the metaphor with new flora and an added term. You see, I had a heart attack last week and am here to tell about it. Mashallah.

A little over nine years ago, my wife Desiree drew a very bad hand and was the victim of a horrible vehicular accident, from which over 90 percent of her body was burned. This caused great pain in the family. This incident was the closest I came to experiencing premature widowhood. As a younger man, anger besot me. “Why did the driver of that truck have to make such a horrible decision?”, I asked constantly. But, the people of Turkey (where the incident occurred) couldn’t understand my emotion. Instead, they told me over and over again – Mashallah. Thanks be to God. “Thank God for what?”, I asked. Thank God she is alive was the uniform response.

And those poignant words sledge hammered me. New perspectives of life swelled my innards. Life all around me changed. For the next seven days I wandered about Ankara as the entrance to the ICU was limited to two hours a day. I started doing things I had not done previously. Each day, I emptied my pockets to the poor. I aided old men in carrying carts up long and steep hills under very severe heat. I shared food with gypsies at the hospital’s parking lot and pretended to sing with them. As they camped out because of monetary constraints, I joined them each morning with extra bread and butter from the all-you-can eat breakfast provided at my \$20-night hotel. I fixed computers at the internet café. I felt like I was part of something that had never been a part of me before. I was terrified and glorious. I was, quite simply, a cocktail of mess and blindness.

Five months later, my wife learned to walk again, returned to work slowly thereafter, and slowly she returned to our family. And, like a broken bone, many of the familial weaknesses seemed stronger from the repair demanded upon us from this extraordinary event. Then this past week came another broken bone.

I got to smell the bromeliads, again. This time, I visited the hospital. First time in over 40 years. This time, my life came tumbling down. But, within

days, I was released, given a laundry list of medications needed for life – time and living – and allowed to live another day. Mashallah, the Turkish people would tell me. Yes. Mashallah.

Life-threatening events come with tremendously divergent highs and lows. Each hopefully coming to an end when life is not lost. In such event, Mashallah may be heralded.

My blockage was at the coined “widow maker.” But, Desiree is not an early widow. A future remains plausible. I can curse at the recent events. I can ask, why me? Why a heart attack to someone who rides bikes, or watches what they eat? But, it did. But, more importantly, I am alive. Mashallah.

Each of my grandfathers lived beyond their heart procedures for 30+ years. Father lived for 20+ after his pacemaker’s implant. The family’s cardiological curse is not so much a disease: It is more of a family warning. There is life after the surgery. I see the future as anything but short. I just see monitoring as a prerequisite to a future. So, as I watch the new concerns, I stoop to smell the bromeliads. Mashallah.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Special thanks to all of you who called, cooked and visited. This is a great society. I am back in the saddle.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Oct. 17-19, 2014

East Everglades Orchid Society Show at RF Orchids,  
82100 SW 182 Ave.  
Homestead, FL 33030  
Show is 9-5 Fri - Sun

#### October 18, 2014 – 9:30 AM

Road Trip to Kerry’s Nursery  
21840 SW 258th St  
Homestead, FL 33031  
<http://kerrys.com/>

Then either Schnebly’s or White Lion  
<http://www.schneblywinery.com/>  
<http://www.whitelioncafe.com/>

#### October 18-19 – 10AM- 5PM

Redland Growfest  
Fruit and Spice Park  
24801 S.W. 187th Avenue  
305-247-5727  
<http://www.fruitandspicepark.org/>



**October 21, 2014 –**

**7:00 PM**

Annual BSSF  
Auction  
Fairchild Tropical  
Botanic Garden  
[http://www.bssf-mia  
mi.org/](http://www.bssf-mia.mi.org/)

**Nov. 7-9, 2014**

Fairchild Botanical Gardens Ramble  
10901 Old Cutler Road  
Coral Gables, FL 33156  
<http://www.fairchildgarden.org/aboutfairchild/>

## **MURDER IN CORBIN A**

© by Robert Meyer

PREVIOUS CHAPTERS MAY BE SEEN IN  
<http://www.bssf-miami.org/>

### **103.**

Marlene's eyes were dancing about as her thoughts still fluttered about the news from Candy and other recent events. She heard voices in the booth, but did not distill one word spoken by the others. Finally, when she had not responded to Shirley on one too many occasions, Shirley belted out, "Hey, honey – what is the matter with you? Can't hear me speaking to you?"

Marlene, suddenly awakened from her torpor, focused on Shirley and said, "Sorry, but my mind had been wandering all day. Nothing personal. I assure you."

"Nothing taken personally." Shirley responded. "Anyway, as I was asking you, haven't I seen you before at the Full House? You and another woman entered there only a few days ago. I got the right person, right?"

Marlene laughed at this comment. Smiled at Shirley and said, "That's a clever one. No, this girl does not frequent places like the Full House. I am too old fashioned for that lifestyle. Just not for me."

"Oh, I know a looker when they walk into the Full House. And when I scout them, I remember them well. You were wearing black pants, a red shirt painted on your torso, and had a thick leather band around your right arm. I saw you and fell in love right away. I know what I saw, honey."

Marlene knew Shirley would engage in a dog fight over whether or not she appeared in the Full House.

And, the longer the fight, the worse it would be for her if she chose to keep her preferences unknown to the guys in the squad. So, she used the oldest line in the book to end the conversation. "I do own black pants, I do own a red shirt, and I have many bracelets and bands. But, that night and any other night for the past two years would end in my fiance's home where he, and no one else, would have the luxury of taking off those items from my body. So, leave it at that." And Marlene completed this response by looking away from Shirley.

"Okay. Let us test this theory of yours. Call the guy up and let me talk to him." Shirley adamantly requested.

Marlene liked that response and expected it. She requested Shirley to engage in clean language, limit the conversation to the relationship, and quietly end the discussion within two minutes. After the ground rules were agreed upon, the call was made from Marlene's cell – speed dialed – and a male answered.

"Honey, it's Marlene. A woman named Shirley wants to ask you a few questions." And then Marlene handed the phone over.

"Hi ya buster. This Marlene here says she is engaged to you. Is that for real?"

The man took a slow pause, and then responded, "Yes. Been engaged for a few years now. She is to wed someday, but the date is not yet established. Why do you want to know?"

"No reason." Shirley responded. "Have a good night."

When the phone call ended, Shirley handed Marlene her phone and apologized the only way Shirley could – she gave a lowly eye look and ordered another round of drinks. When the drinks came, Marlene smiled at Shirley and lifted her glass to her lips and remembered that pact she made two years ago with her gay friend Mike – when one questioned their sexuality, the other could always call the other as the fiancé so the questioning parties would be compelled to believe they were heterosexual. Mike devised the idea, and it worked like a charm.

### **104.**

Being a bartender was not what Earl sought to become. It was not on his high school counselor's career list. Nor were many of his other income-earning ventures. But, that never bothered Earl. He was safe where he worked, the money was good,

and the extracurricular benefits were never unforgiving.

But, when such freelance thoughts drifted through his mind, two more men walked into the bar which Earl knew to be one thing— not regulars. Their shirts, haircuts, and builds gave away their careers. Badges did not have to be held out by these people for anyone to believe they were police. “Feds,” Earl thought. “This does not look good.”

At this time, Earl reached down below the glass compartment holding cleansers and other cleaning items, and pulled out a glock. It was something he received from a police officer during a party when he managed to hide some evidence of a young woman’s presence when the officer was arresting a political person of Miami renown whose problems with the law did not need be exasperated with underage women of the wrong ethnicity. He quickly looked at the safety, checked the cartridge as quietly as he could, and shoved the geometrically rectangular weapon into the back of his pants’ waistband.

Just as he performed the ritual of pretending to be a hood, Earl saw the two men walk toward him and order “virgin” drinks upon which they immediately paid and after such purchase, the two walked toward Boss and the Captain. As this perambulation happened, Marlin’s eyes fixated on the two squares in the Miami Beach hip establishment, and he head signaled to Gort about the awkward presence of the two guys walking toward the two men clad in Tommy Bahama shirts, holding unlit cigars in their mouths, and appearing to be very uncomfortable in their otherwise comfortable surroundings.

“Heck.” Marin thought. “What is pint-sized Lieutenant doing with that other cop in this bar when I am here?” He then looked to Gort and continued with the conversation as though everything inside was perfectly fine.

Earl, having watched Marin carefully while his thoughts flashed across his face, knew that something was very out of joint. He speed dialed his bouncer who was outside enjoying the inspirational views of the young women who traipsed along the avenue in their outfits made for the warm weather. Feeling the vibrations of his phone, Pablo reached for the phone and looked at the screen. It was Earl who had texted Pablo with one simple message, “Cops everywhere inside.”

Pablo, who was tougher than most anyone Earl had ever known, had one soft spot: police. He was born with the wrong people to be his parents, and his grandparent were no better. When the police incarcerated Pablo’s last legal blood guardian,

another officer relayed the boy and his few belongings to foster care. The homes were sporadic, and never permanent. Many of the parents liked him enough, but the monthly stipend provided to them was not enough to handle the 12-year old’s voracious appetite and clothing allowance. He was not a money-maker like the others in his household.

Eventually, when he was 16, he received care by a couple who needed no more money. But, they were more in the character of his parents than of the previous foster house parents. They did not mind his truancy, and in fact favored it for his education of breaking and entering – something they found financially rewarding and very useful when using small children for the breaking and larger children for the entering and looting. When the police caught him the first time, they knew of his name being tarnished by bad seed. So, they gave him a Mulligan. By the third arrest, Pablo was no longer favored by the police. He was another of his clan, and would receive a new standard: guilty until proven innocent. During incarceration, his malleable mind accepted the prophecies of the jail-house clerics who told him that his road to ruin was caused not by genetic mishap with criminal parents who are children of criminals – rather, the self-proclaimed clergy told Pablo, it was the arrest of his parents and grandparents which was the cause. And, since the arrest was created by the police – somehow not the crime – his adversities in society were a derivative of the police, not anything nor anyone else.

Believing these prophecies made Pablo bitter. And, whenever he saw police uniforms, or heard sirens, or watched most prime time television, he would growl. The bane of society were those who we proclaimed were her to protect society. “What hypocrisy,” Pablo would think. “Hypocrisy” was a word he learned in jail which became synonymous with police.

This hatred for the police continued. Earl would know – just by Pablo’s facial expressions – that police were mentioned or near. But, Earl never knew the story about the relationship between the police and Pablo’s hatred for them. Pablo did not discuss his personal life with anyone – especially his employer. But, Earl – who was extremely concerned about this extremely extraordinary circumstance presently arising his premises – knew that Pablo’s feelings about the police would be very useful. Barometrically and physically. And, for that reason, he knew that the message he texted to Pablo would make the large bouncer’s blood pressure rise, and have the large man enter his bar within seconds of receipt.