



# BromeliAdvisory

**March 2011**  
**BSSF Officers 2011**

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

President: Carl Bauer  
 VP: Barbara Partagas  
 Treasurer: Alan Herndon  
 Secretary: Lori Weyrick

**DIRECTORS**

Past Pres.: Robert Meyer

Directors:

- Nat DeLeon '10-'11
- Rhonda Herndon '10-'11
- Sandy Roth '11-'12
- Craig Morrell '11-'12

**Editor**

**Robert C Meyer**

**Door Prize:** Alan Herndon  
**Education:** Nat DeLeon  
**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

**MARCH 15 2011, 7:30 PM**

Speaker: Barbara Partagas – tips on preparing your plants for the show  
 RAFFLE TABLE: Pepe Donayre  
 FOOD TABLE: Ofelia Sorzano, Joy Parrish, Barbara Partagas, Bobby Dooley, and Barbara

**Speaker for the Month:**

Barbara Partagas is a member who has worked before and behind the scenes for years. In this issue, an article she wrote in 2003 is reprinted. Her topic is "Grow to Show!" This will not be a potting class. The program will emphasize the manicuring and exhibiting of plants. Members are encouraged to bring in plants to the March meeting that they need help getting ready or just want to ask whether their plant can go to show. There will be a prize for the most interesting example (to be voted on at the meeting) brought in. **Anyone bringing in plants will be eligible for an additional special plant raffle.**



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**CHECK PHOTOS OF FEBRUARY MEETING**  
<http://www.facebook.com/album.php?aid=276182&id=84661684279>

**NOTICE OF AMENDMENT  
TO BY-LAWS:**

SECOND NOTICE – VOTE WILL OCCUR  
DURING MACH MEETING

This Notice is being given in compliance with **ARTICLE VII** of the Bylaws – and will be subjected to vote at the October 2010 meeting.

PROVISION AS IT READS NOW:

**ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS**

Section 1. Regular meetings of the Society shall be held on the first Tuesday of each month at Fairchild Tropical Garden, 10901 Old Cutler Road, Miami, Florida or at any other place determined appropriate by the membership – upon vote and approval – after one month’s notice in substantial conformity with the procedures outlined in **ARTICLE VII**. Such meeting times and locations may be changed by a majority vote of the membership present at the previous meeting or by the Board in case of emergency. In such cases, the members will be notified as soon as possible.

AMENDED TO:

Section 1. Regular meetings of the Society shall be held on the first Tuesday of each month – or any other date determined appropriate by the membership – at Fairchild Tropical Garden, 10901 Old Cutler Road, Miami, Florida or at any other place determined appropriate by the membership – upon vote and approval – after one month’s notice in substantial conformity with the procedures outlined in **ARTICLE VII**. Such meeting times and locations may be changed by a majority vote of the membership present at the previous meeting or by the Board in case of emergency. In such cases, the members will be notified as soon as possible.

**President's Letter**

Happy Parking! Don't forget our next meeting will begin at 7:30 PM on March 15 at the Garden -- the third Tuesday of the month. At that meeting we will vote to change the by-laws to move all future meetings to the third Tuesday of each month.

All systems are go for our annual show and sale on April 16 and 17. Of course we will also be busy getting ready on the 14th and 15th.

Please reserve as much time as you possibly can during these four days and sign up for as many activities as you can at the meeting.

Our show is highly regarded and rightly so. Your prized bromeliads, the hundreds of beautiful plants, the art work [both students and professional] are all judged and crystal prizes are awarded.

In the garden, we have a great number of Florida's best vendors as well as our own member plant sale.

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden surrounds us, the Tram Tours and beautiful Art Work complete a great day. Be part of it!

*Carl Bauer*

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**THE NOVICE**

*By Barbara Partagas (reprinted and edited from  
The Bromeliadvisory, April, 2003)*

I probably started coming to the BSSF shows about ten years ago. I remember being awed by the inflorescences (which I thought were flowers). I thought these plants were nature at its best. I acquired a few bromeliads over the years. Wonder of wonder: they didn't die on me. I was never a gardener, you see. I hadn't inherited my parents' green thumbs. My dad grew prize-winning dahlias. My mom could make anything grow from a seed. I was only good at over-watering, under-watering, and generally neglecting every plant I was given. When I realized that I wasn't killing off the bromeliads. I thought "Aha, maybe I could grow these plants!"

I took Connie Johnson's bromeliad course at Fairchild Gardens. Armed with "knowledge," I began to acquire some beautiful plants. I watched them for first signs of the inflorescences. It was always a great surprise when they appeared. Thanks, Connie.

After attending the show about three years ago, I finally joined the BSSF. When it came time for the show again last May, I started looking at my bromeliads to see if I had anything I could enter just for the experience. No not in my opinion. Then some members gave me a few suggestions. Yes, there could be a few show worthy plants. I was inspired! I got to work sprucing up those plants.

When I arrived with my plants at the classification table, I saw other entries that made mine look insignificant. Why had I bothered? There were so many plants. Mine were going to get lost in the sea of beauty around them. Why had I bothered? I knew I could learn how to raise better plants from this effort.

After the judging was completed, I saw one of my plants on the awards table. It was quite a thrill. I encourage all of our new members, as well as the seasoned growers, to consider entering even one or two plants in this year's show. It really doesn't take very long to get a plant ready for show. All the help and advice you need is available from fellow BSSF members. Good luck and enjoy your participation in this very special event.

## In Case You Missed It

by Robert Meyer

Nat DeLeon came to speak about the three items of focus when attempting to better produce suckers or pups for plants.

The talk revolved around: (1) light; (2) potting medium and (3) fertilizer. Each, with intrinsic character or variable effect upon the other items of focus, can greatly aid or deter the production of a bromeliad's offspring.

The basic rule for light is that the plants with enough light produce more pups than those with not enough light. And, sometimes the suckers which about the lower leaf sheaths of the parent, are helped when you cut back the dead leaf matter of the parent which may curl down and ultimately shade the emergence of the pups. Good examples included *Alcantarea imperialis* and *Aechmea* 'Little Harv.'

Potting medium has been the topic of other discussion, and what makes the best is a great topic of debate. But, for purposes of improving the growth of pups, Nat asks for three things: (a) loose; (b) good drainage; and (c) full of nutrients. In order to facilitate drainage, Nat endorses the Landmark A-600 six inch pots as they have four side holes in addition to four bottom holes.

Interestingly, Nat believes the soil he used years ago remains the best he ever used – a fern soil. Its ingredients were fibrous peat and perlite. Today, he states, the peat moss is often too powdery and lacks the fibrous character needed for drainage. And, Nat adds that he stopped using perlite and opts for styrofoam pellets instead.

Soil issues also may arrive from the plants you buy. At the larger nurseries, they use potting machines which most likely implement peat moss without perlite or other drainage aids. If the soil dries, the medium becomes extremely difficult to soften, thereupon strangling the roots and diminishing the ability of the pups to reach adulthood. Places like Home Depot and Lowes stock up on such plants, and Nat advises that the pups be removed from this soil into a new potted medium that you make or buy which has fibrous compound and perlite or styrofoam.

Fertilizer's basic mantra is nutricote. Unlike osmocote, nutricote will endure heat and water better, and therefore last longer and not release as readily. He asks for topical fertilizer as opposed to liquid fertilizer. But, at the nursery, they commence plants in pots with good drainage, and apply 20-10-20 for two weeks with liquid fertilizer, and follow with calcium/magnesium mix which is sprayed for two weeks. Upon the completion of this fertilizing ritual, the plants are left on their own.

Nat, the granddaddy of the BSSF, offered more tips to listeners. Best way to start a pup is to pot the plant – and he showed us a secret to holding the plant up [see photos]. The plants with "arms or legs" he held down with one dowel. The plants with no "arms" or "legs" [maybe stoloniferous as opposed to non-stolon plants] he held down with two dowels. The dowels could be bought, or ad-libbed with oak tree twigs which fell down from a storm.

Beyond the concern of light, soil and fertilizer is the concern of when to institute the regimen for the pups. Nat believes that the time arrives to remove the pup when it is 33% of the size of the parent.

Nat gave some tips on the concepts of stapling plants or affixing plants to trees which will be reviewed in the BromeliAdvisory later this year.

### FEEL LIKE SELLING?

Plant society members are invited to sell under their society name at the Fairchild member plant sale on April 30 - May 1. There is also a "presale" to Fellows on Friday, 5pm to 7pm.

I have the application and guidelines for anyone interested.

Carl

Carl

P.S. Deadline is March 30, 2011

## Garden Notes - Feb 2011

By Alan Herndon

Spring has arrived on schedule \_ once again. Our plants started showing signs of renewed growth around the start of February. With the warmer days (and, especially, the warmer nights of recent days), the increase in growth rate has become more obvious.

Initial signs of renewed growth are seen at the bases of the new leaf blades near the center of the plant. For plants with leaves any color other than green, these show a band of tissue that is distinctly greener than present on lower leaves or on the upper regions of the inner leaves. It is generally safe to assume that a greater degree of green color in the band and a more extensive band reflect a more rapid rate of growth in an individual rosette.

Unfortunately, the lingering effects of our cold weather in December are still leading to premature death in some plants. At this point, the problem is caused by secondary fungal infection. Members of *Aechmea* subgenus *Platyachmea* seem to be the most affected. I was able to bring almost all of our *Aechmea chantinii* through with the application of fungicide immediately after the coldest periods. However, I did not treat many of the other species in the subgenus. *Aechmea tessmannii*, *Aechmea cucullata* and *Aechmea retusa* all show distress in varying degrees.

Colors on most of our plants are at the peak of perfection. The cooler (sometimes downright cold) weather of winter, and the slowing of plant growth that accompanied it, allowed the pigments, especially the red pigments, to build

up inside leaves. Many of our *Neoregelia* species and hybrids are also in the early stages of bloom formation. Many of these, of course, produce a bright circle of colored tissue around the inflorescence. The circle of color typically appears long before flowers are evident, and add a highlight to the overall color of the plant.

This is the perfect time to remove and pot *Neoregelia* offsets. With the soil warming, pups without roots can be safely planted and expected to root in a reasonable time. Pups established now can take advantage of the entire summer growing season to reach a large size and then take advantage of the entire winter period to develop full color.. The only problem you face is that many offsets bloom prematurely if they are left on the mother plant too long. You can generally take pups that still have a funnel shape safely, but once the inner leaves begin to spread out it is likely that the offset is already on the path the bloom with will not grow significantly once removed.

Species of *Aechmea* subgenus *Ortgiesia* seem to have had a particularly good blooming season. These plants (including *Aechmea apocalyptica*, *Aechmea caudata*, *Aechmea comata*, *Aechmea cylindrata*, *Aechmea gamosepala*, *Aechmea organensis* among others) have been in bloom since early December 2010 with most pots producing multiple blooms so far this year. Most species of the *Aechmea orlandiana* complex have finished blooming, but the odd plant can still be found with open flowers (particularly in the species *Aechmea gurkeniana* and *Aechmea milsteiniana*). Likewise, the various forms of *Aechmea weilbachii* have largely finished blooming, after some of the smaller rosettes in already flowered clumps bloomed during the past month. Species like *Aechmea distichantha* and *Aechmea wittmackiana* are beginning to bloom along with species in the *Aechmea bromeliifolia* complex. *Aechmea chantinii* is producing a few blooms, but the big spring bloom is yet to come. Several species of the *Aechmea lingulata* complex are blooming. These plants are not commonly cultivated because they have white flowers, green leaves and very little color.

Species and hybrids of *Billbergia* are experiencing a banner year. Most plants are in bloom, have recently finished bloom or are ready to bloom. Again, it is more than likely that the

early pups from the plants that bloomed early in the season will bloom again this year.

*Cryptanthus* species are another group blooming *en masse*. For plants that are so hard to keep looking good during winter, it is amazing that they seem to prefer blooming at a time when the possibility of damaging (to a *Cryptanthus*, anyway) cold still looms.

Members of the *Neoregelia olens* complex and the *Neoregelia compacta* complex are in the middle of their bloom season. For both, the larger rosettes flowered earlier in the year and the smaller rosettes in clumps are now beginning to flower. *Neoregelia ampullacea* and its close relatives are in flower sporadically. However, most *Neoregelia* species and hybrids are showing signs of the coming bloom season.

*Quesnelia*, both the cone-flowering species (subgenus *Quesnelia*) and most species of the subgenus *Billbergiopsis*, are commonly in flower. Unfortunately, species in subgenus *Billbergiopsis* have flowering periods as short as the species of *Billbergia* they so closely resemble. If you don't examine them every day, you are sure to miss some blooms.

Much of the winter peak in *Tillandsia* blooms is past, but there is still plenty to see among your collections. Many species of subgenus *Anoplophytum*, for example, are blooming off-and-on. Many of these are plants that bloomed late last year. In the *Tillandsia fasciculata* complex, very few plants are in flower but several plants are in various stages of bud.

*Vriesea* is still in the midst of a long blooming period. The *Vriesea procera* that has been tantalizing me with bud for months finally produced open flowers around the first of February. This species will retain good color for a long time, but the same cannot be said of many other species. Even though I have had many *Vriesea* spikes around for months, I do not often catch the plants in flower.

Butterflies came through the winter with no apparent problems. They are not around in the numbers you see during the summer months, but over the course of a week, I see almost all

the species (migrants excepted, of course) that I can expect to see over the course of the year. Dragonflies and damselflies have also returned. The number of different species and individuals is still low, but it is a daily occurrence to see at least one flying adult.

**GFWC Plantation Woman's Club and  
Bromeliad Society of Broward  
County Show**

WHEN: March 26, 2011, 9-5

WHERE: 12050 W Sunrise Blvd., Plantation, FL

PRICE: Free

INFO: Colleen Hendrix, timbo-169@comcast.net

**RUSHING TO THE REALLY BIG SHOW**  
by Alan Herndon

April is nearly here. For some, this may mean frantic preparations for filing your income tax. For others,



it means a breakneck rush to finish preparations for our annual show. We only have one more general meeting before the show, so now is the time to decide when you can volunteer 3 or 4 hours of your time to help stage this most important event of the BSSF calendar, and

our best opportunity to spread our interest in bromeliads to members of the general public.

Show committees are being chaired by the usual suspects in most cases.

Advertising  
\*Art (Thur)  
\*Auction (Sat-Sun)

Peter Kouchalakos  
Sharon Biddex-Maessen  
John Lazarus, Peter Kouchalakos

Awards Sponsors  
Awards

Joy Parrish  
Barbara Sparling, Jacquelin Gaudio

\*Catering (Thur-Sun)

Sandy Roth, Judy Pagliarulo

Classification	Nat DeLeon, Karl Green, Lynne Fieber
Clerks	Lynne Fieber
Commercial Sales	Peter Kouchalacos
*Entries (Thur-Fri)	Alan Herndon
*Hospitality(Sat-Sun)	--not yet filled
*Information Table	Sara Donayre
Judges	Dean Fairchild, Pepe Donayre
Member Sales	Elizabeth McQuale, Carl Bauer
Photography	Joel Rosenthal
*Placement (Thur)	--not yet filled
*Plant Holding	Antonio Arbelaez
Publicity	Robert Meyer
Schedule	Dean Fairchild
Show Booklet	Ofelia Sorzano
*Staging (Thur)	Alan Herndon, Sharon Biddex-Maessen

Those committees with a asterisk (\*) are the ones always in need of volunteers. Note the days help is needed for each committee. If you have some free time one or more of those days, and would like to lend a hand, please contact the committee chair to volunteer. If you would like, you could volunteer for different committees on different days.

In addition to thinking about committee assignments, you also need to be preparing your plants for the show. The most useful thing you can do right now is give the plants you are thinking about entering a good cleaning. This means wash out the cups, remove all debris from the leaf axils and clean off any signs of scale infestation. If the plants need to be repotted, do that now also. Get these chores out of the way now, and your plants will only need light cleaning the week of the show. That week you will be able to devote your energy to the details of presentation that are so important to show your plants to best advantage.

The program at our upcoming general meeting will be devoted to the topic of plant preparation and presentation. If you have plants that you think are show-worthy but pose particular problems, it would be a good time to bring them in for friendly advice from fellow members. You also need to pick up a copy of the Show Schedule if you are serious about entering plants for competition.

If you are well organized, and already know what plants you will enter in the show, I request that you send me a list before the show. This will allow us to complete some of the data entry before plants start arriving at the show. Don't worry that you will be forced to enter only the plants on your list.

A partial list of entries would be very helpful if you aren't sure of all the plants you might enter. I also understand that you might need to switch plants at the last moment. The potential time-savings during setup are great enough that I would be happy to make any changes needed. All that I need is your name and a list of the plants you expect to enter. If you are entering a plant in a decorative container, please give the same type of description that you would put on the official entry form. For other Artistic entries, a description would again be very helpful.

Only a month remains before the show starts. Please look for plants that you can enter in the show. If you don't have plants that you feel are worthy of display, please consider the artistic sections. It is less important to have remarkable plants in these sections. It is the harmonious blending of a plant and a decorative container, or the creative use of a plant in a clever artistic arrangement that is most important. Also, remember the cut inflorescence section.

Finally, please volunteer some of your time to help with the show.

### **Murder in Corbin A**

© by Robert Meyer

previous chapters may be seen in  
<http://www.bssf-miami.org/>

### **18**

Within minutes, Marlene stood before Boss with her first cup of coffee still steaming. The discovery of the payment for the attorney had taken only minutes, and Boss – who would never admit to the same – was impressed.

“The judge paid for the attorney.”

“You are sure.”

“Sure, and the amount was \$1,500.00 for getting him out today, and another \$1,500.00 if there would be an arraignment.”

“Anything else I should know, Marlene?”

“If you want to get into specifics. Half of the retainer was a group of *Aechmea fantasia* to be supplied by Linares with an agreed value of \$75.00 per plant, but only credited for \$37.50 a plant wholesale, with the difference of \$750 paid in cash. The society would muster the plants, and the cash would come from the judge who recently sold a strip mall and would be capable of fronting the money without difficulty. The next \$1,5000 would come from a doctor who is a member, and after that it would have been the public defender.”

“And your source is reliable?”

“My source is the bartering agent of the *fantasia* plants. And, she is the gossip of the organization. And, she knows more about the society and this investigation than anyone could imagine.”

“Well, nice. And, now tell ‘em what else should I know?”

“About the new plant? Done deal. I got Bullis to deliver it to the Captain’s house today. Should be in a brown sleeve and totally hidden. It is fuchsia with purple highlights. Named ‘Lilac’s Pride.’ Can’t be bought anywhere as of yet. Cost \$250, and all paid for thanks to Rodriguez. When the Captain comes, remember the name, and that no one else has seen it nor will see it until the World Conference which is 14 months from now. At that time, this plant will sell for hundreds of dollars, and by that time Captain may already have a few pups coming. Anything else?” Marlene beamed. She had performed the seemingly impossible in minutes. Boss was speechless, a rarer event than most would have imagined.

“No. That will do for now.” Boss responded. And as she strode away, Boss mildly uttered, “Nice job.” Thinking his low tone would not be heard by others, and possibly not by Marlene. Boss felt satisfied that he met the civil duty of complimenting an officer for good work, but did so in a manner so that the rest of the group would not overhear and perhaps chide him at a later time.

“You are welcome, Boss.” Marlene responded with a broad smile on her face.

## 19.

When the Captain arrived, he was smiling joyfully – leading all in the precinct to conclude only one thing. But, as usual, they were not right about this. This was a man who got paid, not laid, the night before. He won in poker, and when he got home, the wife was full of talk about the new plant left at the front door. She could not identify it and asked him about it. He had to say that she would have to get the name herself if she was ever going to be a serious horticultural enthusiast – knowing this would buy him some time.

Pointing at Boss, the Captain said, “You, in my office immediately.”

After scurrying into the office, Boss asked the Captain how he felt this fine morning. “Never better.” answered the Captain.

“Now I get to ask you a few questions. Who got the plant and what is it called?”

“We got the plant as instructed, and it is called ‘Lilac’s Pride.’”

“Sure about the name?” the Captain asked.

“My sources are reliable on this one, sir.”

“Very good. Now, this seems to be the beginning of a great blitzkrieg. Wife tells me this a coup d’etat. Our raison d’etre from this moment forward will be to receive and have all the plants that the Johnsons neither can nor will have until open to the public. Strike hard and often. That will be our motto. Compendre, mi amigo?”



“Yessir.” During this entire discussion Boss only heard one set of words repeating over and over again in his mind, “this seems to be the beginning . . .” “Oh my God,” Boss thought, “am I going to become engaged to the tree hugging societies and forced to do what Marlene does so well? And, if I hint that Marlene, not I, is the mastermind, will her career leapfrog my own – all because she likes and knows a little bit more – okay a lot more – about plants than I do?”

“We are going to have you become their friend, who will then have their leaders and you, of course, be entertained by my wife when you

learn who should be invited to the home. Understand?” Captain’s demand shook Boss out of his thoughts.

Nods.

“Good, I hear there is a meeting this coming week. BSSF will look forward to someone like you.”

More nods.

“Okay. That’s all. Back to the grindstone.”

Slowly walking back to his office, Boss sulked about becoming a member of the BSSF. He could not believe where this was all going. He thought, “I have to nip this in the bud.” And then he sulked even more. “Now I am beginning to think in horticultural metaphors.” There was only one thing to say or do.

“Marlene! In my office now.”

## PROXY FOR AMENDMENT TO BY-LAWS

I, \_\_\_\_\_, a member of the Bromeliad Society of South Florida, hereby deliver my vote through this proxy to \_\_\_\_\_, who I know to also be a member of the Bromeliad Society of South Florida, and such person may either vote on my behalf verbally, or deliver this proxy to the parties at the meeting, to establish that my vote on the By-Law Amendment [Article VI, Section 1], to be registered as:

- FOR
- AGAINST

**ARTICLE VI , SECTION 1** of the By-Laws to read as follows:

Section 1. Regular meetings of the Society shall beheld on the first Tuesday of each month – or any other date determined appropriate by the membership – at Fairchild Tropical Garden, 10901 Old Cutler Road, Miami, Florida or at any other place determined appropriate by the membership – upon vote and approval – after one month’s notice in substantial conformity with the procedures outlined in ARTICLE VII . Such meeting times and locations may be changed by a majority vote of the membership present at the previous meeting or by the Board in case of emergency. In such cases, the members will be notified as soon as possible.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Member

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**You can E-mail to Barbara Partagas: [bpargas@bellsouth.net](mailto:bpargas@bellsouth.net)**