

# FLORIDA WEST COAST BROMELIAD SOCIETY

1954-2014

*Celebrating 60 Years of Bromeliads*



*floridabromeliads.org*

## June 2014 Newsletter

### NEXT MEETING

**Date & Time:**

Tuesday, June 3

Doors open at 7 pm; meeting starts at 7:30

**Location:**

Good Samaritan Church

6085 Park Boulevard

Pinellas Park, Florida 33781

### Program

Dr. Terrie Bert's presentation, *Quietly Riotous—the Q and R Bromeliads*, is about three diverse and beautiful genera--Quesnelia, Racinaea, and Ronnbergia. This is the latest in a series of talks on various genera Terrie has presented, in alphabetical order, over the last few years (with eight more genera to go until the end of the alphabet). Tracing the distributions of these three genera will take us through Central and South America and to the Galapagos. While these three are poorly represented in collections throughout the world, Terrie will tell us how to grow them here in Florida. She promises that, as she has done in the past, there will be a game at the end of the talk based on information from the presentation, with bromeliads as prizes for those who know correct answers.

### Plant Sales

The speaker will be the sole plant vendor for this meeting and there will be no member plant sales.

### LAST MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

#### Annual Bromeliad Auction

Last month's Annual Bromeliad Auction, our biggest fund raiser each year, was a great event thanks to Franne Matwijczyk who put the event together and the folks who helped out. Auctioneers Barret Bassick, Dave Johnston, Alton Lee, Kathy Risley, and Susan Sousa worked the crowd to get the maximum dollar for each plant while Runners John Edwards and Alvaro Maranhao brought auction items around for bidders to see first hand. Cashiers Gary Lund, Mike Petryszak, and Barbara Stayer registered bidders and kept track of the finances. And the others who helped but are unnamed here should know we are most grateful for their assistance. Below is a photo essay of the auction with pictures taken by Nicole Matwijczyk.



Live (left) and silent (right) auction plants, bidders, and auctioneer Kathy Risley



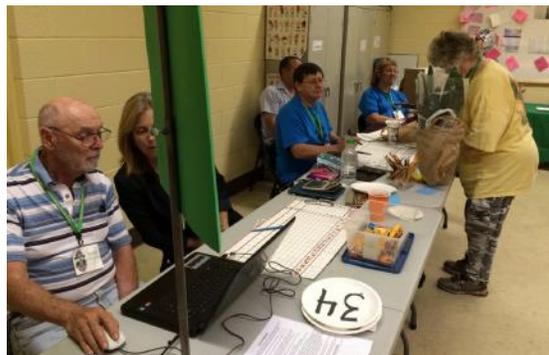
Some auction plants



Auctioneers Alton Lee and Kathy Risley working the crowd for bids.



Auctioneers Barret Bassick and Susan Sousa and Runner John Edwards.



Cashiers Mike Petryszak, Barbara Stayer, and Gary Lund



Al Maranhao showing *Neo. 'Painted Delight'*



*Aechmea 'Raspberry'* donated by Michael Kiehl



Plants, plants and more plants



Art piece by Steve Littlefield



The 'girls' contemplate bidding.

## THIS AND THAT

### Neoregelia 'Blast Off' Variations

Some bromeliads produce offsets that are dissimilar to the mother and/or to each other. An article in the April 2014 issue of the East London Bromeliad Society, South Africa, shows an example of such a bromeliad that one of their members had for their meeting's Show and Tell segment.

"Lyn Wegner showed three of her *Neoregelia* 'Blast Off' bromeliads [pictured below] to illustrate how variable they can be. *Neoregelia* 'Blast Off' originated in Brazil, parents unknown and was registered in 2005. It has very variable growth, flowering and foliage. When and if the plant blooms, it flushes white or raspberry, or a combination of both colours. If it doesn't bloom it develops a tubular growth which rises from the centre of the plant, hence the rather apt name *Neoregelia* 'Blast Off'."



And as you can see in the photos, leaves for *Neo.* 'Blast Off' can vary from white tipped to cross banded green/white/pink to marbled.

### HOW TO REMOVE AN "UPPER" PUP

By Herb Plever, published in the New York Bromeliad Society newsletter *Bromeliana*, February 2012, Volume 49, No. 22

A few tillandsias are stingy in producing offsets and will put up only one pup after flowering, no matter how strong they are or how much they are fertilized. But most other bromeliads will produce at least two offsets and usually many more than that. However, *Guzmania sanguinea* and *Vriesea splendens* (and most of its cultivars such as *V.* 'Hera' or *V.* 'Splendret') if left on their own will produce only one pup after flowering, and it will come up along the side of the inflorescence in the central reservoir. Instead of emerging from a leaf axil or from the base of the parent plant, these "upper" pups come up at the top of the plant. We don't know what evolutionary benefit these plants gained from adapting to a single upper pup, but, of course, we do not know their evolutionary history eons ago. Suffice it to say that natural selection was, as always, operative during this development - even if it might have been overcome by other physical factors. These plants are called "upper puppers", and they are the only two broms I know of that have this habit. You can leave the upper pup to grow on while the parent plant dies back. Eventually the upper pup will replace the parent, BUT since it is growing on top of the stem of the parent it will be somewhat out of the pot and the succeeding generation will be more so. The alternative is to remove the upper pup and repot it. An additional advantage is that stingy *Guzmania sanguinea* and *Vriesea splendens* may produce basal offsets when the upper pup is removed. Surgical removal of the pup must be done with care as its base is fragile and may snap off if outward pressure is applied. So it is important to be able to visualize the base before any cutting is done. A very sharp knife is mandatory.

STEP 1-Since the pup came up along the side of the inflorescence it will have a definite lean to that side. Orient the pot so that the leaning side is facing you as shown in Photo 1, right. (The parent's leaves had been cut short when the plant flowered to make room for more plants in the window tray. At the time I hadn't intended to do this experiment and write this article, or I would have left the leaves intact to have a more vigorous parent after the surgical removal.)



PHOTO 1 - Facing the leaning side.

STEP 2 - Strip the parental leaves that are covering the pup by separating them in the center lengthwise. You will then be able to visualize the entire base of the pup, as shown in Photo 2, right.



PHOTO 2 - Pup base revealed

STEP 3 - Make a horizontal cut below the pup base and downward vertical cuts on each side of the base to below the base and into the parent. Then place the sharp knife between the pup and the parent with the blade slightly angled toward the parent. A smooth downward cut all the way down will free the pup from its parent. Do not apply any outward pressure on the pup while cutting down to free it. If the knife is really sharp you won't need to push or apply pressure as the blade will do the work. When this pup came free from the parent I was happy to see that the base was intact and that it was showing roots at the bottom, as shown in Photo 3, right. Now that the pup is free from the parent, we must take additional steps to assure that it will remain healthy, free from infection and to prepare for its eventual safe potting in a medium.



PHOTO 3 - Freed base showing roots

STEP 4 - The base of the pup and the cut part of the parent are now vulnerable to infection from both fungus and bacteria. If you have a fungicide powder (or Rootone which has a fungicide) dust the base of the pup and the cut side of the parent. In the alternative, swab some alcohol on those areas and then lightly spray them with Safer's Soap solution. These areas will not be safe until the tissue there has hardened and callused, and until then the pup should not be potted. This will take 3 to 5 days.

STEP 5 - During this period I like to suspend the pup in air so the base is not touching anything. I accomplish this by hanging the pup in a clean yogurt container with the leaves hanging over the top circumference as shown by Photo 4, right. I also occasionally lightly spray the base with Safer's Soap.



PHOTO 4 - Pup suspended in container

STEP 6 - When the base of the pup has sufficiently callused, place the pup in a medium in which it will rapidly grow roots and establish itself to grow on its own. The area around the base should be consistently moist but not wet. In that area I would place presoaked pieces of peat moss (or sphagnum moss) that will retain moisture for a reasonable period. You can drop some potting soil into the hole to fill up the spaces, as rooting is encouraged when the base is more tightly surrounded by the medium. To keep the pup stabilized and immovable during this initial period, I place two strips of masking tape overlapping across the top of the pot to tightly firm up the pup. This temporary brace should be removed when the pup is stabilized with its own roots. See Photo 5, right.



PHOTO 5 - Pup potted and stabilized 5 days later.

## Plants in Bloom this Month



*Aechmea melinonii*



*Neoregelia* 'Ray LeMieux'



*Vriesea* 'Splenet'

### UPCOMING EVENTS, 2014

September 8-14, 21<sup>st</sup> World Bromeliad Conference, *Bromeliads in Paradise*  
Honolulu, Hawaii, USA ([www.bsi.org/new/wbc-2014-registration-and-info](http://www.bsi.org/new/wbc-2014-registration-and-info))

August 9, Bromeliad Sale

University of South Florida Botanical Gardens, Tampa, FL ([cas.usf.edu/garden](http://cas.usf.edu/garden))

August 16-17, Seminole Bromeliad and Tropical Plant Society Sale

The Garden Club of Sanford, Sanford, FL

October 3-4, Tropiflora Fall Festival

Tropiflora Nursery, 3530 Tallavast Road, Sarasota, 941-351-2267 ([tropiflora.com](http://tropiflora.com))

October 11-12, USF Botanical Gardens Fall Plant Sale

University of South Florida, Tampa, FL ([cas.usf.edu/garden](http://cas.usf.edu/garden))

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