

The Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society

Next meeting **Sunday, December 10th, 2017 1:00pm.**

Colony in the Wood – club house

4000 S. Clyde Morris Blvd., Port Orange 32129

December, 2017

Merry Christmas 2017!

President – Rick Ryals 386/679-8700

**Co-Vice Presidents – Hedy Quirk and Jane Villa-Lobos
386/847-4513 and 386/446-0341**

Secretary – Rose Vincel 386/453-3229

Treasurer – Eve Krauth 386/871-1041

Annual FECBS holiday dinner!

If you were hoping for a boring business meeting, you might want to skip our December gathering – because it will consist only of good will, great food, a 50/50 raffle and a chance to compete in our annual holiday centerpiece competition!

Regarding the dinner – first of all, note the time. We will start at 1:00 rather than 1:30 like usual. The club will provide the main course for the luncheon, the plates and cutlery, and the beverages. You, our membership, are asked to bring the side dishes and dessert. We didn't get a chance to circulate a sign-up sheet at the November meeting, but all present were asked to contact the officers if you are wondering what to bring. This will hopefully avoid finding out at the last minute that everyone has decided to bring their family's infamous lima bean, beet, and squid casserole. Of course, if everyone decided to bring their favorite brownie recipe I for one would not be too disappointed!

Now, if you are unfamiliar with a 50/50 raffle, here's how it works: you buy (*that means you may need to bring some money with you. Tickets will be \$5 each*) a ticket or tickets for this raffle. You keep half of each ticket and the other half goes into a bowl. Meanwhile, the money from the sale of all tickets goes into a separate container. The

winning ticket is drawn and if it is your ticket, you win half of the total amount that was taken in from ticket sales. The other half of the money goes to the club.

Also, as in past years we will be having a centerpiece competition at this meeting – so, let your imagination run wild and let's see what you can create (using bromeliads of course!) around a Christmas theme. The membership will pick the winner and there will be a prize for the winner. The winner from two years ago was featured in the Bromeliad Society International Journal, so this is your ticket to fame and fortune!...well, maybe fame...probably not so much fortune.

Where does all of that delicious food come from at each meeting?

Everyone seems to enjoy having refreshments at our meetings, but as our club grew larger and larger it became a bit complicated determining who would bring the goodies each month. Because of that, several years ago we began our system of asking each person when their birthdays occurred. When your birthday month comes along, we ask that you bring something to the meeting that same month for our refreshment break. Simple, no muss, no fuss – everyone knows exactly when they are supposed to bring in refreshments. Happy birthday, now

bring us some food!! Also, to ensure that everything continues to run smoothly, we have one or more member(s) each month designated as ‘birthday host to remind that month’s birthday people of their obligations. This person also sets up the refreshment table, brings drinks and follows through with the all-important cleanup at the end of the meeting. This may seem like a lot for one person to handle and that’s why it is really best if more than one person signs up as a birthday host for each month. We’ve been very fortunate this past year in having volunteers to serve as hosts and we hope that when we circulate a sign-up sheet for the upcoming year we can count on your support!

Last month’s meeting – Bingo!

We finally held the much anticipated “Bromeliad Bingo” event and I think everyone had a wonderful time. Thank you, Rick, for obtaining those beautiful plants and for calling out the Bingo number. Congratulations to all of the winners and a wish for better luck next time to those who didn’t win – it just wasn’t in the cards this time!



Judith claims her prize for a winning card – a beautiful Skotak Neoregelia hybrid. This and the next 2 photos by Rick Ryals.



Deep in concentration as the next Bingo number is called.



Ron and Marsha with a beautiful Guzmania.

Also at last month’s meeting was our annual election of officers for the approaching new year. Thank you, Rick, Hedy, Jane and Eve, for agreeing to retain your seats for 2018. Thank you Rose for the excellent job you did as Secretary this past year and we welcome Ruth Gessner who will be taking over for Rose beginning in January.

Out and about...

I had heard of a beautiful “bromeliad Christmas tree” currently on display for the holiday season at Bok Tower Gardens in Lake Wales and so, Calandra and I naturally had to see what that is all about. Bok Tower Gardens is a National Historic Landmark and well worth the trip (a little over 2hour drive from our home in Port Orange) even without the goal of seeing bromeliads in the landscape and, as it turned out, we weren’t disappointed.

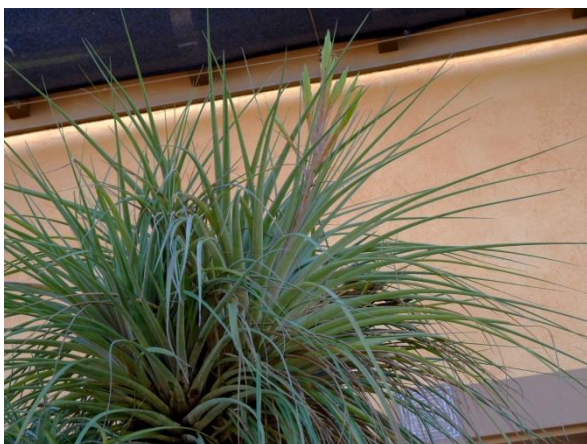


Bok Tower in Lake Wales

Bromeliads are some of the first things you see when you enter the visitors' area.



Tillandsia "tree" at entrance to gardens



Tillandsia fasciculata mounted on Tillandsia tree

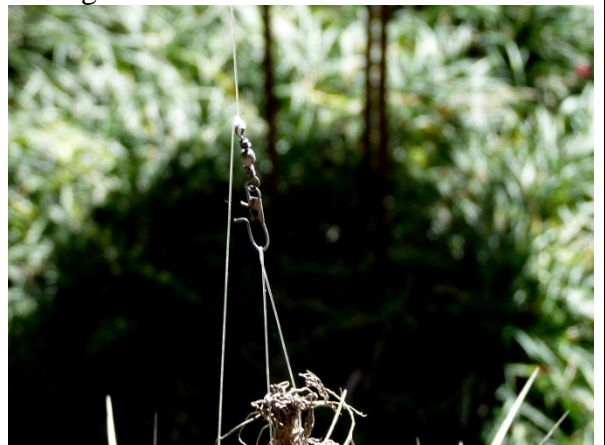


Curtain of hanging Tillandsias provide privacy wall in outside dining area.



Close-up of Tillandsia curtain.

Especially interesting was a swaying wall of Tillandsias that were used as a privacy curtain outside of the café in the visitors' area. These plants were well-established and had produced multiple generations of new plants while attached on monofilament fishing line!

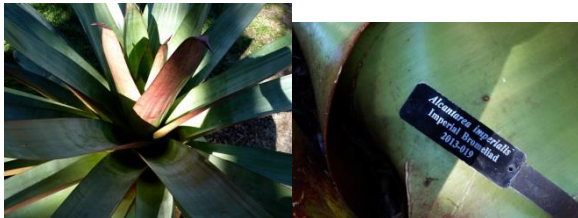


"curtain" is made using fishing line and a combination of snaps and swivels to allow plants to turn in the breeze.

Bromeliads are prominently displayed around the adjoining Pinewood estate.



No, this plant is not on fire – it's the bloom of *Aechmea blanchettiana*!



Some, but not all of the landscape plants are identified.



Not labelled, but probably *Vriesea* 'Mint Julip'



Mass planting of *Aechmea* 'Little Harv'



'Little Harv' in bloom in garden

It took us a while to find it, but eventually we came to the bromeliad Christmas tree. What a great idea – this 16ft. “tree” is formed of a latticework of steel strapping shaped into a tall cone and then *Neoregelias* are placed in holes in the latticework! Only two varieties of Neo. hybrids were used in the display, making the contrast in colors just that much more dramatic. The tree is then topped out with *Alcantarea odorata* and bright green ivy.



Now, here's a tip if you are planning on visiting the gardens around Bok Tower – the admission fee is a bit high, but if you go to website “Groupon” and register there, you can purchase the tickets a half price! We tried this and at the entrance gate noticed that practically everyone entering had Groupon tickets on their cell phones. The downside (there's always a downside!) is that from then on, I've been getting emails from Groupon encouraging me to take advantage of other discounts that they offer! Oh well...



Photo by Calandra Thurrott



Set just outside of the Pinewood estate, the bromeliad Christmas tree drew many admirers while we were visiting the gardens.

Looking ahead:

December 2, 3 2017 – Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society show and sale. 9 – 4 on Saturday;

10 – 4 on Sunday.

Location: ARABA SHRINE TEMPLE 2010 Hanson Street Fort Myers, Fl 33901

April 21 – 22, 2018 Bromeliad Society of South Florida annual show and sale
10901 Old Cutler Road, Coral Gables 33156

February 24th, 2018

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies first meeting of the new year. Hosted by the Gainesville Bromeliad Society

March 24,25, 2018

Bromeliad Society of South Florida 40th Annual Show and Sale at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, Coral Gables Fl.



May 29 – June 3, 2018

You won't want to miss the upcoming World Bromeliad Conference in San Diego, Ca.!

Included in the registration fee is a half-day afternoon tour in central San Diego. We'll visit two members' gardens in the historic neighborhood of Mission Hills, and there will be a stop in Balboa Park to see the world-famous Botanical Building, built for the Panama-California Exposition of 1915.

An additional option while you are there:
This is a DO NOT MISS experience, with garden tours followed by a catered dinner at the San Diego Botanic Garden. In order to optimize the amount of time at each garden and avoid traffic, the optional excursion to north San Diego County destinations is planned for Thursday. The luxury buses will take you to diverse, wonderful gardens. To build the suspense, I am not going to tell you the names of the members who are opening their gardens to you. Suffice it to say they are enchanted gardens. One garden has thousands of tillandsias, billbergias, and other bromeliads in a shade house. More bromeliads, succulents and rare fruit trees grow in the landscape. The owners are perfectionists with a great knowledge of each plant and how it is best grown. Sound like fun? Of course, it does! Register now through the website at www.bsi.org.



Florida East Coast
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