



orlandiana

**Newsletter of the
Bromeliad Society of Central Florida**
Volume no. 49, Issue no. 2

Next meeting: February 16, 2022

Where: Leu Gardens, 1920 N. Forest Avenue, Orlando, FL 32803

6:30 –7:00 is pre-meeting time for purchasing plants

Meeting officially begins at 7:00 pm

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Visit the Bromeliad Society of Central Florida Website at:
www.bromeliadorslando.com

You will find an activities page that lists our speakers for upcoming meetings, downloadable copies of newsletters, plant photos, a map to Leu Gardens, and more! This is a great place for the public to find out about our Society or send us a message. Check it out!

The President's Message

As I sit down to write this 'Message', I am too tired from hauling broms to write anything. It was two full days of hauling plants to protect them, and four long days of hauling everything back. It was one thing to take down a hanging plant, and another be at the top of a ladder stretching to re-hang it. Why do I do all this stuff for some plant?!? Well, I decided to do some reading on the psychology of plant obsessed people.

There is a lot written on the benefits of gardening generally. There is scientific evidence that gardening alleviates stress, anxiety and depression. So, my anxiety over the freeze was my obsession alleviating all other stresses. Gardening supposedly also teaches important values, like the value of hard work, patience, determination and caring for others. I guess I'll learn those lessons when that 20+ year-old *Alcantarea imperialis* finally blooms. I did cover it despite the wind trying to blow the covers off. Gardening is also good for one's physical health, which is why I ache all over from hauling plants. It was good for me. There are a lot of other benefits, but at this point I decided I was not learning much about why I do these things, just that there are beneficial side effects if you don't kill yourself in the process.

Researching more in depth led to a bunch of articles in psychological journals, but I did not have the patience, determination or care enough to do the hard work of digesting them. So, I just sat back and asked myself, 'Why do you do this?'

I thought about the wonder of a flower emerging from a prickly *Billbergia*, and the bizarre shapes in which *Tillandsias* grow. I would much rather help a *Vriesea* get rooted than drill holes like a woodworking friend does. Power drills and saws give me headaches. When that *Vriesea* blooms, I'll be proud I played a part. There is a sense of achievement that hitting a white ball into a hole just doesn't do for me.

I think part of the obsession comes from connecting to my roots. When I was a small boy in Kentucky, everyone grew something. There were backyard vegetable gardens, flower gardens, fruit trees, grape arbors and all the spring blooming trees and shrubs. For six months of the year, everything was bare and 'dead'. Having growing things around me is restorative. I like the fact that I can pull up a weed and it does not talk back. The Japanese speak of "shinrin yoku", which roughly translates as "forest bathing". It concerns the experience of being immersed in a living green world with none of the mechanized artificiality of modern life intruding. Being in Nature restores harmony within.

Then my thoughts were interrupted by a memory of one of those psychology journal articles. Being in close contact with Nature releases serotonin within our brains, giving a sense of

happiness and fulfillment. Maybe that is why I'm obsessed by broms. Have I become addicted to broms because my scratched-up arms give me a sense of fulfillment? (Or, is there a dose of masochism in me?) My aching back is actually making me happy. Really?

Well, I guess so. I am happy that everything got through the freeze. And, I am happy that there are no more freezes in the long-range forecast. But, you know, all that work was not so fulfilling that I want to do it again. Still, I'm happy I did it. And, I know I'll do it again next time. I bet the folks crazy enough to be reading this will also.Definitely something addictive going on.

Happy February!
- Mike McMahon

January Minutes

BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA, INC.

Meeting Minutes

January 19, 2022

President Mike McMahon convened the meeting at 7:00 PM with a Special Presentation to Mike Saunders and Marilyn Howser.

Mike and Marilyn were presented Tropiflora gift certificates as tokens of the Society's appreciation and gratitude for serving as president and vice president respectively for the past 5 years.

Program:

Calandra Thurrott continued with the 2nd part of her presentation. She presented the 1st part at the October meeting last year. This program focused on the time she attended the 2008 Bromeliad World Conference held in Cairns, Australia.

Announcement of Secret Bid Auction:

President Mike McMahon announced that 7 plants were available for the new secret bid auction. There is a minimum bid for each plant. Bidding will be done during the break. Phil Wright is coordinating the auction.

Refreshment Break was taken, with a variety of dishes, snacks and desserts provided by members and laid out by Hospitality Coordinator, Joe Ventura.

Business Meeting was called to order by President Mike McMahon at around 8pm.

We welcomed new members and guests

New Members:

Miguel and Doris Nicolas
Christina Hurtado and mother Leonor Villaquiran
Sonia Priore
Penny Potter
Sandra Caruthers
Martha Clouse
Priscilla Rose
Mariella Gonzalez
Rekha Shah
Jennifer Rosenblat
Liza Iszard and daughter Violet
Sandy Sherer

October 2021 meeting minutes were published in the Orlandiana Newsletter. No corrections were made and they stand approved as filed.

Joyce Gibault gave the treasurer's report.

Marilyn Howser, Membership Secretary, discussed the 2021 membership dues.

Dues are due and payable on January 1 and delinquent on February 1. One notice of delinquency shall be mailed. Only members who have paid full annual dues, student members, life members and others designated by the Board of Directors will receive the society publications. All life, paid regular and student members will be listed in the annual roster.

Telka diFate, Librarian, was not able to attend the meeting but sent in her report that books are available to check out and return the following month. The Society has an extensive book collection and we hope that members will be interested.

Tim Dreggors, Vice President and Program Chair, announced that Nick Beltran will be the guest speaker for the February meeting. Topic of his presentation will be about bromeliad

hybridizing and freezing pollen.

Karen Steinberg spoke about the planned field trip to McCrory's nursery on the Sunday, Feb 20 at 2pm. Meeting place will be at the nursery site in Eustis, Fl. This field trip will be attended by both our society and the Seminole Bromeliad and Tropical Plant Society. She will send out all the field trip details by email.

Phil Wright announced the winners of the secret bid auction.

President Mike McMahon announced that Evan McCrory has been appointed the chairman for this year's Leu Garden Plant Sale. If anyone is interested in participating, please contact Evan or Mike.

President Mike McMahon announced the Bromeliad World Conference will be held in Sarasota on Jun 7-11, 2022. Host hotel is Hyatt Regency Sarasota. Registration is currently open. You can get refund through March 31. If you cancel by May 7, you can get 50% refund. Start thinking about entering plants for the show. Greg Kolojeski can answer any questions you may have.

Old Business – none.

New Business.

World Bromeliad Participation. President Mike McMahon announced that BSCF has been requested to participate in the conference. The Board has considered several suggestions.

Constructing Floor Display – The theme is “The Big Show” so circus themes are requested. This is considered too much of an undertaking due to the distance. However, if anyone is interested to volunteer, please contact Mike.

Raffle Basket – creating a basket with plant supplies, bromeliad themed art, pottery, candles, pineapple-themed items, books, wine/treats, plants and pups. If anyone is interested to volunteer, please contact Mike.

Ad for the WBC Program. Full page is \$150. The Board supports taking an ad. Ad copy is needed before April 18. We could list our meeting dates, promote our FB page and website in the ad.

A motion was made by Phil Wright to take an ad in the WBC program and seconded by Joyce Gibault. Motion was passed.

Contribute 4 or 5 plants to the Rare Plant Auction.

John Boardman and Mike McMahon will donate one each.

We need 2 to 3 more from members.

Anyone willing to volunteer to collect the donated plants and transport them to Sarasota should contact Mike McMahon.

WBC needs volunteers for various jobs throughout the WBC.

Susan Souza (727)420-4269 is coordinating volunteers.

Volunteer for Registration, Publicity, Setups/Takedowns, Security, Photography, Raffle and Silent Auction Help and International Assistance.

New Business.

Per Bylaws Art V, section 1, we must re-affirm the dues. Our dues are \$15 plus \$5 for additional family member listed.

Joe Ventura motioned to reaffirm the current amount. It was seconded by Karen Steinberg. The motion passed.

Per Bylaws, we need to appoint members to an audit committee. Anyone interested to volunteer please contact Mike.

Show and Tell.

John Boardman brought some amazing bromeliads for show and tell. Some of the plants he brought were Neoregelia Hot Pink, Neoregelia Eye Candy and Neoregelia Fire Bomb.

Mike McMahon brought in some seedling plants to demonstrate the different growth stages of bromeliads. He brought some 6-month old seedlings, some 1-year old seedlings and some that were over 4 years old.

Door Prize and Raffle drawing – the meeting concluded with the drawings for door prize and raffle plants donated by members. Every one of the approximate 50 persons attending the meeting received at least one plant, if they wanted one.

Adjourned at 8:55 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Liesl Haas

Secretary

McCrorry's Bromeliad Nursery Field Trip in February!

Date: Sunday, February 20, 2022

Time: 2:00 pm

Location: McCrorry's Bromeliad Nursery
(address below)

This is a wonderful opportunity to tour an inspiring nursery full of beautiful bromeliads! Come and mingle with the members of the Seminole Bromeliad and Tropical Plant Society while touring greenhouses at one of the largest growers of bromeliads in the country. You will most certainly learn new and interesting tips, as well as an appreciation for all the hard work and dedication that goes into a large commercial operation such as McCrorry's.



Important information!

- We will meet at the Nursery at 2:00 pm to begin the tour, plan on being there for a few hours.
- Evan McCrorry will be our guide!
- You do not need to register, just show up at the nursery at 2:00 for the event
- This is a walking tour – some of the areas are a bit sloped and there are some gravel areas, so wear comfortable shoes that don't mind possibly getting a bit wet!
- Evan will try to have a golf cart available for anyone who needs a bit of assistance getting around
- There will be beautiful plants for sale, please bring cash or a credit card (cash preferred)
- You can bring a guest if you like
- We'll have coolers with soft drinks and bottled water available for everyone
- You will definitely LOVE this tour and have a great time!

Address:

McCrary's Bromeliad Nursery
35152 La Place Court
Eustis, Florida 32736
352-357-9876

Link to [Google.com](https://www.google.com) map:

<https://goo.gl/maps/YwkaMMu6LEPq5yNBA>

From Orlando, FL (about a 40 minute trip)

Get on FL-408 W (2 min, 0.6 mi) then take FL-429 N to W Kelly Park Road. Take exit 38 from FL-429 N (24 min, 26.9 mi). Take County Rd 437 to 35152 La Place Court in Lake County (14 min, 8.9 mi).

Please shoot me an email if you have any questions and I'll get back to you as soon as I can!
steinberg.km@gmail.com

See everyone at the BSCF meeting on the 16th, we will have another reminder at the meeting and in email before the event on the 20th.

Thanks,
Karen

Leu Gardens' Annual Spring Plant Sale

March 12 & 13, 2022, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Free Admission all Weekend!

Over 50 growers and vendors selling a variety of plants and outdoor accessories to enhance your landscape and home.

Bring a wagon or plant cart for your purchases. All vendors take cash and most take credit cards.

Leu Gardens' Members shop early on Saturday, March 12 at 8:00 a.m., please show your membership card and photo ID to be admitted early. Guest(s) of members will be able to enter at 9:00 a.m. Guest Passes and AHS Reciprocal are not accepted during the Leu Members' early shopping hour.



World Bromeliad Conference 2022

The **World Bromeliad Conference** was rescheduled from 2021 to **June 7-11, 2022**. The host hotel will be the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Sarasota. **Refunds for the 2022 conference will be granted in full up through March 31, 2022.** From April 1, 2022 through May 7, 2022 (which is 30 days before the conference), a refund will be granted for half of the registration fee. There will be no refunds within 30 days of the start of the conference.

Events will include tours of two of the world's leading Bromeliad nurseries ([Michael's Bromeliads](#) and [Tropiflora](#)), a visit to the renowned [Marie Selby Botanical Gardens](#) (with free admission for conference registrants), a number of notable speakers, an opening conference reception and welcome address, a banquet with a rare plant sale and auction, a plant sale with numerous sellers, a fantastic judged plant show, and more.



Guest Speaker

Nick Bethman is our February speaker and has been living in Florida for over 30 years and resides in Boca Raton with his wife (who doesn't share his passion for bromeliads). His father was a farmer in the St. Louis area and although Nick never lived on a farm, he spent his summers doing farm work until he was able to escape. Nick has been collecting bromeliads for 20 years and hybridizing and growing them from seed since 2008. He has registered 3 bigenerics including the first ever subfamily cross but has lately mostly stopped making new hybrids. He has dozens of nice, unregistered, normal hybrids waiting to be thrown away or registered. He recently served as the Bromeliad Society of the Palm Beaches President, editor of the 'Spine and Stolon' and FCBS representative. Nick has been professionally developing software since 1985 after graduating from the University of Missouri with a BS in computer science. He also served as an Intelligence Officer in the US Army Reserve during the cold war.



Tom and Carol Wolfe will be our march speakers, topic TBA.

Pictures



Steve Beaudoin covered his shade structure to create a greenhouse with heaters.



More of Steve's broms had to be covered...



And, Steve filled his garage as well.



Not clothes drying, but Maxine & Phil Wright's hanging plants.



John Boardman wraps up his bromeliads, benches too.



Although wrapped in freeze cloth, John Boardman's *Alcantarea imperialis* suffered some damage

After Johns benches were unwrapped, no damage.



Mike McMahon uses step ladders and 10' poles to hang plants in garage.



Irrigating at 26 degrees created ice magic in the yard of Eloise Beach.



...and icicles, too.



When uncovered, Julia Jenson's clump of blooming *Aechmea blanchetiana* were fine.



A *Neoregelia Julia* overlooked suffered damage.



Robin Norton draped towels on some exposed Neoregelias.



After the freeze, no damage.

I would love to have members submit pictures and articles that can be published in our newsletter. It's not that hard to do and can even be a picture or article from another source as long as you reference it.

Submit to lordvec54@gmail.com and type BSCF somewhere in the subject so I don't miss it. Submissions should be received by the 8th of the month to insure publication that month.



HOW BSCF MEMBERS GOT THROUGH THE FREEZE

January ended with freezing weather not experienced in Central Florida for several years. For two weekends in a row there were frost and freeze warnings. Fortunately, below freezing temperatures were not as widespread as forecast, but there was severe cold in some locales. Our members had a range of experiences, and dealt with the cold in different ways. We can learn from each other how to cope with the inevitable reminders that global warming has not made Central Florida part of the tropics, no matter how hot the summers become.

Robin Norton resides just east of Leu Gardens in a tree filled neighborhood so everything was pretty much protected from frost. It did get down to 34° on her screen porch, colder than it had been in a very long time. She covered the plants she most cared about with sheets, towels and very light blankets. Everything in her garden survived well, even the *Aechmea nudicaulis* that has fared the worst in the past.

At the opposite extreme, Eloise Beach experienced a Sunday morning low in Apopka of 26. It was below freezing for several hours. Eloise “heated” her greenhouses with under bench watering. Outdoors in the landscape, she also irrigated. Because of the impending hard freeze, she ran sprinklers continuously to protect plants using ice. It created a crystal wonderland in her yard. There were *Alcantareas* with freeze damage spotted all around the Orlando area. A coating of ice protected Eloise’s.

Steve Beaudoin is on the east side of downtown Orlando. It took him two days to get ready for the freeze. All open area bromeliads were covered with frost cloth. Special and

expensive bromeliads were moved into the greenhouse or the garage. All hanging bromeliads, orchids, and other species were placed on the ground in protected areas, the garage, and the greenhouse. He pushed all potted bromeliads together when possible and moved them up against the house. Two oil-based radiator style heaters kept his greenhouse cozy. Steve recorded a low of 32 degrees in the open areas and 34 in the shade house. The greenhouse was a toasty 62 degrees at 7 am. On initial inspection, there was no bromeliad cold damage. There was obvious damage to other types of plants he did not protect.

Near Windermere, Phil and Maxine Wright started covering their most valuable plants with sheets on Friday, January 28th. Phil has a 30-foot hanging basket rack, which was covered with sheets creating a tent. There are many large oaks on their property providing some frost protection. Although the Windermere area is usually colder than in Orlando, the coldest it got at the Wrights was 36F. There was no damage at all.

In the St Cloud area, John Boardman had a huge job. His shadecloth covered greenhouse is 30' x 35', with benches filled with over a thousand potted bromeliads and about 200 hang from the rafters. Everything is placed on the ground under the benches, which are then wrapped in freeze cloth down to the ground. A neighbor helped get the 30' long freeze cloth spread over the benches. Wind does not help. Then John crawls along the ground looking for plants that fell over. Once that's done, the freeze cloth is weighted down with heavy paver stones. The idea is to have the warmth of the ground protect the plants snuggled under the wrapped benches. Around the yard, bromeliads in the ground were also covered. A rather large collection of *Cryptanthus* were taken into the house and other plants were moved to a screened porch and covered with a sheet. John runs 3 ceiling fans on high during the cold nights. About 50 of his very best plants were brought into the garage, while his car stayed out in the cold. John did not take temperature readings, but had frost three nights. One night frost was observed across the yard by 10:00 PM. When the cold was over, John confronted the chore of getting everything back in place. He hired some help. Everything did well except for one giant *Alcantarea imperialis* 'Rubra' located in the open in his front yard was damaged. Another *Alcantarea* in his back yard under palm trees and scrub oaks had no damage. John is happy to have it over, but the four feral cats he feeds are sorry to see the freeze cloth go. They loved it, jumping on the covered benches like it was a game just for them.

In freezing Deland, Tim Dreggors crammed as many as he could in his greenhouse, which he covered with plastic. A small space heater was placed in there in the hope it would be just enough to keep above freezing. With over 400 squeezed in, Tim was wondering if

maybe he had too many broms. He covered everything else with frost cloth and sheets. It got down to 25 degrees and was below freezing for many hours. Tim got through OK. All was well in the greenhouse. When the yard was uncovered some leaf tips were burned. After so much worry, all in all, Tim was pretty pleased.

Cristina Hurtado is one of our newer members who lives in the Dr. Phillips area. Her neighborhood was hit hard. All the grass turned yellow from heavy frost. But, she protected her broms. Plants in pots were placed inside the house and garage. Ones planted in the ground were covered with sheets the first weekend. Cristina thought it was not enough because the sheets were wet the next day. She then created tents to cover the sheets at night using tarp (only for the night). For a few bromeliads, she used a trash can (inverse), and for others a couple of cardboard boxes. With all that care, there was no damage to her bromeliads.

Julia Jenson lives at the end of a canal on Lake Conway and believes the water kept the temperature moderate at 37 degrees, not the forecast freeze. But, the forecast scared her into covering everything she could until it got too dark to see. There was no freeze, but there was frost. Julia lost one *Neoregelia* that had not gotten covered. "However my amazing *Blanchetiana* which have been blooming for almost a year came through fine."

At Marty Folk's home in rural Kissimmee, it got down to 30 degrees (documented on a max/min thermometer). However, he suspects it was not below freezing for very long because he has seen only minimal plant damage so far. The amount of time below freezing makes a big difference in how the plants cope. Marty covered lots of broms with frost cloth, but also left many uncovered where there is some tree protection. The only damage evident so far is on some uncovered *Aechmea blanchetiana* that have patches of cold burn. "Overall I am very happy with the outcome!"

John Vecchitto covered his broms the best he could. Unfortunately, his gardens doubled in size in 2021 but the number of frost covers he had stayed the same. His expensive ones came through fine, but the neglected ones not so good. Live and learn. He already bought more for next year.

Aren't we all! The long term forecast shows no more freeze fronts ahead. Joy!

2022 Bromeliad Society of Central Florida MEMBERSHIP FORM



____ NEW MEMBER ____ RENEWAL

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City, State Zip +4 _____

Phone /Email _____

\$15 for one member, plus \$5 for each additional family member at the same address.

Name Tags are optional. The price for a name tag is \$7 per member.

If so desired please insert number ordered _____ \$ _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____ Make checks payable to BSCF

Either **bring payment to the next meeting.** OR If mailing please send to:

Bromeliad Society of Central Florida, PO Box 568872 Orlando, FL 32856-8872.

Meetings are held the 3rd Wednesday of every month, from 6:30-9:00 pm (buy plants from the speaker between 6:30-7pm) at Leu Gardens, 1920 N Forest Ave, Orlando, FL 32803. You'll enjoy informative programs, Show & Tell, plant sales, refreshments, and door prizes. Members also receive a monthly newsletter. Please come join us!

Treasurer: Date _____ Check # _____ Cash \$ _____

Officers

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Donations to this society are tax deductible in accordance with IRS regulations.

BSCF is an affiliate of the Bromeliad Society International, Inc., and a member of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies, Inc. and the Cryptanthus Society.