



# orlandiana

**Newsletter of the  
Bromeliad Society of Central Florida  
Volume no. 52, Issue no. 4**

**Next meeting: April 16, 2025**

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

**6:30 – 7:00** is time for displaying and purchasing plants, Leu Gardens doors open at 6:00

**Program officially begins at 7:00 pm**

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**Visit the Bromeliad Society of Central Florida Website at:  
[www.bromeliadsorlando.com](http://www.bromeliadsorlando.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!**

**Submissions for the orlandiana newsletter to: [orlandiananews@outlook.com](mailto:orlandiananews@outlook.com)**



## President's Message

In last month's newsletter I had mentioned my travels to Brazil. Although I had been exposed to bromeliads prior to my first visit to Brazil in 1984, I was truly amazed seeing the abundance of bromeliads everywhere I went. From the terrestrial bromeliads like *Aechmea blanchetianas* on the coast of Cabo Frio to the epiphytes covering the trees, poles, and almost anywhere the airborne seeds can attach. I saw trees that were less than three years old that were completely covered with epiphytic ferns, cactus, orchids and bromeliads. Everywhere, from small houses, apartments, or the large fazendas, bromeliads were utilized in the plantings.



I am fortunate to have purchased a 1 acre property with ample room to plant out my bromeliad collection, even doing masses of them, similar to the gardens I saw of Burle-Marx. Most of our members have smaller lots, and tend to grow their bromeliads still in pots on tables and racks under shade cloth. I have many large slash pines on my property which creates shifting sun and shade acting like shade cloth. Where I have full sun exposure, I have utilized those species which can handle the brutal summer sun. But as I add more rare plants that need a certain light requirement, I see myself adding in a shade cloth area where I can keep an eye on those treasures.

Mounting bromeliads to driftwood is a popular way to display idea also came from Burle-Marx's Sitio garden. He created a sculpture of square uprights with square platforms at different levels, painting them bright colors, putting different bromeliads on each level, then made a grouping of these as a garden accent. How is everyone keeping or displaying their collection? I would like to see a slide show one meeting, maybe as background during the intermission or as the main presentation on how everyone is growing their bromeliads to promote ideas and discussions. Stay tuned.

Dan

## March 2024 Minutes

### BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA, INC.

#### Draft Meeting Minutes

March 19, 2025

**Will be approved with potential corrections at the April 16, 2025 meeting**

After setting up a Member's Market held during the meeting, President Dan Sawyer had to leave. He designated Mike Saunders to preside in his place. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mike Saunders at Leu Gardens Orlando, Florida.

**Program:** Steve Beaudoin presented a short program entitled "Aechmea recurvata" about the species and its many forms and hybrids. In addition, Mike McMahon presented a short program entitled " Bulbous Tillandsias = Too Weird To Be Real."

**Announcements:** None.

Mike Saunders announced a meeting break at 7:50 pm to be resumed at 8:05 pm.

**Business Meeting** was called to order at 8:05 p.m. by Mike Saunders.

**Membership Secretary:** Pam Marion introduced three guests:

Trudy Boardman (sister of John Boardman) and her partner Jerry Martino.

Glenn Spitzer, husband of member Merely Spitzer

**Minutes:** The draft minutes of the February 19, 2025 meeting were published in the March 2025 *Orlandiana*. Two corrections were noted at the March meeting. The revised minutes will be published in April 2025 *Orlandiana*.

**Treasurer's report:** Joyce Gibault reported that the organization was financially stable. Income and expenses were presented.

**Committee Reports:** An audit committee report was presented by Dr. Telka DiFate.

**President's Report:** None

**Old Business:** Mike Saunders announced that the Leu Gardens Plant sale went well and thanked the volunteers who assisted.

**New Business:** Mike McMahan, Greg Kolojeski and Mike Saunders discussed upcoming sales and shows.

Mike Saunders also noted that a volunteer is needed to take over as editor of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies newsletter which would also involve handling the roster and helping with the archives project at UCF.

**Show & Tell:** None.

**Door Prize/Raffle giveaways:** Mike Saunders announced the order of seating rows to select door prizes.

Mike then drew and announced raffle ticket numbers.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Norton  
Recording Secretary  
Bromeliad Society Central Florida

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Date Approved

## BOARD MINUTES

President Dan Sawyer having informed the Board on February 26, 2025 of the resignation of Telka DiFate as Vice President, the Board considered filling the vacancy as per its responsibility under the Bylaws. It was proposed that Bonnie Friedrich, who had consented to be considered, be selected to fill the vacancy. Upon due consideration, acting electronically by email, the Board unanimously approved and declared Bonnie Friedrich elected to serve as Vice President for the remainder of the current term effective March 30, 2025.



## Guest Speaker

### APRIL PROGRAM: HAWAIIAN ISLAND BEAUTIES

Last Fall, Bonnie Friedrich vacationed in Hawaii and arranged to visit several of Hawaii's prolific breeders: David Fell, the Shiigi nursery, the Sharon Petersen nursery and Dennis Heckart. Bonnie got to see their thousands upon thousands of bromeliads on her visit, and, naturally, could not control herself. She acquired dozens. At our April meeting she will share her experience in Hawaii and also will bring about 35 of her new Hawaiian Island Beauties for all to see. They are fabulous.



Part of the Shiigi nursery in Hawaii

Members will not just be able to look at the Hawaiian Island Beauties. Bonnie has arranged for both Shiigi and Heckart to supply photos of many broms available at their nurseries. If you see something you must have for yourself, there will be order forms/price lists for your use. Bonnie will gather them and coordinate a group purchase. She will have all the details at the meeting.

While the Shiigi nursery is famous for Vriesea hybrids, David and his daughter Royanne also work with other genera, including Neoregelia, Guzmania, Alcantarea and Goudaea.

Dennis Heckart has been an active creator of hybrids of Aechmea, Billbergia, Hohenbergia, Tillandsia, Vriesea, and other genera. He is particularly noted for creating bigenerics of Billmea, Hohenmea, Portemea, Quesmea, Vriecantarea and Vrieslandsia. Bonnie will be bringing an amazing new bigeneric, XVriematodon "Hilo Sunrise" x Stigmatodon brassicoides.



Dennis Heckart raises new Tillandsia hybrids on hanging 'logs' of a rot resistant guava

Of course, those with the will power to resist can just enjoy the tale of Bonnie's travels and the gorgeousness of her Hawaiian Island Beauties.

PS: Bonnie will have bromeliads from her own collection for sale. Beware: If you are trying to cure your addiction to bromeliads, you best not come to this meeting!

## Upcoming Events

### COMING ATTRACTIONS

Bonnie Friedrich

I like knowing what is coming up well ahead of time. So, as I take on being Vice President/ Program Chair, I am hoping to be able to announce scheduled speakers and programs months in advance. Maybe even for the rest of the year?? That may not be possible, but it's a good goal. I can announce that at the May meeting Mike McMahon will be the speaker. I asked him to do a program on how to grow Tillandsias and the practical steps involved. I think people want to learn how to grow their own beautiful plants, not just see some. Mike agreed. So in May the program will be "The Nuts & Bolts Of Making Tillandsias Easy".

What will be the June and July programs? Watch this space. I'll be letting you know. Meanwhile, let me know the sort of programs you prefer. I aim to please.

Bonnie

### SPRING PLANT SALE

The Seminole Bromeliad & Tropical Plant Society's Annual Spring Plant Sale featuring plants offered by over 30 members will be on April 12-13, 2025 at the Sanford Garden Club, 200 Fairmont Drive, Sanford, FL. Free Admission and Free Parking.



## MOTHER'S DAY WEEKEND EXHIBITION & SALE

Our annual Mother's Day weekend event will be just two days this year, Friday and Saturday, May 10 & 11 from 11:00 AM to 8:00 PM at Fashion Square mall. (Use the entrance by the movie theatre.) With the event scaled back to two days, members can more conveniently participate in displaying some plants and still be with family on Mother's Day. Members not selling get special preference. They can bring their display-only plants either Thursday afternoon (4pm to 7:30pm) or on Friday morning at 10:00 AM. And, they can remove their display plants on Saturday anytime after 4:00 PM without waiting for the 8:00 pm closing. With just a few exceptions, past participation in the display has been mostly those selling. BSCF can put on a better display than that if more members give it a try. There are still shoppers at Fashion Square who check out the displays. All can help spread the 'bromeliad bug' by displaying even just one plant. It should be in display-worthy condition, cleaned-up and free of any pests. Each plant needs to have a correct name label and pots should be cleaned-up, but need not be pristine. It is OK if the pot is mossy.

There is still room for more sellers. If you are interested in selling (bromeliads only), email Mike McMahon ([mike.mcmahon2024@outlook.com](mailto:mike.mcmahon2024@outlook.com)). Set up is Thursday, May 9 (Officially after 7pm, but we will start at 4pm.) Tables are needed to hold all the plants, so sellers are encouraged to bring as many as they can. Breakdown begins at 8:00 PM Saturday. The rules for the sale appear below.

And, even if you are neither displaying nor selling, come check it out. There will definitely be some bromeliads available that you have not seen before!

### RULES FOR 2024 MOTHER'S DAY WEEKEND EXHIBITION & SALE:

1. Only members of BSCF in good standing may participate in selling plants.

## BROMELIAD SHOW & MOTHER'S DAY SALE

Friday, May 9 : 11am - 8pm  
Saturday, May 10: 11am - 8pm




Fashion Square Mall  
3463 East Colonial Drive  
Orlando, FL 32803  
(Use entry by Panera)

## OVER 1,000 BROMELIADS ON DISPLAY AND FOR SALE

Bromeliad Society of Central Florida's  
50th Annual Mother's Day Exhibition & Sale



2. All sellers are required to work in the Sales Booth during sale hours: 4 HOURS (50 or fewer sale plants) or 8 HOURS (51 or more sale plants) over the course of the Sale (not per day). This requirement can be met by the seller arranging for someone else to work in their stead for all or part of the required hours.

3. All sales must go through the central cash register. No individual sales allowed.

4. Only bromeliads shall be sold. (Supplies, such as pots, mounting materials, etc. are generally not to be sold, but a limited quantity may be sold with advance permission so long as there is sufficient space.) Table space is limited and will be assigned by the Chair.

5. 20% of your gross sales will be deducted as a donation to BSCF. (Sales tax collected by BSCF)

6. Plants must be priced in EVEN DOLLARS. The minimum price shall be \$1.00. Plants should be priced & labeled before they are brought to the sale.

7. All plants must be CLEARLY marked with two labels:

A. Label with PRICE and Member ID number on SAME side of label. (Or, you may use your initials with advance permission of the Chair.) (This tag is taken at register as record of the sale & used after the sale to calculate amount BSCF pays to selling member.)

B. Label with correct plant name (stays with plant when sold).

Sellers are strongly encouraged to affix a small self-adhesive PRICE sticker to a prominent place on a leaf. Experience has shown that plants sell faster when the price is easily seen.

8. Your BSCF Membership Number will be your seller ID number. (If you do not know it, the Membership Secretary can provide it, or ask the sale Chair.)

9. Plants must be clean and in good condition, free from insects or disease. You may sell mounted or bare root plants, but labels must be secure. Bare roots with soil attached should be bagged for neatness. (Bring some empty pots or trays for displaying bare root plants.) Questionable plants will be removed from the sale by the Sale Chair.

10. Plants not picked up by the close of the sale on Saturday will be considered a donation to BSCF.

11. Reasonable care will be taken, but the Bromeliad Society of Central Florida, Inc. cannot assume responsibility for any loss or damage to your plants, nor prevent theft.



12. The BSCF Treasurer will issue a check in payment to selling members of their 80% share of the sale proceeds attributable to their plants following calculation and certification of same by the plant sale committee. Payment generally occurs within 10-14 days following the sale, but on occasion may take longer.

13. All Sellers must place a minimum of five (5) specimen plants on display. The display plants may be sold, but cannot be removed from the display prior to 6:00 PM on Saturday. The Chair may grant exceptions in its sole discretion so long as the integrity of the display is maintained, or may require substitution with another specimen plant.

14. All sellers are expected to participate in set-up and break-down. Exceptions may be granted by the Chair in special circumstances. Set-up is on Thursday evening beginning at 4:00 PM (but may be as late as 7:00 PM if required by the mall). Break-down commences at 8:00 PM on Saturday upon the Sale closing. All plants (both sale and display), tables and other property must be removed as promptly as possible on Saturday evening. All plants to be sold should be brought on Thursday evening. With permission of the Chair, a limited number may be brought on Friday morning at 10:00 AM. Re-stocking may occur on Saturday morning at 10:00 AM and shall be completed by the opening at 11:00 AM. See the Chair for directions in gaining entry to the mall prior to 11:00 AM on the sale days.

## 2025 Bromeliad Extravaganza

**September 26th to 27th, 2025**

**Kissimmee, Florida (near Disney)**

**Conference Registration Fee: \$125**

**(Online Registration or Mail-In)**

Sponsored by the **Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies** and hosted by the **Seminole Bromeliad & Tropical Plant Society**, this will be Florida's biggest Bromeliad event of the year!

The **Bromeliad Extravaganza** will include a Friday night dinner (BBQ buffet), three Saturday afternoon seminars (including Leonardo Versieux from Brazil), a Saturday night banquet (Italian buffet) with a rare plant auction, and last (but not least), the biggest Bromeliad sale of the year in Florida. The Bromeliad sale (an area of almost 6,000 square feet) is open to the public on Saturday from 9 to 4.

Bromeliad growers and enthusiasts from all over Florida will bring a large selection of top quality Bromeliads for your purchasing pleasure. Those who register for the Conference will get first stab at acquiring some of these fantastic plants on Friday evening.

The hotel is the **Ramada Gateway**, 7470 W Irlo Bronson Memorial Hwy 192, Kissimmee, FL 34747. To obtain the conference rate, call the hotel (407-396-4400 or 407-997-6662 from 9am to 5pm) and ask for the special **Bromeliad Extravaganza** rates.

The special hotel room rate for Conference registrants is only \$85.80 per night (\$67.80 plus \$18 resort fee) plus 13.5% taxes. This rate includes free parking and breakfast discounts. Deluxe tower rooms are also available for only \$105 (\$87 plus \$18 resort fee). Rooms are King or 2 Queen bed rooms.

A deposit for one night's room rate plus taxes (\$67.80 plus \$9.16 or \$76.96 for the courtyard or poolview rooms) will be required at the time of booking (refundable up until 72 hours before the scheduled arrival date). The special rates will also be available from Sept. 23rd to 30th for those who would like to make a vacation out of their stay, but you need to book before August 26th to get this special rate. Hotel check-in time is 4pm and check out time is 11am.

You should book the hotel as soon as possible.

## AN EVOLUTIONARY BLURB: CAM PHOTOSYNTHESIS

by Mike McMahon

Everybody knows what photosynthesis is, right? There's a lot of complex chemistry involved that I never could figure out in school, but I did learn that it is the process by which plants use chlorophyll to convert the energy of sunlight into the sugars they need to grow. In the process, they absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen during the day. At night they release carbon dioxide (but less than they consume during the day).

Well, what I was taught is true for most of the plants around us, but it is not necessarily true of bromeliads. You see, back when bromeliads began their evolutionary trek up into the tropical forest canopy to reach light, many of them developed a different way to photosynthesize. They developed what is known as CAM photosynthesis. (For the curious, CAM stands for "crassulacean acid metabolism". No need to remember that.)

CAM photosynthesis allows a plant to photosynthesize during the day, but only exchange gases at night. In a plant using CAM, the pores in the leaves (stomata) remain shut during the day. You might say, it can hold its breath all day long. The stomata open at night to collect carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). Since the CO<sub>2</sub> cannot be used in the dark, it has to be stored overnight

for use the next day when the leaves are exposed to sunlight. It gets stored by creating crassulacean acid (a form of malic acid) which is stockpiled in special vacuoles within the leaf. The next morning, the acid is transported to chloroplasts where it is converted back to CO<sub>2</sub>, which the plant uses to photosynthesize the sugars it needs.

This is a lot of extra work! It is much more efficient to just absorb CO<sub>2</sub> during the day when it is needed for photosynthesis. Nature does not engage in unnecessary work. There has to be a real benefit to justify the effort required to store CO<sub>2</sub> overnight. That benefit is in being able to keep the stomata closed during the day, which results in an enormous reduction in the amount of water lost to the atmosphere. Plants using 'regular' photosynthesis lose as much as 97% of the water taken up by their roots throughout the day. That's why so many plants wilt if they do not have enough water in the root zone. Being able to keep stomata closed during the hottest and driest part of the day reduces the loss of water tremendously.

The genus *Pitcairnia* is generally considered the most ancient among bromeliads. *Pitcairnia* species look more like 'regular plants' than other broms and come from moist environments, often found along streams. Thus far, all *Pitcairnia*s studied use regular photosynthesis. The most highly evolved bromeliads are generally considered to be *Tillandsias*. Thus far, all the air plant type *Tillandsias* studied use CAM photosynthesis. Although *Pitcairnia* and *Tillandsia* share a common ancestor back eons ago, they have evolved differently. *Pitcairnia* have remained terrestrial, and are dependent on a regular water supply. *Tillandsias* have taken to the skies and can survive months-long dry seasons high up where drying breezes are constant. It can be rough on them, but they are able to tough it out. One of the traits allowing *Tillandsias* to colonize and thrive in habitats where no *Pitcairnia* would have a chance is CAM photosynthesis.

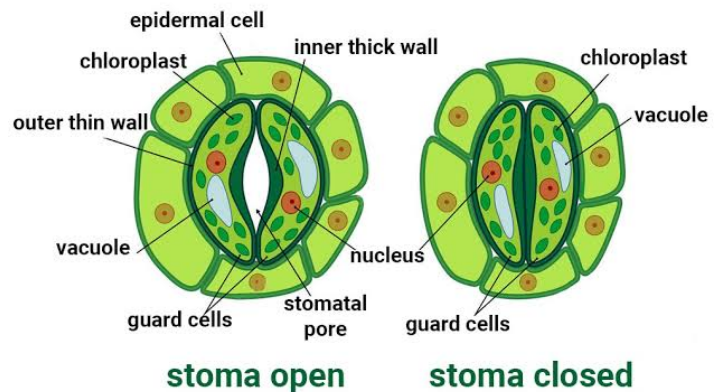
*Tillandsias* are not alone in using CAM. So do cactus, various epiphytic orchids and many succulents. And, a number of other broms. All the *Dyckias* and *Hechtias* use CAM. Among *Aechmea*, *Billbergia* and *Neoregelia*, most appear to use CAM, but not all. Interestingly, the nearest relatives of *Tillandsias* are *Vrieseas* and *Guzmanias*, few of which use CAM. Generally, bromeliads which are atmospheric (*Tillandsias*), or tank bromeliads with noticeable trichomes (silvery scurf) and stiff leaves are CAM plants. Broms living in shaded habitats with plentiful water and softer leaves generally use the more efficient regular photosynthesis.

The evolutionary agility of broms is not limited to choosing between being a user of CAM or regular photosynthesis. Some can do both. There has been special focus on *Guzmania monostachia*, an epiphyte typically found in habitats with plentiful water availability, but sometimes experiencing brief droughts. When water is readily available, like in the rainy seasons, *G. monostachia* uses regular photosynthesis. But, when it suffers drought conditions, it switches to CAM. There is also an interesting study that found juvenile



*Guzmania lingulata*, which are not capable of holding any water in their grassy leaves, have a limited ability to use CAM... just enough to survive short dry periods. Mature *G. lingulata* can hold some water in their leaves and were found not to use CAM at all.

There are other broms able to switch to CAM when stressed. I suspect that if botanists thoroughly studied all bromeliads they would find many able to switch back and forth, using the more efficient regular photosynthesis when water is available and CAM when it is not. Maybe someday a dedicated botanist will devote the years necessary to determine if my suspicion is correct. However, unlike a CAM brom holding its breath during the day, I'll not hold mine waiting to find out. It's enough knowing our broms have little secrets like this. Tricky devils those broms.



## Plant of the Month

### Dyckias: Show us your spines!



This month's theme is to showcase Dyckia bromeliads. These bromeliads come in all shapes and sizes, but are characterized by their thorns and extra thick and tough leaves. Most Dyckias will thrive in Florida's tough summer sun, but unlike other bromeliads, they require soil and most prefer to have their roots wet.

Some examples to bring to the April meeting are: black gold, blood lust, brevifolia, cherry coke, choristaminea, dawsonii, encholirioides, estevesii, fosteriana, goehringii, hedbingii, natalie, nude lady, old joe, pallaphat, tarzana, and yellow glow.

## Pictures



Mike McMahon's *T. Streptophylla*

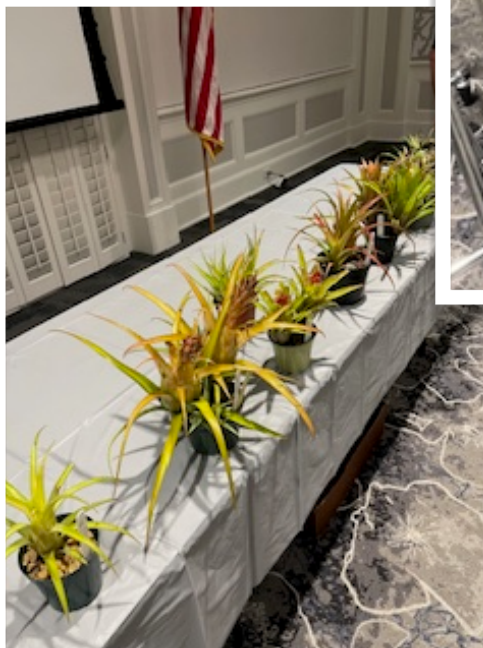
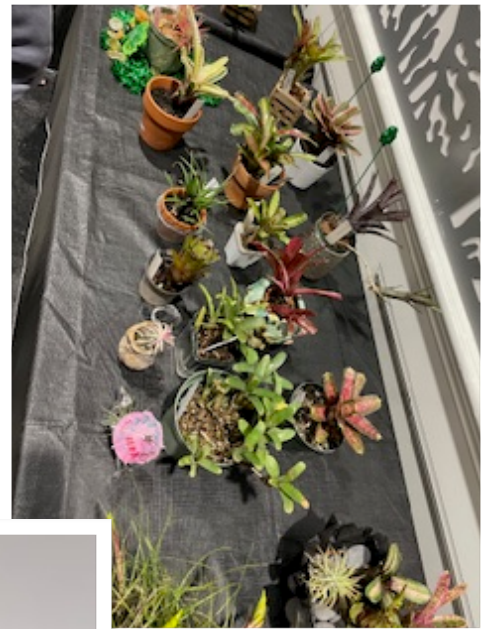


Mike McMahon's *T. bulbosa* 'Tiny Dancer'



Mike McMahon's *T. bulbosa*







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## **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 \$8 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.**

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Meetings are held at Leu Gardens, 1920 N Forest Ave, Orlando, FL 32803.

On the 3rd Wednesday of every month, from 6:30-9:00 pm. Buy plants from the speaker between 6:30-7pm. The meeting starts promptly at 7:00. You'll enjoy informative programs, Show & Tell, plant sales, door prizes and raffles. Members also receive a monthly newsletter. Please come join us!

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Cash \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**[www.bromeliadsorlando.com](http://www.bromeliadsorlando.com)**

## Officers

President: **Dan Sawyer**  
Vice-President: **Bonnie Friedrich**  
Treasurer: **Joyce Gibault**  
Recording Secretary: **Robin Norton**  
Membership Secretary: **Pam Marion**  
Immediate Past President: **Mike McMahon**  
Florida Council Reps: **Mike Saunders & Dan Sawyer**

### POSITIONS

Meeting Layout Coordinator: President.  
Meeting Hospitality Coordinator: **Kathy Hancock** (Beverages); **Peggy Bohl** (Snacks)  
Welcome Table/Raffle Coordinator: **Robin Norton** Helpers: **Katherine Vaccaro, Kathy & Phil Hancock**

Recycling Coordinator:  
Meeting Breakdown Coordinator: **Pam Marion** Helpers: **Tina Self, Karen Steinberg, Robin Norton, Katherine Vaccaro & others who pitch in**  
Secret Bid Auction Coordinator: **Phil Wright**  
Plant Of The Month Coordinator: **Steve Beaudoin**  
Speaker Helper: **Bonnie Friedrich**  
Librarian :  
Newsletter Editor: **John Vecchitto**  
Newsletter Proofreader: **Marty Folk, Katherine Vaccaro, Destini Coiner**  
Audit Committee: **Dr. Telka diFate, Bonnie Friedrich, Steve Beaudoin, John Vecchitto**

### PLANT SALES -

Plant Sale Chair for Leu Gardens Spring Plant Sale: **Mike Saunders**  
Plant Sale Chair for Mother's Day Show: **Mike McMahon**  
Plant Sale Chair for Mead Garden Fall Plant Sale: **Mike McMahon**  
Field Trip Organizer: **Karen Steinberg**  
Holiday Party Coordinator: **Paula Edwards**

Permission to reprint is granted with acknowledgment. Please send all correspondence to the address below:

**Bromeliad Society of Central Florida, Inc.**

**PO Box 536961**

**Orlando, FL 32853-6961**

**[facebook.com/BromeliadSocietyOfCentralFlorida](https://facebook.com/BromeliadSocietyOfCentralFlorida)**



**BSCF is a nonprofit Florida corporation recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) organization.**

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.