

# FLORIDA WEST COAST BROMELIAD SOCIETY

1954-2017

*Celebrating over 63 Years in Bromeliads*

*fwcbs.org*



## June 2017 Newsletter

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### NEXT MEETING

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**Date & Time:** Tuesday, June 6, 2017, 7:30 pm  
**Location:** Good Samaritan Church  
6085 Park Boulevard  
Pinellas Park, Florida 33781

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### Program

**Marty Baxley**, longtime FWCBS member and owner of Jungle Gems Nursery in St. Petersburg, will talk to us about *Bromeliads in Puerto Rico*. Marty and his late father Bernie Baxley started their bromeliad collection in 1987 and built the nursery around it. Today Marty has over 1,500 bromeliad species and hybrids, including the many hybrids Marty has created. Marty will be sole vendor for the evening.

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### LAST MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

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### Program

Last month was our Annual Bromeliad Auction of bromeliads donated by generous members, both hobbyists and commercial growers alike. Member Helga Tarver is liquidating her collection and generously donated about 12 Tillandsias and an equal number of Neoregelias to the auction. Below are pictures of some of the bromeliads in the live auction.



On the right is a picture of Abdul Vector showing a tub of gardening tools and materials in the live auction donated by Helga Tarver.



Below are some of the items in the Silent Auction section that included boxes of driftwood and three more tubs of Helga's gardening materials and tools.



Tub o' Tools



Three auctioneering teams (pictures below) worked in pairs, one person describing the plant and the other eliciting maximum bids from bidders.



Team Alton Lee and Susan Sousa



Team Dave Johnston and Dick Dailey



Team Michael Kiehl and Kathy Risley

Runners pictured below covered a lot of floor space moving about the audience to be sure everyone had a good look at the items up for bid.



Franne Matwijczyk



Kathleen Steil



Sal Vactor

Below are pictures of some of the outstanding plants in the auction.



*Sincoraea navioides*



*Neoregelia 'Groves Red Tiger'*



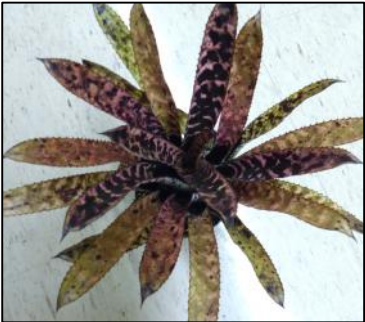
*Dyckia 'California'*



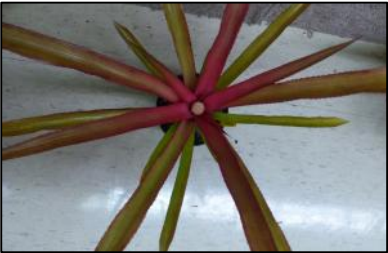
*Neoregelia 'Luna'*



*Neoregelia concentrica*



*Aechmea orlandiana 'Pink'*



*Cryptanthus 'Pink Utopia'*



*Alcantarea regina*

### New Members

We have two new members, Kathryn Scofield and John Bullard, who joined at the May meeting. Kathryn learned about our society when she visited the bromeliad garden installation our group did at the St. Petersburg Museum of Fine Arts for the Art in Bloom exhibit last April. Welcome both.

### A Plant Story

Florida West Coast member Bob Albanese, who is with the Pinellas County Extension Center, wrote to me about an *Alcantarea imperialis* (pictures below) in the Florida Botanical Gardens (FBG). (The gardens are located adjacent to the Extension Center.) The pictures show that the plant is currently putting out a bloom stalk, which can grow up to 8 feet tall and can last 12 to 18 months.



Bob recalled that the plant was donated to the FBG in 2003 and had some connection with Phyllis Steil, a member of our society. Here is the connection. The plant originally belonged to Ann Jones who was a member of our society from the 1970s into the 1990s and was Phyllis' aunt. Ann lived next door to member Helga Tarver who joined our group in 1980, and they became good friends and bromeliad buddies. After Ann moved out-of-state around 2003, Helga spoke with Phyllis about preserving the plant, which was already at that time quite large, and they arranged for it to be donated to the FBG.

This is what Bob writes about retrieving the plant from Ann's house and planting it in the gardens. "The plant was in a LARGE ceramic pot that was 3 feet tall and was about a foot wider than the pot all the way around; I remember it was quite pretty. I also remember saying to myself, how am I going to get that out of there without breaking the pot? (It was an expensive looking pot.) When I reached into the pot under the foliage to feel for the soil, my hand went down halfway to my elbow before I stopped and pulled it back. (I do not like reaching into places I can't see or don't know what is there.) I picked up the bottom leaves and saw there was no soil at all, just a 3- to 3.5-foot long stem or trunk [i.e., caudex]. The plant appeared to be resting on its foliage on the rim of the pot. I carefully rolled the pot on its side and all the water came out of the plant. I then tugged on the plant and tugged some

more. When the plant was out I saw that at the bottom of the 3.5-foot tapered stem was a small white, 2-inch plastic pot with some roots attached to it. [This small pot was inside a 1-gallon pot that also had no soil.] The plant was surprisingly light without water in it. When I planted it in the gardens, I was going to use a posthole digger to dig a hole deep enough for the long trunk but I reasoned that putting it down in the soil that deep would probably be a problem. After pondering it for a bit I decided to cut off most of the trunk, about 3 feet of it. I treated the cut area with a systemic fungicide, let the plant sit out exposed to the air for a day and then planted it. It never missed a beat.”

Bob added that, when he watered the plant after it had been set in place, it took almost 6 gallons of water to completely fill the tank and leaf-base cups before the water started to overflow from the bottom leaves. One gallon of water weighs a little more than 8 pounds, so the 6 gallons of water could have added about 50 pounds to the weight of the plant! On the right is a photo Bob took of the plant in 2005.



The age of the plant in this story is unknown but we estimate it is about 25 years old. *Alcan. imperialis* typically take 15 to 25 years to produce a bloom stalk, and this one has been in the FBG for 14 years and was already quite old (and with a 3.5-foot stem) when moved there in 2003. *Imperialis* typically grow to be 3 to 5 feet tall, and the one in the garden appears to be about 5 feet tall and that is minus the 3 feet of the trunk that was removed when it was transplanted.

If you want to visit the gardens and see the plant, it is located relatively close to the courtyard where the restrooms are, along the walkway behind a free-form concrete bench covered with a tile mosaic. If you exit the courtyard by the men’s room where our society’s Membership Service Award plaque is located on a large rock and turn left (north), you will be looking directly at the plant.

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#### BLOOMING THIS MONTH

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*Acanthostachys strobilacea*

### UPCOMING EVENTS, 2017

June 23-24, Tropiflora Nursery Summer Sale

Tropiflora Nursery, 3530 Tallavast Road, Sarasota ([tropiflora.com/events.cfm](http://tropiflora.com/events.cfm))

June 24-25, USF Botanical Gardens Summer Plant Festival

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

August 4-6, 2017, Bromeliad Extravaganza<sup>®</sup>, *Bromeliads by the Bay*

Clarion Hotel, 4710, 2701 E. Fowler Ave., Tampa, FL; Hosted by the Bromeliad Guild of Tampa Bay, Tampa, FL ([bromeliadguildoftampabay.org/news](http://bromeliadguildoftampabay.org/news))

August 19-20, Seminole Bromeliad & Tropical Plant Society Sale

Sanford Garden Club, Sanford, FL (407-539-4314)

August 26, USF Botanical Gardens Bromeliad Bash Sale

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

October 6-8, Tropiflora Nursery Fall Festival

Tropiflora Nursery, 3530 Tallavast Road, Sarasota ([tropiflora.com/events.cfm](http://tropiflora.com/events.cfm))

October 14-15, 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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