



orlandiana

**Newsletter of the
Bromeliad Society of Central Florida**

Volume no. 50, Issue no. 8

Next meeting: August 16, 2023

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

6:30 –7:00 is time for displaying and purchasing plants

Program 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!

Cover Photo: *Orthophytum saxicola variegated*

Courtesy: Steve Beaudoin

President's Message

Most of our members are aware that BSCF is a member of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies. If reminded, they recall being emailed a newsletter on occasion. Some actually read it. Several recall that we begged off hosting a Council meeting in 2022 because it was going to be too costly. Those at the July meeting learned that BSCF is hosting an October meeting. (And, thanks to John Boardman making his home available, we do not have to rent a venue or pay restaurant banquet rates to provide lunch to the attendees.) Beyond that, many know nothing about the Council. That is unfortunate, especially since BSCF was instrumental in forming it.

Way back in 1976, BSCF took on the responsibility of hosting the 1980 World Bromeliad Conference. That was a really crazy commitment to make. World Conferences had been held in California and cities with large local societies, not in Florida. There was a handful of BSCF members who had been to a World Conference, but most had not and BSCF did not have all that many members. Just figuring out what needed to be done was no small job when snail mail was the only mail. Actually doing it was a bigger job than BSCF members could do alone. We needed help.

BSCF's World Conference project was led by Carol Johnson. (Her Pineapple Place nursery off of Markham Woods Rd. was sort of the Michael's Bromeliads of the day, although not nearly so extensive.) For some time the idea had floated around that bromeliad societies around the state should combine together in some way. Nat Deleon in Miami was a major supporter of doing something. BSCF's need for help putting on the Conference became a motivator. An organizational meeting to form FCBS was held in the Longwood home of Carol Johnson on Sunday, June 17, 1977. Attending for BSCF were Carol, Eloise Beach and Bud Martin (who soon thereafter was a founder of the Seminole Bromeliad Society). There were representatives from five other societies. By the time Florida Council was actually formed, there were nine member societies.

The idea was simply that the several local societies could do more together than alone. There were some big ideas, like putting together speaker programs with leading experts touring the societies around the state; having a major magazine; having an annual state-wide judged show; and so much more. Those big ideas took a big step forward the following year when the first state-wide judged show was held in Miami sponsored by FCBS and hosted by the Bromeliad Society of South Florida. It was a 3-day test run for putting on a big judged show at the Orlando 1980 World Conference. And, the Council

commenced a Judging School so there would be sufficient trained judges for shows around the state. From that point onward, a number of societies began having annual judged shows, including BSCF.

The big ideas proved more bold than realistic. *Grande* magazine was grand. It was glossy full color, very professionally produced and filled with interesting articles about broms and personalities in the Florida hobby. It was also bankrupt after two issues, but subscribers had been promised four. They eventually got all four, and then *Grande* folded. The FCBS Quarterly Newsletter was a cheap substitute of sorts. The idea of an annual state-wide judged show turned into the biennial Bromeliad Extravaganza, pulling together brom sellers from all around the state and a lecture series, but without a judged show, which was too much work. Judged shows are not so popular anymore, but FCBS still sponsors the training of judges.

While the big ideas of the 1970s largely fell by the wayside, Florida Council has remained a means for societies to share information and pool resources. Many of the speakers at BSCF's monthly meetings are invited because we learn of them and their programs through Florida Council and its publications. The FCBS Photo Index of bromeliads is an internet resource recognized world over and available for free. The Council compiles the rosters of all member societies and supplies everyone with a statewide directory every year, so we do not need to do one of our own. When the invasive 'Evil Weevil' came on the scene, Florida Council was the vehicle for pooling funds and resources to promote research in combating the invader. It continues to seek worthy research for funding. While you may not hear all that much about Florida Council, the thing to know is that FCBS connects societies around the state. When a need arises, there is a way to pull together. That is important.

Our Bylaws provide for BSCF to be a member of FCBS. We pay dues each year and have the duty to host quarterly meetings in rotation with the other member societies. This year we gave further support by running an ad in the Extravaganza program, and arranging the donation of plants for the Rare Plant Auction. We do our part to keep it going. Now you know why.

Mike McMahon

July Minutes

Bromeliad Society of Central Florida

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 19, 2023, 7-9pm

Program: Vice President Tim Dreggors introduced speaker Jason Mellica of Sarasota. Jason explained how to hybridize bromeliads and gave a lot of great tips for this painstaking art. He showed hybrids he created and sold many plants to eager BSCF members.

To provide time for discussion during our social break, President Mike McMahon presented a brief overview of a proposed group tour to Costa Rica for 20 participants, which would take place in May, 2024. There was strong interest among the members present, so organizer Peggy Bohl will proceed with further planning.

The Business Meeting was called to order by President Mike McMahon at 8:00 pm.

New Members and Guests: Recording Secretary Katherine Vaccaro invited us to welcome guest John Bergstrom (a previous member) and new members Susan Collins, Laura Costandi, Jeremy Conner and Lovett Taylor.

Minutes: The minutes of the June, 2023 meeting were published in the *Orlandiana* Newsletter. A motion was made by John Vecchitto and seconded by Joyce Gibault that they be approved. The motion passed.

Treasurer's report: Joyce Gibault reported on our income and expenses for June. We continue to have healthy reserves in both our checking and money market accounts.

President's Report:

Thanks to John Boardman, Tim Dreggors and Mailyn Howser for providing special bromeliads for the plant auction at the Extravaganza later this month.

Thanks to John Boardman for hosting the October FCBS meeting, with volunteer help from Pam Marion and Tina Self.

Planning for our November Holiday Party is underway. Coordinators Teresa Eddy and Joyce Gibault will begin asking everyone to sign up for (light) duties at the August meeting.

A nominating committee of Phil Wright, Julia Jenson and Katrina Kruse has formed. They will present a slate of officers for our vote in October. All members are encouraged to speak with them about taking one of our five leadership positions.

There was no **Old Business**.

New Business:

A motion was made by Tim Dreggors and seconded by Robin Norton to make a substantive Bylaw change:

**Article XI:
Amendments and Suspension of Bylaws & Standing Rules**

1. The Bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Society by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting, provided that written notice of the proposed amendment has been sent to each member at least seven days before such meeting.
2. The Bylaws and Standing Rules may be suspended with a three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) vote of the Members present and voting at any regular meeting. The suspension shall be limited to a particular subject matter and terminates upon adjournment.

There was discussion about when and why “B” would be needed. Potential circumstances were explained by Mike Saunders, with examples offered by Mike Saunders and Mike McMahon. The motion was voted on and approved.

Show & Tell continued to draw beautiful specimens. Steve Beaudoin and Mike McMahon showed seedlings and explained how to cultivate them. They pointed out that Dykia, Billbergia, and Aechmea seedlings grow much faster than Vrieseas and Tillandsias.

Door Prize/Raffle giveaways rounded out the evening.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Vaccaro, Recording Secretary

Guest Speaker

Our speaker will be Ray Lemieux, formerly a grower/hybridizer with Tropiflora. Ray is always entertaining and so very knowledgeable. He now has his own nursery focused on succulents and terrestrial broms. You can expect to learn about broms our speakers do not usually discuss.



Do Gnomes Remove Pups In Nature?

By: *Mike McMahon*

Across the internet, novice bromeliad growers ask worried questions about removing pups. In our Facebook group, questions are asked about removing pups so small they are not much more than nubs. A lot of folks have gotten the idea that removing pups is an essential step in caring for their broms. Guess what? You do not have to remove a pup. No mystical spirits float through the jungles to cut brom umbilical cords in Nature. Whether to remove a pup is a decision you get to make.



The start point for a lot of folks is to remove pups unless there is some reason not to do so, like it is still too small. I suggest considering it the other way around. Never remove a pup unless you have a reason to remove it.

Why that presumption? Well, it is not a joke to think of pups as attached by an umbilical cord. As long as it is attached, all the strength of the mother is directed at making the pup the strongest, healthiest, biggest it can be. Cut it, and it is on its own. A pup without its own established root system is like a premature baby. They fall behind and many never quite catch up to what they could have been. Pups left attached to Mom often grow stronger and bloom much sooner and more profusely than those removed. Many

broms reliably bloom annually, if left attached; but, if removed as a modest-sized pup it may take two or three or four years to bloom. Since the young plants do best if left attached, why remove pups at all?Exactly.

Before removing a pup, ask yourself: "Why am I doing this work? What am I trying to accomplish?" If your answer is "because it's there", think again.

There are good reasons to remove pups. The grass-like pups of *Alcantareas* should be removed when still very small, assuming you want to grow more. Grass pups are different. They appear when the parent is young, years before it ever blooms, and cease to be produced when the parent has some size. *Alcantarea* grass pups need to be removed when the parent plant's foliage starts to cover them. That can be when they are just a couple of inches. As the parent plant grows, it blocks out the light and all the grass pups wither away. Grass pups die if the parent plant lives. It is an interesting evolutionary adaptation, but that is a different discussion. (Place the grass pups in the vase of the parent. They will grow lots of roots. Only when there are lots of roots do you pot them up in a mix. Grass pups placed directly in potting mix have a low survival rate.)

If you are interested in getting a quantity of plants rather than just one or two strong replacements, then remove the pups as soon as they can survive on their own. Perhaps that is one quarter the size of the parent, or even smaller. They will be slower to grow, a whole lot slower in most cases, but removing them encourages the parent to produce more. But, do you really want seven or eight or more small, slow growing plants of that one variety? If not, why are you removing the pups?

One good reason is that you want a symmetrical rosette-shaped plant. Pups left attached grow away from the parent and become lop-sided. Most people want their *Neoregelias* and *Nidulariums* to be symmetrical rosettes. You generally will want to remove their pups, but *Neoregelias* with long stolons grow in rosettes without being removed. Removing the pups of *N. 'Fireball'* or *N. ampullacea* defeats most folk's goal of having such Neos in great cascading clumps. For most *Aechmeas* and *Billbergias*, symmetry is not a major factor for a lot of people, but it is for others. Decide your goal.

Another good reason is the parent plant has declined and the old potting mix has broken down to sludge. Then it is best to get rid of the old parent to minimize the risk of rot and re-pot the pup(s) in a fresh mix. Or, perhaps the pups are all growing in one direction making the pot unbalanced; or you prefer single specimens over multiples. There is no right or wrong decision to whether you grow your broms as singles or in clumps. But, it

should be you deciding what you want, not an internet site drumming away about removing pups.

If you have decided to remove a pup, when do you do it? There are lots of recommendations to remove them when quarter-sized, or one-third the size of the parent, or half as big. Which is right? All these guidelines are right and all are wrong. It depends. It depends on the strength of the pup and the goal you want to achieve. Telling a novice "It depends" is not helpful, so even I end up saying "Wait until it is a third of the size of the parent, or larger"; or, with some broms I'll suggest waiting until roots have begun to form. The correct answer is really something like "Wait as long as you can consistent with your goal." If the potting mix has turned into black mud and the parent has a rotting base, it's time to remove a pup even though smaller than you prefer.

Once you have removed a pup, put it to the side in an empty pot for a day or a week to allow the cut to heal. (Do place water in the cup of the pup.) The pup will be fine. Really. In fact, if it stays in the empty pot for a few weeks, you just may find that it is sending out a lot of roots, especially if the empty pot is exposed to rain. Their roots find their own way without a potting mix. There are no gnomes in Nature putting broms in potting mix. As I am fond of saying, broms did not evolve to grow in pots, but that's a different subject to ramble on about some other day.

Spiky Relations

A recent article in *The Economist* featured bromeliads as international news makers: our edible pineapples: (courtesy: Katherine Vaccaro & John Vecchitto)

In their quest for the perfect pineapple, Taiwan's agricultural engineers spared no effort. They spent almost 25 years developing a variety with a mango-like fragrance, a longer shelf life than the island's dominant strain, and a resistance to blemishing in its hot and humid summer. Released in 2018, it was officially named Tainung No. 23. But it soon became known as the Mango Pineapple.



The cultivar is now the focus of a fresh Chinese attempt at pomological warfare. On April 4th Taiwan's deputy agriculture minister, Chen Junne-jih, accused China of "plundering" plant breeders' rights after mainland media reported that Mango Pineapples were being grown in southern China. Smuggling seeds or seedlings to the mainland was "absolutely unacceptable", he said.

Pineapples are valuable exports for Taiwan. China has targeted them before to put pressure on the island, which it claims. But this latest development comes at a sensitive time, with China and America stepping up preparations for a potential war over Taiwan. The self-governing island will also hold a presidential election in 2024 in which farmers are an important constituency.

Since taking office in 2016, President Tsai Ing-wen has tried to reduce Taiwan's economic dependence on China by expanding exports to other countries. Her government is making progress towards a trade deal with America, both sides say. For now, though, China remains the island's biggest trade partner.

China lifted tariffs on Taiwanese pineapples in 2005, when it hoped to forge closer ties through trade. By 2020 it was buying \$49m worth, more than 90% of Taiwan's annual exports of the fruit. Then, in 2021, China banned all Taiwanese pineapple imports, saying they carried pests. Taiwan called that a political ploy. Soon the pineapple became a symbol of resistance against China.

Ms Tsai urged her people to "eat Taiwan's pineapples until you burst". Local businesses added pineapple to products ranging from beer to beef noodles. Taiwan also called on other countries to buy its "freedom pineapples". That echoed a campaign to promote Australian "freedom wine" after China hiked tariffs on that product in 2020.

Japan responded to Taiwan's appeals with gusto. By the end of 2021 it had bought 62% of the island's pineapple exports. But further sales were hindered by the short shelf life of Taiwan's dominant Golden Diamond variety. So Taiwan began promoting Mango Pineapples, which were given temporary intellectual-property protection in Japan in 2022.

China, meanwhile, has rapidly expanded cultivation of Golden Diamonds and begun marketing them abroad as "Chinese pineapples". Its farmers now appear to be setting their sights on Mango Pineapples. On March 11th a state-run news website in the province of Hainan reported that both types were being grown on some 60 hectares of farmland.

Taiwan has just 27 hectares of Mango Pineapple under cultivation, with production restricted to four seedling companies and three farming households. Only Taiwan and Japan legally

protect the cultivar. Taiwan and China established a plant-patent work group in 2010, but the Chinese side stopped talking in 2016. On March 16th Taiwan's cabinet approved an increase in the maximum penalty for illegally exporting seeds or seedlings to three years in prison. Still, it will be hard to establish how the new variety reached China: it can be planted using buds from the pineapple's crown. The news has been especially tough on staff at the Taiwan Agricultural Research Institute who began developing the cultivar in the 1990s by cross-pollinating different strains by hand. "It's a real disappointment," said Huang Shou-horng, a researcher there. "It's very damaging for us as individuals, as researchers and as a country."

Plant of the Month

ORTHOPHYTUM: This is a genus of terrestrial Bromeliads from eastern Brazil where they are often found growing on rocky ground and the sides of cliffs. There are 65 recognized species and 54 registered hybrids.



Orthophytum 'Orange Frosting'



Orthophytum sucrei



Orthophytum vagans

Photos Courtesy: Steve Beaudoin



Orthophytum magalhaesii



Orthophytum glabrum



Orthophytum 'Stardust'

Although they look like succulents from arid regions, it is wrong to think of them as desert plants. They grow where their roots grow into cracks and fissures between rocks and reach water that drains through the rocky substrate. Orthophytums meet their needs for moisture and nutrients through their roots. They have not evolved 'cups' to hold water in the center. Their leaves are generally thick and succulent, giving them the ability to store moisture during dry seasons. However, while they can endure drought, the leaves shrivel up as the stored moisture is used, making the plant unattractive. They look their best when kept moist. Give them a fertile, well-drained soil and you will be rewarded with lush growth.

Orthophytums are found in bright light. Give bright filtered sun. Most will do well in full sun if gradually acclimated and kept moist, but just a couple of hours of direct sun is generally best. They like warm weather. Florida's steamy summers are ideal, as long as their potting mix does not become waterlogged. They are sensitive to frosts and freezes.

Orthophytums produce tall, thick bloom stalks with what appear to be tufts of little leaves along the stalk or on branches. Small white flowers give interest, but are not particularly showy. As blooming ends, those tufts of leaves turn into pups. As they grow, the stalk bends until it is flat on the ground from the weight. Then the pups send out roots, searching for crevices in the rocks. If they find water, a new clump of plants develops a foot or two away from the mother plant, which meanwhile produces pups at its base like many Bromeliads. Over time, the tangle of old bloom stalks capture leaves and debris, forming a humus layer over the rock. They can be amazingly prolific. If you have success with an Orthophytum, you likely will find yourself with a lot of them!

Article reprinted from BSCF hand outs.

Snacks

Wow, it has been hot! The broms are flourishing and the need for personal hydration is growing!

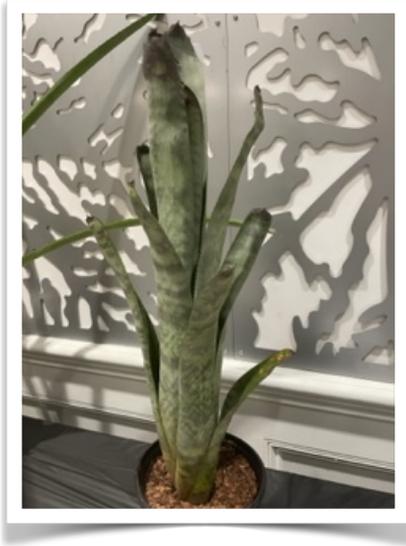
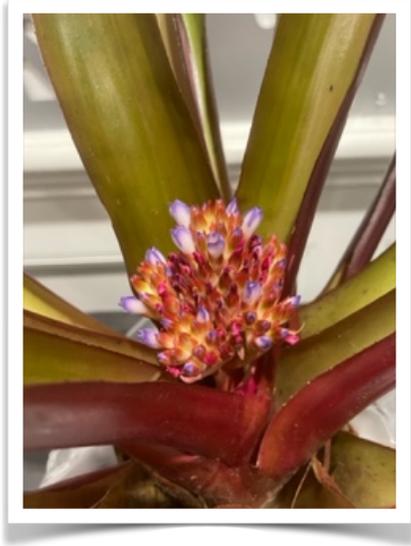
Thanks to Kathy and Phil for fulfilling our needs with a varied supply of drinks! I enjoy Katherine's nuts and look forward to sneaking some, when she arrives! I know you have your favorites of the bounty that has been appearing at the meetings. Keep the food of your choice coming. It is becoming quite an opportunity socialize and garner information on the plants we love both prior to the meeting and during the break time,

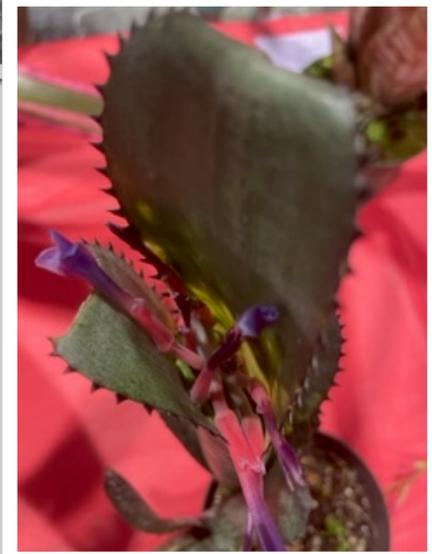
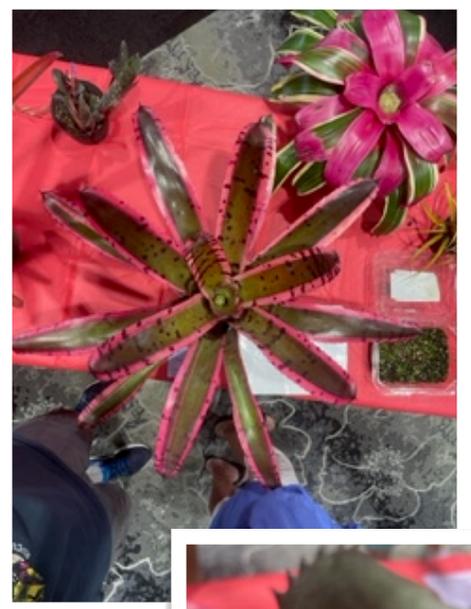
Peggy Bohl

Pictures

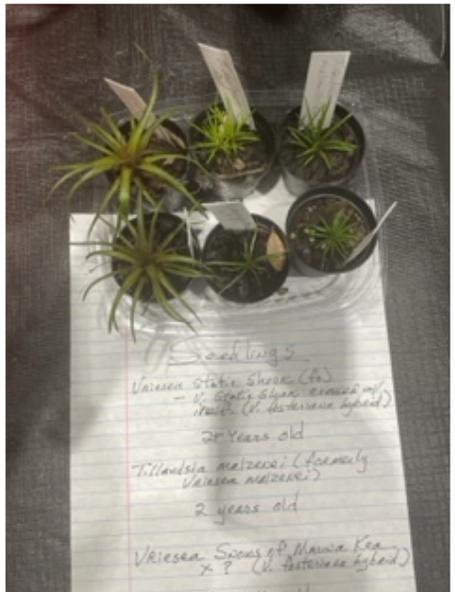


Hannibal Lecter & family





Show & Tell



Extravaganza 2023 Photos

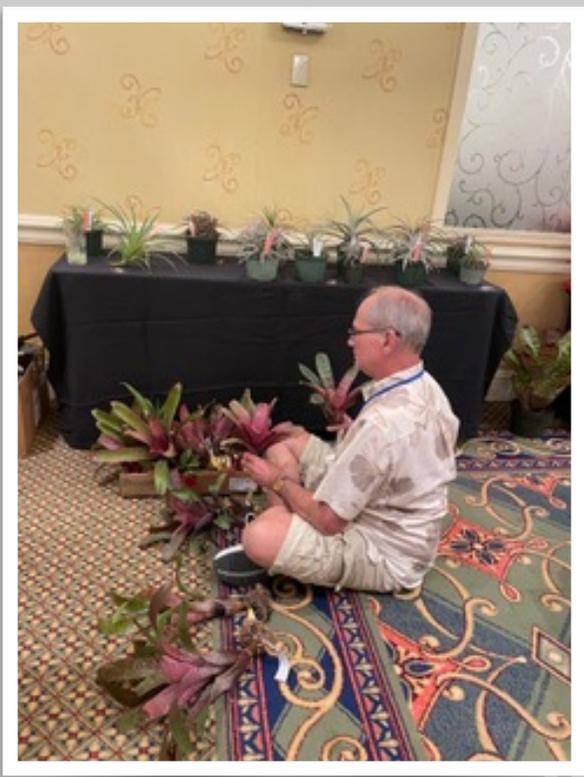
OF THE PALM BEACHES



THE
rav
2023



LI
PA



TROPIFLORA



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2023 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 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!

Treasurer:

Date _____ Check # _____ Cash \$ _____

Officers

President: Mike McMahon

Vice-President: Tim Dreggors

Treasurer: Joyce Gibault

Secretary: Katherine Vaccaro

Immediate Past President: Mike Saunders

Florida Council Reps: Mike Saunders & Mike McMahon

POSITIONS

Meeting Layout Coordinator: President.

Meeting Hospitality Coordinator: Kathy Hancock (Beverages); Peggy Bohl (Snacks)

Helpers:

Welcome Table/Raffle Coordinator: Robin Norton Helpers: Tracy Kochmann, Katherine Vaccaro

Secret Bid Auction Coordinator: Phil Wright

Plant Of The Month Coordinator: John Boardman

Speaker Helper: John Boardman

Librarian : Telka diFate

Newsletter Editor: John Vecchitto Would be good to have a couple of people as 'reporters', supplying John with photos, news blurbs and articles.

Newsletter Proofreader: Marty Folk

Membership Secretary: Marilyn Howser

PLANT SALES -

Plant Sale Chair for Leu Gardens Spring Plant Sale: Mike Saunders

Field Trip Organizer: Karen Steinberg

Webmaster: Greg Kolojeski

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.

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