



BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF GREATER CHICAGO

THE BSGC NEWS

October/ November , 2012

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Lori Weigerding

We hope many of you were able to make the end of the year Bromeliad luncheon at Jimmy's Charhouse.

The October 14th tour of the Botanic Gardens greenhouses was enjoyed by Del Busczynski, Maureen Collins, Priscilla Segel, Julie Jimenez, Roberta Torossy, Paula Darning and Lori and Jeff Weigerding.

Minutes by Roberta Torossy from October Meeting

We went on the tour of the green houses before the meeting, and found it to be very interesting and informative. We had a very good person who did an impressive job on explaining the various plants and the care of them. He explained the opening and closing of the windows on the roof to control the environment. We also had a tour of the electrical system required for this control as well as found out about the fertilization methods for the various plants. Afterward, we had a brief meeting in the hallway with members there giving approval for the board. A discussion was held as to where we would hold the Christmas party. Julie will mail the menu for one of the restaurants to Lori. Maureen will check out another resaurant. The decision for the place will be made by the board. The Meeting was over by four o'clock. Paula moved to adjourn and Lori seconded it.

Luncheon Minutes

Luncheon: November 11, 2012 Minutes taken by Roberta

Attendance: Lori , Jeff, Priscilla, Julianna,Paula, & Roberta

We met at Jimmy's Char house at 12:00 . We visited while waiting for others to come. When the last arrivals came, we had a brief business meeting. We had the vote for the upcoming year and the new slate was approved. Paula introduced the new slate; Lori is President, Paula is Treasurer, Martha is Vice President, and Roberta is Secretary. There was discussion as to when to hold our next meeting in February. There was talk about what we can do. Julie said there was a conservatory in Milwaukee that has greenhouses that we might like to see. Priscilla seconded the idea as a very good place. Julie will look into renting a small bus or van so that members could go together. There was some talk as to when this could take place. The date will be discussed later.

The meeting was closed and lunch was ordered. Everyone had a good time.

President's Column

Wow what a change of pace for the luncheon! Jimmy's Char House was a fabulous idea, thanx Julie! We had a nice change of items to choose from.

We were sorry that more people couldn't attend, but the few of us had a great time! We took a final vote for the list of officers and the slate was passed as submitted!

We talked about what we might do in the upcoming year of interest to the members we have and what we could try to attract new ones.

Julie brought up going to a conservatory and Priscilla mentioned the Boerner Botanical Gardens outside of Milwaukee. Julie volunteered to see how much it would cost to rent a small school bus. Jeff and I on the way home thought about the idea of renting a van too. We didn't decide when to try and plan this event. We want to discuss it with the members and see when a good time to get the most attendance would be.

Other than that, the year is coming to a close. The days are shorter and colder! I want to thank everyone who has come to the meetings, given of their ideas and themselves to make this club a success! Martha and Steve, without your valuable expertise and assistance thru out the year, we wouldn't have anything to do or read! Roberta you do an excellent job of reporting what we do at each meeting and Paula you do a great job of keeping our books in order. Thanx again to Ardie and Jack for all the plants you bring to share with us and the public and make our show a success!

We all hope in the coming year that more of you will be able to attend our meetings and bring along your ideas! We will probably have our next meeting in February. We'll let you all know what's happening in an email or a newsletter. I want to wish everyone the best holidays possible! Please be safe and take care!

Lori Weigerding



Blooming Aechmea

Steve and I went to the 20th BSI World Conference in Orlando at the end of September. It was nice to see old friends and make some new ones. The seminars and poster session were excellent. (Of course Dear, You handled the Poster Session!) I was unable to go to all the seminars since I had signed up for the Leu Gardens and the Osceola County Schools Environmental Study Center Tours.

The yard tours were of Steve Beaudoin/Tina Farsetta, Lisa Robinette and Steven Wagners gardens. This is what they provided for the conference booklet. (Copied from the book since it saves writing!)

Steve Beaudoin / Tina Farsetta

Our yard is very diverse with many different kinds of plants and yard sections ranging from a butterfly garden to a succulent garden. In between you'll find an assortment of lilies, tropical plants, ferns, orchids, Florida natives, walkways, statuaries and not to mention bromeliads. Our philosophy is to try and showcase the beauty of the plants in an artistic and aesthetically visual way. Our yard is also a working yard with a sometimes messy nursery and plant hospital, potter's bench and 3 composting bins.

We don't have a lot of shade, so we had to create a 40' long pergola for those sun sensitive plants. In other areas we had to rely on our neighbor's oak tree and smaller shade providing plants to shelter more sensitive plants and bromeliads. We also added a small 20' long greenhouse to winter our cold sensitive plants from November to March time frame. We've been into plants for many years and had a small bromeliad selection up until about 4 years ago when we joined the bromeliad society. Our



At Steve Beaudoin / Tina Farsetta



New Home for Crypthanus!

collection has grown from roughly 20 different types to about 300 different kinds of bromeliads. Needless to say, for the yard size we have, we are running out of usable space.

Due to the lack of “good” shade, some of our bromeliads are grown “hard”. However, it is fascinating to watch the bromeliads as they change throughout the year as the amount of sun they get increases and decreases.

Depending on where a specific plant is in the yard, it may look totally different from the same bromeliad planted elsewhere. We also keep a lot of the bromeliads in pots so we can move them around to take advantage of the sun levels throughout the year.

We hope everyone enjoys the yard tour and looking forward to sharing our yard with the group.

Lisa Robinette

It would be my pleasure to share my love of bromeliads with those that are fellow enthusiasts. My time is well spent sculpturing my yard with numerous settings from growing in the ground, designed on berms, hanging and displayed on poles with an extensive array of variations, colors, shapes and sizes. As you stroll through my private garden you can hear the tranquil sounds of fountains combined with plumerias, crotons, succulents, dracaenas among others. I have been growing for more than twenty years and I am always looking for ways to improve the appearance of my garden, and of course, how to protect my plants from the weather changes. I hope you will be pleased and would agree that you can only describe my garden as a real kaleidoscope of bromeliads.

Steven Wagner

Stella Luna Gardens is a National Wildlife Federation certified Back Yard Wildlife Habitat. I started gardening here twelve years ago. When I purchased the property, the only flora besides St. Augustine grass was a Chinese Elm, Maple Tree and a Gardenia bush. The St. Augustine has long been replaced with beds of bromeliads and other semi-tropical and tropical plants.



At Steve Beaudoin / Tina Farsetta

I have a goal of 100 palm trees in my yard. At the moment there are 13 different species, totaling 40 palms. I have a small collection of Pachypodiums. I am growing all three genus of Redwood Trees in pots. (Here, the visitors are the giants, rather than the trees.)

I have recently developed an interest in tropical edibles. I have begun to mix plants such as, Moringa, Papaya, Roselle Sorrel and Mayan Tree Spinach into the landscape, along side bananas and pineapples. The garden is chemical & pesticide free!

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Most of you have changed your clocks which reminds us that there has been a change in the sunlight. Because of this we need to check our plants to see if they need to be moved to a different location so they get the appropriate amount of light. The following article from the Feb. 1993 Houston Bromeliad Newsletter explains this. (Note: We **don't** have to change time in Arizona! Yeah! Don't forget to check your smoke and CO alarms batteries!)

Plant at right is Neoregelia 'Lorena Lector'



The Right Place At The Right Time

By Valerie Steckler

If the earth did not spin on a tilted axis around the sun, there would be no reason for us to adjust our greenhouse schedule, and move our plants in reaction to the changes in temperature, humidity, air circulation, moisture, and particularly light. As winter approaches, the days



At the Wagner's

shorten as the sun “moves” further and further towards the south, until we reach the shortest period of daylight at winter equinox in December. Then, as we approach spring, we see a lengthening of the days as the sun “moves” northward, until finally we come to summer equinox, and the longest period of daylight. The relationship of the earth’s tilted rotation to the sun is predictable, and accounts for the seasonal changes that we enjoy.

The change of seasons and accompanying weather conditions alter the routine of the bromeliad grower in many ways. What was the perfect spot for a particular plant in June will often be less than optimal in October. In Central Texas on a bright, cloudless summer day we received approximately 20,000 foot candles of light. (Yes, Virginia, there is a sun out there somewhere. Just take it on faith!) On a gloomy, sunless winter day we often receive less than 500 foot candles of light. It is imperative to place those plants

requiring bright light in areas that receive the most light. It is no less imperative to place those plants that bleach out or burn, into areas receiving less light. We must take into consideration not only the intensity of the light, but also its duration. Most plants can take an hour or so of bright sun, if they have been in a moderate light situation before exposure to very bright light. Conversely, a bright light plant can take a few days of diminished light at a bromeliad show without a loss of color and markings. (Yes, I know there are exceptions). The successful grower takes the time to place a particular plant in a spot that is optimal for it. Plants need to be in the right place at the right time. This is easier said than done, and requires some experimentation.

In winter, bromeliad growers throughout Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas greenhouse their plants if they expect to see any of them in the spring. The last two years have convinced me that if I don’t have greenhouse plastic on the greenhouse, and all plants that I choose to continue to grow into said greenhouse by Halloween, I am a fool. This theory can be verified by Harvey Beltz, Don Garrison and countless others who have played “freeze roulette” and lost. True, you don’t lose all the plants, but they are damaged, and every time you water them you feel like giving yourself a quick kick.

In addition to the duration and intensity of light we must consider the temperature to be maintained, the humidity, air circulation, and depending on the weather when to water thoroughly, by flushing out the cups so that the water will trickle out through the leaves and run through the mix. The concentration of salts in the water in the cup will rapidly rise unless the plant is well watered every time. If there are many sunny days with cold night temperatures and heaters are required, the plants will dry out quickly. Remember that cold air holds less moisture than warm air, and this lowers humidity. Gloomy, sunless, cloudy days slow the degree of evaporation, and care must be taken not to over water and induce rot. Of course, all watering is dependent on the potting mix used and whether the plant is mounted or in a mix. Several box fans will increase air circulation and help the plants hang in there 'til spring.

A tightly packed greenhouse is the ideal habitat for scale to go forth and multiply, so if you didn't inspect all plants carefully when placing them, take the time now to do so. If you do have scale on a few plants and ignore it, you will pay a high penalty come spring. I prefer Cygon, one teaspoon to the gallon, and I dunk the plants, mix and pot. This is time consuming but effective. Orthene will work as well. Be sure to follow all the safety precautions when using any pesticide. Long rubber gloves and a weatherproof poncho work well for me. After approximately an hour the effectiveness of Cygon sharply decreases and fresh solution must be prepared. When you are finished, shower immediately.

To save time, place plants with similar needs together. Often this is difficult. At least try to have one spot where the "picky" plants can be observed closely. If you use poles and pot hangers, reserve the uppermost areas that get the most light for those plants that require bright light for color, markings and compact conformation. Keep in mind that while wintering plants in the greenhouse isn't a lot of fun, soon it will be spring and we'll move them out to the right place at the right time, and enjoy their beauty once again. That's what the hobby's all about, isn't it?



At Lisa Robinette's



Lisa's use of poles to hang bromeliads

We were saddened to hear of the death of one of the Great Bromeliad Men, Harry "Mr. Bromeliad" Luther, known for his expertise on bromeliad identification. Harry Luther, who was Selby Gardens director of the Mulford B. Foster Bromeliad Identification Center and Curator of Living Collections for 32 years, unexpectedly passed away. Considered one of the world's most knowledgeable botanical experts on the bromeliad family, Harry was an

Honorary Trustee of the Bromeliad Society International and recipient of the Society's highest award, the Wally Berg Award of Excellence.

During his career, Harry described more than 100 species of bromeliads and authored more than 200 scientific and popular publications. He co-authored the book, Native Bromeliads of Florida with David Benzing in 2009. He will be remembered as a man with a great passion for botany with an insatiable curiosity about the natural world.

His vast contributions to the collections and expertise at Selby Gardens and his generous nature of sharing knowledge with others were of incalculable value. After working at Selby, he accepted the position of Assistant Director of Horticulture at Singapore's Garden by the Bay.

Anne Coughlan found the following article in the Chicago Tribune on November 4th and thought you might like to read it. Here is the link.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/classified/real-estate/home/sc-home-garden-air-plants-20121114,0,308093.story>



At Lisa Robinette's