

Pup Talk

January 2019

THE SADDLEBACK VALLEY BROMELIAD SOCIETY

Volume 26, Number 1

Next Meeting: Thursday, January 3, 2019, 7:00 PM

**At the Norman Murray Community & Senior Center
24932 Veterans Way, Mission Viejo, CA**

FEATURED THIS MONTH:

Cristy Brenner presents the second half on her 2017 trip to Bolivia. The tour will leave the drier environments of the high plateaus and travel to the warm and humid lowlands located east of the Andes. This area has fewer cacti and many more Bromeliad genera including: Aechmea, Bromelia, Deuterchonia, Fosterella, Guzmania, Mesobromelia, Pitcairnia, Puya, and numerous species of Tillandsia. Pictured is *Tillandsia samaipatensis* from that presentation. (See page 3 for more information on this plant.)

Join us for an interesting, bromeliad filled evening!

DIRECTIONS: Meetings are the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM in the Norman Murray Community and Senior Center, 24932 Veterans Way in Mission Viejo. Visitors Welcome!



Where is that? Off the I-5 take the La Paz exit. Go east on La Paz past Marguerite Parkway to Veterans' Way. Turn left. The parking lot is at the road's end. We are in the Juniper Room!

This Meeting Includes:

Bromeliads and More Wonderful Bromeliads:

- * **Show & Tell** – A meeting highlight. Bring in your bloomers, show stoppers, interesting plants, questions, even disasters. Help all of us learn and enjoy while you get a free raffle ticket.
- * **Raffle Table** – A chance to add to your collection; buy lots of tickets!
- * **Auction** – We often have special plants for you to bid on, usually in a silent auction.

Refreshments – Our great break provided by Chris Bruce, Larry Marks, and Mike Moody.

Supplies — Buy items needed to help your plants thrive! We have pots, soil, tags, and other special items you need to grow those show winners!

Library & Information — Want to learn even more? Check out a book and read up! Or ask our bromeliad experts that question that has been bugging you! We love to talk Bromeliads!

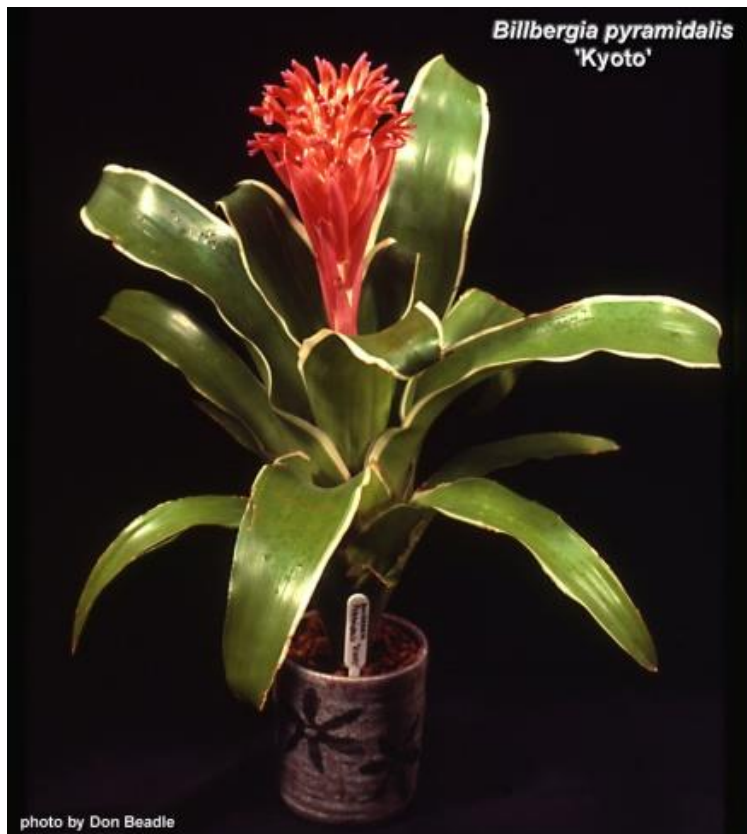
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Getting Out and About:

January 3 – Cristy on Bromeliads of Bolivia

January 27 – Board Meeting. (Please see page 3 for more information.)

February 7 – Our February Meeting



Billbergia ‘Kyoto’ is a colorful member of the Billbergia genus. The flower structure has the fan shape reflecting its *B. pyramidalis* parentage and is pink to red with tiny blue to purple flowers. This shape is why you will see this plant sold as *B. ‘Koyto’* Flaming Torch or Summer Torch. Like most members of the Billbergia genus, these flowers enjoy a relatively short life. But the leaves which are an emerald green with white variegated margins offer an attractive year round addition to any landscape. The plant can reach a foot in height and up to an 18 inch spread.

B. pyramidalis is a native of a wide area from Brazil to Cuba, and is found from mountain rain forests to coastal areas. The ‘Koyto’ cultivar is thought to have been developed in Japan, and first imported to the US in 1975.

(Photo by Don Beadle)

SADDLEBACK VALLEY BROMELIAD SOCIETY NEWS!

Holiday Party:

Our holiday party was wonderful. Attendance was held down by the severe weather but everyone there enjoyed a festive evening of food and friendship. Barbara Stewart outdid herself with colorful decorations, raffle prizes and plants, and a handmade decoration for each of us. There even was a place to photo each aspiring “Santa” or “Mrs. Santa.”

The gift exchange produced much laughter as gift “stealing” kept everyone guessing who was getting what.

It was a great evening!

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Board Meeting

Our annual board meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 27. Barbara Stewart will not be able to host the meeting as planned and Mary Kermani has kindly volunteered to step in. Mary’s address in Huntington Beach is listed on page 9 and detailed information will be at the January meeting.

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Bromeliad Adventures.

Guillermo Rivera Plant Expeditions updated their 2019 schedule. Trips focused on bromeliads include:

- To central Brazil in July for both cacti and bromeliads.
- To Peru in September.
- To Argentina and Chile in November.

There were openings on all these as of early December. If you would like more information, go to www.plantexpeditions.com.

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Tillandsia samaipatensis

We are used to plants named for a discoverer or for someone famous. The plant from her upcoming talk that Cristy suggested as our cover photo is named for a city.

Lee More in the July/August Journal wrote of finding this plant on a trip to the area, “Only a few kilometers before the town of Samaipata, we spotted large plants of *Tillandsia samaipatensis* growing on the canyon walls with spectacular bright butter-yellow branched inflorescences. Growing to a height of about 1.5 mtrs, the inflorescence grows upright like a towering Ponderosa Pine until it gradually leans over under its own weight at maturity. The area where they are found is about 1800 mtrs. MSL and is arid most of the year. The plants were growing lithophytically or in the loose dirt among Cacti and Agaves.”

This species appears to be endemic to this one area.... Collecting a few specimens proved to be difficult because most of them were growing on the steep canyon walls across the river from the road. They were mostly unattainable, so I imagine that they will remain there undisturbed for some time to come. They also appear to be monocarpic; meaning that they do not pup and grow only from seed after maturing, dying, and finishing their cycle by spreading their seed like *T. fendleri*.”



Rainforest Flora

This first class *Tillandsia* supplier's growing center in northern San Diego County was leveled by the horrible Lilac fire in December, 2017. It was an almost complete loss. Paul Isley, Rainforest Flora President, summarizes the damage, their recovery progress, and their plans.

"The 65,000 and 20,000 sq. ft. greenhouses were destroyed except for the steel framework of the larger house and even it was subject to significant damage. All of the steel was black with soot." It is estimated that between 5,000,000 and 7,000,000 plants including staghorn ferns and bromeliads perished or suffered significant damage in the fire. The Neos below lost their



color and markings in the heat although the centers were alive. In addition, all the very expensive watering, vehicles, and other equipment and buildings needed to maintain such a large operation were destroyed. Paul continues, "Two homes and all their contents were lost. Fortunately, no one was hurt although our employees, who also lived on the property, escaped the blaze with just the cloths they were wearing and a couple of cars."

"So how does one deal with such natural catastrophe? The two choices were to let the property go and sell it "as is," the logical and easy choice, or to try and, like the proverbial Phoenix, build it up again from the ashes—literally! The short answer to this is that we decided not to give up and to rely on our experience, perseverance, and prayers to put Humpty Dumpty back together again."

"It took our team and a lot of initial volunteer help over 3 months just to empty the upper greenhouse and discard the lower one. Some 15 forty-yard containers were filled with debris and the remains of millions of *tillandsias* that took us decades to put together." What plants that could be saved or recover with time were transferred to the Torrance, Ca. retail center that remains in operation.

"We are now close to the end of the rebuilding process and in two or three years the large greenhouse will be filled again. This has been a fascinating although difficult and frustrating journey but our new operation is almost ready—after thousands of hours of effort."



"We now have a new mobile home and a new, state-of-the-art facility in which to grow our beloved *Tillandsia*. Some people believe that everything happens for a reason. I don't know about the truth of that but I do know that when I look at this new greenhouse, this fruit of our labors, I get excited about what the future holds for Rainforest Flora!"



Don Beadle passed away 10/31/2018, at the age of 89. He left a great legacy in a wide number of areas for us all and was awarded the Wally Berg Award of Excellence at the WBC in San Diego earlier this year. This article was written before his passing.

Don Beadle, Mr. Billbergia's Deep Legacy

By Karen Andreas

In the beginning, Billbergia was a modest little plant, often plain green with three leaves, a few spots and a quick-lived inflorescence. It was relegated to the back of collections, neglected and disrespected.

Then Billbergia met Don Beadle; neither was ever the same again.

Born in Lafayette, Louisiana, Don Beadle never quite fit in. "I couldn't play the banjo and I couldn't talk Cajun," he says, so he booked out of Louisiana at age 19, joining the Air Force. College followed four years of military service, and Don Beadle was now a petroleum engineer. He started with Philips Petroleum and worked his way into smaller and smaller companies until he had his own, Macero Minerals in Corpus Christi, Texas.

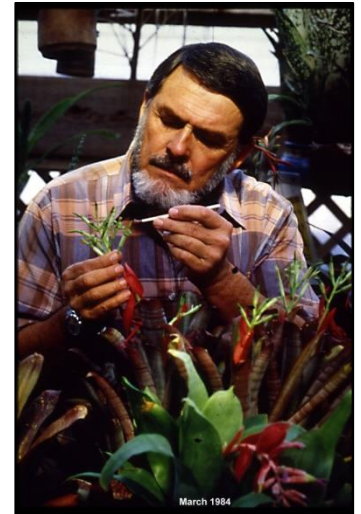
In Corpus Christi, John Anderson and Don were neighbors.... Thus began a lifelong friendship that, in later years, made them a popular duo of auctioneers, sought after as much for their stories and banter as their auctioneering skills. It was during those early days that Don discovered bromeliads. He went to a bromeliad society meeting, and the addiction was immediate. His first bromeliad was Aechmea 'Black Jack'. "You just can't kill this plant," Don says with great fondness. John became a renowned grower of Aechmeas. "John never did anything half-assed," Don remembers.



Don was fascinated by the variety of bromeliads and wanted to collect everyone in the world. The impracticality of it soon became apparent, and so he narrowed his focus on the lowly and lonely Billbergia. "I collected all the species I could find - there were about 20 available at the time," he says. He looked for cultivars although they were few and far between. "Mulford Foster had made 'Fantasia' and R. Wilson had made 'Catherine Wilson' but, in general, Billbergias had not really caught on in popularity." Don was fascinated by the idea of making hybrids and found the process exhilarating.

Preserving pollen was the first big challenge. After only two or so days, it would turn green and lose viability. Once he figured out that freezing the pollen kept it viable for up to two years, it became "compulsive, an addiction," he remembers.

Still, he was growing green Billbergias. It was a limiting process, until Bob Whitman found 'Domingos Martins', the gorgeously spotted cultivar of vittata. "I lusted after that bromeliad with a passion," Don says. After much coercion and a year's wait, Don got a pup and went to work. He crossed 'Domingos Martins' with 'Ed McWilliams', and Billbergia 'Hallelujah' was born. Prized for its rich deep red leaves and its white and pink spots, its foliage appeal long outlasts its stunning magenta scapes and purple flowers. 'Domingos Martins' revolutionized hybridizing and today is found in many Billbergia cultivars. (Continued on P.6)



Don continued to create better, more beautiful, sexier Billbergias to the extent that they soon moved to the forefront of sales and shows. Everyone wanted a Don Beadle Billbergia. Billbergias were no longer the red headed stepchild of the bromeliad world. 'Afterglow' with its rich, deep pink blush does literally glow as light shines through its leaves. 'La Noche's' dark, banded leaves are dramatic and stunning. 'El Capitan' is another dramatic Billbergia whose sturdy leaves have both banding and spots.

Don quickly ran out of plant growing space and built his first greenhouse. More hybridizing soon followed, as did a larger house and a larger greenhouse, where he lived and grew bromeliads for ten years. He came to Florida to visit Harry Luther and Wally Berg, who, as it turned out, were off in South America on a collecting expedition. Through happenstance, he ended up at a realtor's and told the agent he wanted a "house on the beach with room for some greenhouses." The agent later called him with news of a place with a fresh water pond and three greenhouses full of dead plants; Don made the deal over the phone.



So in 1986, Don sold his Corpus Christi house and moved to First Dirt Road in Venice, Florida home to Los Milagros nursery. He fell in love with the place, rebuilding the greenhouses and growing like mad. To date, he has created more than 140 named cultivars and many more yet to be named.



While he continued to hybridize, Don was breaking ground in yet another area: photography. He set up a dedicated space for taking pictures and decided it would be more dramatic and compelling to photograph bromeliads in clumps rather than singly, then the norm. Every day he checked for blooms so he could catch the flowers at their (quick) peak. He experimented with lighting, finally settling on blue photo bulbs for the most honest light. Using a Nikon camera with a full array of lenses, he honed his photographic skills and incorporated double exposures into his photographic repertoire. When Don decided to create a photographic record of

species, Harry Luther suggested that Don dissect the flower and capture its qualities in intimate detail. In those pictures, Don started using "that little white ruler that I love and I got unadulterated pleasure from the photography. It gave me a lot of satisfaction."

Don's presentations at World Conferences became standing room only events.... Audiences sat in rapt silence as Don's slides were shown, with minimal but very often pithy commentary from Don and to the accompaniment of quiet music. His photographs set the standard for both scientific presentation and artistry. His technique and the quality of his legacy are evident today. The next time you see a beautiful picture of a bromeliad, you will catch the echoes of Don's influence.

The legacy does not end there, however. In 1998, Don Beadle compiled the Bromeliad Cultivar Registry for the BSI. This monumental work was the bromeliad bible of nomenclature and bloodlines of every known cultivar at the time. Don compiled this tome on a computer - it is hard to imagine now how revolutionary this technology was at the time - yet he understood that it was obsolete in many ways as soon as it was published. Beyond having taken on this labor- and time-intensive task for the bromeliad world, he recognized that changes, new information and new cultivars would overtake the publication within a very short time. He also believed that the Internet would be a way to offer accessible information.

(Continued on P. 7)

To that end, Don first suggested to the BSI those digital files be made available on compact disk but he was ahead of his time with technology. That was an impractical suggestion as most people at that time did not have access to the kinds of programs that would handle such a document. So Don offered the files to Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies webmaster Michael Andreas. Michael was able to create the format for the Internet and make the living, flexible Cultivar Registry available for world access. Don's work at organizing, educating and providing information about bromeliad cultivars lives on.



In 2000, Don's life took another turn, and he sold Los Milagros, the nursery and the property, to Michael Kiehl who moved his nursery, Michael's Bromeliads, to First Dirt Road....

Don could often be found at Michael's Bromeliads. Don has reorganized the Beadle Billbergia collection that lives and thrives there, sharing information and memories with Michael Kiehl. Don's amazing collections of photographs now live on the website of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies in yet another collaboration with Michael Andreas.

Don's passion for bromeliads led to ground breaking Billbergia cultivars that made this genus one of the most popular; his ground breaking bromeliad photography set the standard for bromeliad pictures; his passion for knowledge led to the Bromeliad Cultivar Registry; his vision for an accurate registry accessible and available to one and all took him beyond his peers and now serves the entire world.

Don Beadle's legacy has had a deep impact on our bromeliad world. We are all the richer for his being our friend and mentor.

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Lyn Wegner, BSI President, adds, "I will miss you dear Don, you will live on in our gardens forever!"

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B.L.B.E.R.J.R. In 1987 Don Beadle, Mr. Billbergia, wrote the following in the *Journal*.

Billbergias will inevitably seek out and occupy the darkest, dampest, and dreariest corners of your greenhouse. Once there, they will degenerate into large, dense masses of lanky, green, scale-infested foliage and will eat their tags. I do not expect you to take my word for this astonishing phenomenon. The proof lies in your own greenhouse. Notice the occupant of the lightest, brightest, and most desirable area. Does the genus on its tag begin with a "B"? I thought not. You are probably looking at the "N"-word, or the "T"-, or "V"-words, but surely not a "B." Maybe even the "C"-word, but never a "B"-word. You will find most of your "B" tags, if indeed you find tags, in the dank, dark, dismal locations.

Billbergias behave this way because they are troubled by feelings of inferiority engendered and constantly reinforced by the callous and insensitive grower. A study of the psychological profiles of certain Billbergias has revealed one problem to be a deep-seated envy of the longer blooming period of their more colorful cousins. The Billbergia compensates for this shortcoming by prominently displaying its reproductive apparatus and thereby encouraging the promiscuous and indiscriminate creation of hordes of Billegitimate offspring. The consequence of this behavior in the bromeliad world is much the same as for other life forms. The Billbergia suffers a loss of self-respect, declines in social status to the lowest level, experiences growing discontent, and finally resorts to revolution.

(Continued on P 8)

Although hardly fashionable in this day and age, I confess to having barely repressed feelings of sympathy and empathy for the cause of the beleaguered Billbergia. I know others of similar sensitivity must feel the same. In fact, I have recently observed a small but growing grassroots movement among the more radical Billbergia sympathizers. Resentment has been skyrocketing....

It was inevitable that an increasingly militant group of radical Billbergia growers would tire of waiting for the government to do something about the Billbergia crisis. It appears that, finally, relief is at hand. Last week I attended a clandestine meeting of radical fringe Billbergia activists at a secret location. In attendance was the cream of internationally noted Billbergia growers, hybridizers, and their ever-present groupies. Feelings ran high. As emotions flamed I became afire with billfever and willingly accepted the mandate thrust upon my shoulders to carry the message to the world that the day of justice and equality for the Billbergia is finally at hand.

As chairman of the Action Committee for the newly organized BILLBERGIA LOVERS BROTHERHOOD FOR EQUAL RIGHTS AND JUSTICE RIGHTNOW (BLBERJR) I have, accordingly, prepared a preliminary list of demands to be presented to an emergency meeting of the BSI Board. A synopsis of this list is as follows:

1. Equal Opportunity Housing. Effective immediately, billbergias shall be fully integrated into the "Country Club" areas of the greenhouse. No more tenement and barrio living under the benches and behind the trash cans. No more overcrowding, high carbohydrate diets, and scale bugs. Billbergias are naturally friendly and gregarious and prefer to live in neat, single-family dwellings in a nice neighborhood.
2. Equal Health and Sanitation Services. Billbergias are by nature a clean and tidy group, but require assistance to stay varmint-free and well groomed. Billbergias shall, therefore, be examined at least once a week for various varmints and groomed until they say "Quit." Further, Billbergias should not have to occupy the same pot with their long-dead ancestors. Periodic removal and prompt disposal of billcorpses will begin immediately.
3. The Environment. Billbergias like clean water and fresh air just as well as the next bromeliad. They are primarily nonsmokers, preferring fully functional trichomes. Billbergias shall, therefore, be provided at all times with climatic conditions equivalent to those on any hilltop in Vista, California, or a reasonable facsimile thereof. Further, the watering of the bilibergias shall be on a plant-by-plant basis and must be performed in accordance with minimum standards as established by the Brother Beadle Watering and Meditation Institute of Corpus Christi, Texas.
4. Birth Control. The immediate imposition of stringent birth control procedures is imperative. Recently, the media disclosed the details of a sordid and shameful incident where pollination was attempted for no other reason than that the two parties were in bloom at the same time. Really! This has got to stop before all Billbergias look as much alike as do Neoregelias.
5. Equal Opportunity Exhibition. A study group empowered to develop and implement a system for handicapping show plants of all genera other than Billbergia must be formed now. This system should allow Billbergias to win top awards at least 50 percent of the time until compensation is made for the prejudiced and discriminatory judging which has victimized the Billbergia in the past.



Deliverance for the Billbergia is at hand! Billbergia growers of the world, UNITE! Down with the nasty Neo., the vile Vriesea, and the deceitful Dyckia! Remember, we are watching you. Billbergia hot lines are now being organized. BLBERJR is now hiring out-of-work revenue agents to conduct covert spot checks of your greenhouses. You have one month for voluntary compliance before we undertake drastic steps.

2019 Society Officers/ Committee Heads

President:	Cristy Brenner	(949) 837-3722	cbrenner4@cox.net
Vice President/ Programs:	Jeff Sorensen	(949) 275-1586	jeffsorensen@sbcglobal.net
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Treasurer/ Membership:	Mary Kermani	(714) 747-1451	mehrnazk@aol.com
Fundraising:	Yvonne Wilson	(714) 531-5464	ymwilson@uci.edu
Librarian:	Carolyn Parsons	(949) 347-8667	pacorocko2@aol.com
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Supplies:	Don DeBok	(714) 840-9806	ddebok@aol.com
Webmaster:	Mary Kermani	(714) 747-1451	mehrnazk@aol.com

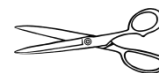
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Renew Today — Now is the time to renew your Saddleback membership. Enjoy a year full of meetings and discussions about your favorite plants with friendly people and add to your collection with outstanding raffle plants. Membership is only \$15 per year. Renew your membership and send a second for that brom-loving friend.

SVBS 2019 DUES / MEMBERSHIP

Dues are \$15 per membership (for one person or for two or more at the same address). Please send a check & info to:

Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society (SVBS) c/o Mary Kermani
19642 Sacramento Lane, Huntington Beach, CA 92646



Membership Name(s): _____ Newsletter via: <input type="checkbox"/> email (Dues \$15 a year) or <input type="checkbox"/> USPS (Dues \$20 a year) or <input type="checkbox"/> Both (Dues \$20) Address: <input type="checkbox"/> Check if information is the same as last year. (Otherwise fill out below) Street: _____ City, State, ZIP: _____ Phone Number(s): (____) ____ - _____ Email: _____

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Our Web Address: <http://www.bsi.org/webpages/saddleback.html>

Join Us The Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society is an educational organization promoting the study and cultivation of Bromeliads. Meetings include an educational talk, a plant raffle table, a silent auction, refreshments, a lending library, supplies for purchase, shared information, and camaraderie. Dues are \$15 per year (for a single person or a family) with email newsletter and \$20 with USPS newsletter. Send name, address, email with dues to Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society (SVBS) c/o Mary Kermani, 19642 Sacramento Lane, Huntington Beach, CA 92646

Pup Talk, January, 2019

**Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society
1414 via Lima,
Fallbrook, CA 92028**

FIRST CLASS PLEASE!

Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society

Pup Talk

January 2019, Page 10

The Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society next meets Thursday, January 3, 2019, at 7:00 PM.

Festivities include a:

- * **Program** on the Bromeliads of Bolivia;
- * **Plant raffle** (Bring a show & tell plant to receive a free raffle ticket!);
- * **Show & Tell** with lots of our plants to see and enjoy;
- * **Lending library** for books you need to learn;
- * **Supplies** you need to grow;
- * **Goodies** by Chris Bruce, Larry Marks, and Mike Moody;
- * **Friendship**; and **Information**.

A big thank you goes to all who contributed information, writing, and production of this newsletter including Cristy Brenner, Pete and Patti Dunn, Paul Isley, and Mary Kermani.

Pup Talk is a publication of the Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society. Any opinion expressed herein is not necessarily that of the Society. Send comments, enquiries, and articles to: Joe Wujcik (760) 451-9146 or email joewujcik@sbcglobal.net. Plant photos are courtesy of the FCBS Photo Index, Bromeliad Society of Australia, Cristy Brenner, and Paul Isley. Deadline is mid-month before month of publication. When credit is given, nonprofit publications may reprint from us.

The Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society is an educational organization promoting the study and cultivation of bromeliads and fellowship among those who do. We are an affiliate of the Bromeliad Society International.

