



BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF GREATER CHICAGO

THE BSGC NEWS

December, 2011

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Lori Weigerding

We were glad to hear that those who were able to make it to Lambs Farm for the year end luncheon had a great time. There was some discussion of the February meeting and the show in July. Please mark your 2012 calendar when you get it for our meeting on February 12th and March 11th. It doesn't seem possible that another year is almost over.

President's Column

Well It's official, the board has been elected as slated. We all want to thank you for your support and trust. We had a terrific lunch and conversation. I want to also thank all those who responded! Please if you have any ideas that you would like us to try and do, please let us know.

We had a wonderful time visiting Pasquesi Home and Garden! Boy, we felt like royalty. They had a sign announcing our coming and took us on a tour throughout the store! We each got a booklet explaining about Pasquesi and a small gift bag! It's really a neat place and well organized!

I want to thank all those who come to the meetings and participate in keeping our little group alive! I want to especially thank Martha and Steve who work on

getting us speakers, doing presentations, organizing the plant show, putting together the news letter and so much more! I want to thank Paula and Roberta who without their help and commitment we couldn't keep going. Jack and Ardie who every year bring so many plants up with them so we have a great show and contributing their expertise. Henry and Patsy for all the time spent watching the booth over the years and their expertise. For Priscilla and Del's continued attendance and assistance at the shows. For Anne and Marjorie's shot of adrenaline and vigor into our little group! Your new ideas and views are greatly appreciated!

We want to wish you all safe and happy holidays! We will see you all again in February and hope that the weather is nicer by then. We hope that you get everything that you've wished for, but if not, at least everything that you need!

Looking forward to seeing you all in the new year!

Lori Weigerding



Pool at Caribe Royale



Site of the BSI World Conference 2012

We were sorry to hear of the passing away of Barbara Temchuk. She was a former member, newsletter editor, Secretary and great grower. I looked through some of our old newsletters that she had written and found the following.



HOLIDAY DECORATIONS by Barbara Temchuk

**It's a few days before Christmas
and all around my place
Bromeliads are sitting
with much style and grace**



**There are red leaves and green leaves
befitting the season
There are striped ones and spotted ones
with no rhyme or reason**

**Tillandsias are mounted
and hung with great care
Why some are even dangling
overhead in mid-air!**



**Aechmeas and Dyckias
bedeck the shelf
While a Guzmania with a red spike
resembles an elf**

**There are Vrieseas with blooms
coming out of their cups
And there are Neoregelias
adorned with new batches of pups**

**Like toy soldiers, the Billbergias
stand in a row
While Cryptanthus, the earth stars
sparkle below**



**“Old Man Winter”
he'll not cause me dismay
For my home is brightened
by this magical display.**

In early November, Steve and I went to the Caribe Royale in Orlando. It is a beautiful hotel with suites near Disney and Universal. There is a complimentary shuttle to the Disney Theme Parks. To find out more about the hotel, go to www.thecaribeOrlando.com The World Bromeliad Conference will be held there Sept. 25th thru Sunday, September 30th. This will be a great Conference. Some of the speakers scheduled so far are: Eloise Beach, Francisco Oliva-Esteve, Barry Landau, Terrie Bert, Larry Giroux and Any Siekkinen. To find out more, you can go to www.bsi.org and www.fcbs.org

The Hotel is really nice and you get a two room suite at the reduced rate for the Conference. There are places for inexpensive food right across the street. There is plenty of room for the Sales, Show and Seminars. Since it is in Orlando, you can use the Conference as a “excuse” to treat your self and your spouse to a trip before next Winter. We will be going to meet old friends and new friends.

After visiting Orlando, we went to the Extravaganza in Daytona Beach. We were happy to see Jack and Ardie Reilly there but sad to hear that Jack had a heart attack in August. This was the first year that the Cryptanthus Society had their show at the Extravaganza. They did a great job.



Some of the plants available at the Extravaganza in Daytona Beach

Paul Wingert from Michigan who gave our society a program this year, wrote an article in the SEMBS January/February 2006 Newsletter. He discussed some of the challenges, the northern grower has in the winter.

Growing Concerns: Winter Challenges of Heat and Light by Paul Wingert

Growing bromeliads in the summer time seems so easy. Just put them outside and they look great. During the winter, though, things aren't so easy. Even in my greenhouse, things can get pretty cool and gloomy. Not only are the days at their shortest, but the sun is also at its lowest intensity. In addition, weeks on end of lake effect clouds, and blankets of snow blocking what little light exist curse us. When we do get a sunny day, the temperature will reach 80-85 degrees in my greenhouse. Unfortunately, for the entire month of December 2005 only one day was sunny! Several broms seem relatively unfazed by the cooler, dimmer conditions. *Aechmea orlandiana* and *Ae. Capixabae* are blooming beautifully, along with many *Vrieseas*. Many of the beautiful foliage types, such as *Vriesea fosteriana* and its hybrids also look very nice. Even some of the red leafed *Neoregelias* such as 'Charm' and 'Royal Burgundy' are keeping good color.



Marty Folk's C. 'Black Mystic'
BEST OF SHOW

The role of heat relates directly to the metabolism, or growth rate, of plants. Most bromeliads are considered to effectively stop growing when temperatures are 54 degrees or colder. There are always exceptions, of course. Some high altitude species may thrive under cooler conditions, but most of the plants that we enjoy growing do best with temperatures in the 70s and 80s. The greatest impact to bromeliads growing under cooler conditions is that they will produce fewer leaves than they would in a warmer climate. For instance, I grow many hybrids of *Neoregelia concentrica* heritage because I love the way they look when they bloom. I know that they will rarely be competitive with a Florida or California grown specimen, because the number of leaves is fewer, and perfect conformation is very difficult to achieve. In my greenhouse, plants would certainly benefit if I were to install a nice gas furnace to heat the air to 70-75 during the day. The 500-watt electric heater I use only raises temps to about 62-65 on a cloudy day, depending on how cold the temperature is outside. Temperatures at night can be as cold as 45-50 in the greenhouse when the outside temps are extremely cold. I suspect that this doesn't make all of my plants real happy, but I have rarely had plants die from the lingering chill.



Steve Hoppin's *C. Warasii*

If you are growing your bromeliads inside the house, then they are certainly comfortable if you are. Dialing down your thermostat at night will be healthy for the plants, too, as well as saving money on your utility bills.

Light is needed for the process of photosynthesis. Bromeliads vary greatly in their optimum light requirements. The greatest danger from

insufficient light is that the leaves become “etiolated”. That is the process of the leaf stretching out and producing more leaf area in an attempt to capture more light. Plants can grow erratically when subjected to such uneven light levels. It is unfortunate to see plants that have grown with a compact nature in the summer then produce strappy and flabby looking leaves in the winter. Such plants typically have very poor conformation.



Steve Hoppin's *C. Fosterianus* cv 'Elaine'

In my greenhouse, I grow the sun lovers such as Neoregelias, Aechmeas, and Billbergias as close to the glass as I can. Even with the maximum available natural light, I find that many of the plants lose the bright and crisp leaf coloration that I enjoy during the summer. It's kind of like experimenting with the “contrast” setting on your TV, and reducing the levels 25-50%! However, by withholding fertilizer and growing the plants cool as I dare, the plants at least keep fairly even conformation. Plants that will tolerate lower levels of light, such as Nidulariums, Guzmanias, and most Vrieseas grow in the shade of the aforementioned sun lovers. I do have a 3-tiered artificial light cart where I grow some favored small or miniature bromeliads, especially Neoregelias. I have a 3-tube fixture and two 4-tube fixtures to produce relatively bright and intense light. The lights are on for about 12 hours each day. I've had very good success keeping excellent color in those selected plants. I can certainly recommend it as an alternative to growing in a greenhouse.

From mid December until about the second week of February are the bleakest times for growing here in Michigan. However, conditions improve pretty rapidly as spring approaches. So, just hold on for a few more weeks! Meanwhile, I offer this suggestion for next year: Take pictures of your plants this summer when they're at their best! Then look at those pictures next winter when things look dreary. It will inspire you to take good care of your plants and remind you why you acquired them in the first place!



Larry Giroux's C. 'Sweet Pea'

Here are a few websites to check out: www.bromeliopolis.com
[Http://dykiabrazil.blogspot.com](http://dykiabrazil.blogspot.com)

We wish you all a Merry Christmas

Pictures on Barbara Temchuk's page and the following are from the www.fcbs.org Website.



Neoregelia 'Christmas Colours' photo by R Smythe

