

Equality Park Garden Club  
www.EPGCwm.com



## Save the Date for February's Meeting!

### "Bromeliads-The Gurus United."



Joe Libertucci &  
Jeff Hutchinson,  
February's  
Presenter

Date: Wednesday,  
February 21, 2018

Time: **EARLIER TIME!**  
7:00 p.m.

Location: **NEW LOCATION!**  
Hagen Park  
2020 Wilton Drive  
Wilton Manors, FL 33305

Joe Libertucci and Jeff Hutchinson are both 20+ year members of the Bromeliad Society of the Palm Beaches. They are two of the most knowledgeable and entertaining bromeliad experts you will ever hear. Joe's home and garden has been on Mounts Botanical Garden's annual "Connoisseur's Garden Tour" several times. These two guys have amazing chemistry between them when they speak to groups.

## President's Message

Wow! February already. We probably are not going to have any more nights in the upper 30's or lower 40's, but to be safe, hold off on fertilizing and major pruning till the end of this month. The new growth could be damaged by the cold.

You still have until February 10th to submit your ideas on a new name for the club. Either email your suggestions to me (pbaquaserve@aol.com) or let any Board member know. At our next Board meeting we will narrow the list down to 3 to 5 names and then present them to the membership at the February 21st meeting. After the new name is chosen we will need a motion to go with that name. Per our by-laws 30 day waiting period, we will vote at the March 21st meeting to make the name permanent and legal. I am very excited about this.

Hope to see many of you at our February 10th volunteer clean-up day at Flamingo Gardens. Bring gloves, pruning shears, and sun block. Dot gives all the details below. We are invited to wander the park and gardens afterward. This is a great opportunity to make new friends and bond with your fellow garden club members.

Hate to sound like a broken record, but we need your help NOW to make sure the March 24th and 25th A Tropical Plant Fair is the most successful one yet. These are the most immediate:

- Help with the three most profitable parts of the show which are the Silent Auction (which brought in about \$2000 in 2017), the Sponsorships (about \$2000 last year) and the Members' Plant Table (which netted us about \$1000).
- The more items you grow and donate to the table the better we will do. It does not have to be only plants. Lightly used garden decor, or equipment will also be sold.
- Anything you can get us for the auction is very appreciated. Member of a gym? Please ask the Manager for a donation of a gym membership. Have your favorite restaurant or club? Ask the Manager for a gift certificate or a gift basket. Take your dog to the groomer or doggie day care? Ask the owner or manager for a donation. We all have our favorite retail stores. Ask the manager for a gift certificate or a gift basket. The possibilities are endless.
- The sponsorships. Ask the same people, or other (including your own) businesses. Doctors, lawyers, people in the yard care or plant business, accountants, printing companies, insurance companies. Again, the possibilities are endless. We need these monetary or service sponsorships to defray our costs of putting on the show. In return, depending on the amount of the sponsorship, they get their logo on our print ads, yard signs, and banners. We can also arrange for them to have a booth at the plant fair. We will make this worth it for them. Thanks for anything you can do to help with these three things NOW.

Look forward to seeing everyone at the February meeting. I have seen Jeff Hutchinson and Joe Libertucci give presentations several times over the years. These two bromeliad gurus are thoroughly entertaining and I always learn something new. They will also have plants for sale!

Paul Durbin  
2018 Equality Park Garden Club President



## Dot's dashes for February

### **Looking backward and forward:**

#### *Backward:*

Our January meeting had 71 people in attendance, membership for 2018 increased by 8 households, and many of us were inspired to plant native nectar plants for butterflies and hummingbird.

We have until February 10<sup>th</sup> to submit a name change for the club. Names that have been suggested now are: Evening Garden Club/EGC/. (our original membership came from a merger with a club by that name), Zone 10 Garden Club /Z-10GC/, Island City Garden Club/ICGC/, Gold Coast Garden Club /GCGC/ and Wilton Manors Garden Club /WMGC/. If you have an idea, please pass it on to Paul. We will be voting at the February meeting.

#### *Looking forward:*

Last year about 30 of us spent the morning weeding and clipping the area by the Pride Center. This year our working community service plan is to begin work on the new Pre-historic /Cycad/ Garden at Flamingo Gardens. As you remember we contributed money toward that last year and the ground is about to be broken.

We will work on February 10<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 AM until noon. Workers will need long sleeves, long pants, and maybe gloves. It won't hurt to bring your own beverage or mid-morning snack. Besides the fun and good feeling from doing a good thing, you'll save \$20, the entry fee, and can spend the afternoon touring the gardens and seeing the animals and champion trees.

On February 27<sup>th</sup> California Pizza will be donating 20% of our meal tickets to the club. Ron Halpin has arranged this twice before, and it was tasty and fun!

#### *Plant Fair Preparations*

Besides dividing and potting your plants for our sales booth, you will want to sign up at the February meeting for a half day of work at our set up or Plant Fair March 23-25.

### **February to-do list**

1. Check both inside and outside plants for insect and mite pests. They will become even more active now that spring is around the corner.
2. If you are tearing out leggy old perennials think about the best way to replace them. Clump several identical plants together. The bed will look better than if you plant one of this and one of that. Consider the adult size of plants before you buy and consider how you will hate to trim them back when they obliterate your walks and entry ways.
3. Check orchids for new roots, when you see short new roots, you can repot them, or tie them on a tree if they need to come out of the current pot. If an orchid is growing out and over its pot, it is ready to be moved. If Phalaenopsis roots have come to the top of the medium, they are seeking air and telling you to move them out of old soggy medium. More and more I like tying orchids to trees, the host tree furnishes enough heat to keep them alive in cold weather, various 'critters' fertilize them, and the only thing you need to consider is placing them where they will be hit by a sprinkler during the dry season.

Whether you are moving an orchid to a new pot or to a tree, secure it so the new roots don't break as the plant shifts in the wind. Moving an orchid with short, quarter inch, roots will be easier than moving longer roots that will be more prone to break. Broken roots often branch into two roots, so a few breaks will not hurt the plant.

4. February is the time to plant shrubs, and potted trees. Keep them well watered and when you see new leaves know that they have good roots and that all is well. Remember smaller trees and shrubs often grow faster and better than larger, more expensive ones. The old theory that surrounding trees with a foot of rich soil has been shown to be wrong. The tree will let its roots grow round and around in the good soil and not spread out. If that happens they will tumble in a wind storm. But surrounding your new tree with the same sandy soil in your yard will cause it to send out stabilizing roots that are seeking more fertilizer or moisture. This will result in keeping your tree upright in a storm.

### **Think cut flowers**

Valentines and Mother's Day are the two big flower selling times in the United States. The Dutch are the world's leader in flower production, but only 5% of them come to our country. Even that 5% is reported to be 200 million flowers. Americans buy 10 million cut flowers each day.

Most of our cut flowers come from South America. Around Valentine's Day 50 extra cargo planes arrive in Miami to meet the demand. Great numbers of flowers also come into Los Angeles, Boston, Chicago, and New York.

There is always a market for 'new' variations of most kinds of flowers. It takes about \$100,000 to get a new flower to market. In the old days mutants were selected from 'normal' hybridizing. These days "gene guns" blast DNA from one organism and insert some of the shredded DNA into an egg cell of the recipient mother-plant. Gene guns hold x-ray, gamma rays or mutagenic chemicals.

Many food products today boast no GMOs but 75% of gene blasting is done on food crops and 25% on floral crops. Fish genes that keep fish from freezing have been blasted into tomato crops that keeps them protected from frost.

Buchmann, Stephen. 2016. Why Flowers. Simon and Shuster. Pp. 150-156

### **Be your own 'plant doctor' and spot mineral deficiency**

**\*Nitrogen** – Look for yellowing leaves and stunted growth. Nitrogen is the building block for vegetative growth.

**\*Phosphorus**- Look for poor flowering, flower drop and retarded growth. This element is involved in photosynthesis, growth and flowering.

**\*Potassium**- Look for dwarf growth and yellowing of leaves. This element is involved in root growth and the production of starches and sugars.

The symptoms above are much alike and you are not too likely to see them, since even the cheapest fertilizer will contain these three major nutrients. The microelements which follow are NOT found in some fertilizers.

**\*Magnesium.** Look for chlorotic areas at leaf margins and between veins, drooping leaves, and leaf spotting. This element is the building block for chlorophyll and needed for plant metabolic processes. *(The prevention or cure here is to add ¼ teaspoon of Epsom salts, Magnesium sulfate) to each gallon of water containing your regular fertilizer every few weeks.*

**\*Calcium.** Black leaf tips are a clue to add this as well as leaf spots, stunted growth of leaves and roots. Calcium is needed for cell division. *This is a common problem in South Florida where our tap water has a high pH. To remedy this dust soil surface lightly with lime, crushed shells, or egg shells, or Tums. All are slightly soluble in water and release a bit a Calcium for about a year.*

**\*Iron.** This element is involved with enzyme functions, chlorophyll synthesis, and healthy new growth. Look for yellowing leaves, especially in new growths. *Chlorophyll and hemoglobin are huge molecules with a large number of atoms. They are IDENTICAL except for 4 atoms. Plants are just slow green animals.*

**\*Silicon.** This element is believed to strengthen cell walls and make plants more resistant to insects and fungus and it may help plants recover better from dehydration. *Dyna Gro make a Silicon additive called Pro-teck which you might try. Silicon is not an essential micronutrient.*

**Carbon dioxide.** This compound is the waste product from respiration in both plants and animals and is an in-product in sugar production. The only way a plant could need this is if it is confined in a closed small chamber without a more productive animal.

**\*\*\*\* Other essential micronutrients are :** Manganese, Zinc, Copper, Boron, Molybdenum and Sulfur. When any of these elements are missing, plants show the symptoms found among the elements above. THE BOTTOM LINE IS TO READ WHAT YOU ARE GETTING ON A FERTILIZER'S LABEL AND IF SOMETHING IS MISSING, ALTERNATE IT WITH ANOTHER BRAND THAT CONTAINS WHAT IS LACKING.

**(Notes:** *italic information is from my own experience. Factual information is from : Jones, S. August, 2005. Orchids Magazine, and Sheehan, T. Orchid Pests and Diseases. )*

### **Fruity, favorite, crops- a filler**

**Nationwide:** The orange is America's favorite fruit, followed by grapes for wine. It hasn't hurt the growing of grapes that some research has shown wine to have health benefits. FYI, they just found evidence that man has made wine for at least the last 8,000 years. The fastest fruit to climb the list is the mini watermelon.

**Florida.** The most crop land in our state is devoted to landscaping and flowering plants. Citrus growing was once the king of crops here but disease has reduced the land devoted to growing space. In just the year between 2004 and 2005 there was a 22% reduction in the acres devoted to citrus. Florida citrus production is not as far down as the space used. Growers have learned to harvest more fruit in less space. Even so much of what we buy is imported.

Listed in order after horticulture and citrus are our major agricultural products: livestock, field crops (corn, wheat, soybeans), tomatoes, strawberries, green beans, peppers, sweet corn, cucumbers, squash, and cabbage.

(Avant Gardner, Florida Trend magazines.)

### **Final thanks and reminders**

I was 'over the moon' when all of our raffle plants came into the January meeting with pots enclosed in plastic bags. Maybe we will never need a volunteer bag policeman.

Please remember to bring in a treat or something to drink for the meeting held in your birthday month.

Think about how you will vote for our changed club name. We need a timeless name. EPGC had a name change from Equality Park Memorial Garden Club to the current name which was before our 501-C3, but a name change requires much paper-work so just once more!

Dot Henley  
Equality Park Garden Club 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President

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