HAPPY NEW YEAR!
And, Happy Planting!

MEETING REMINDER •

Monday, January 23, 2017 at 7:15 pm
In the Garden House at
Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden

Speaker: Bruce McAlpin
Topic: Sansevierias Worth Growing

[Bruce promises there are some!]

Please Note — membership fees are now due
Please see page 5 for the 2017 Membership Application and 2017 fee information. Take a moment to fill in the application and either mail it with your check to the address noted in the application or, bring both with you to the January 23rd meeting.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>November 28, 2016</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaker:</td>
<td>Erna Maxwell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Topic:</td>
<td>Better Known Gesneriads</td>
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<td>Treasurer’s Report:</td>
<td>Balance - $14,063.06</td>
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<td>Hospitality:</td>
<td>Emalyl and Company, LLC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Raffle Table Plants:</td>
<td>by Oasis Nursery</td>
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Vice President Georgia Tasker announced the slate of officers, asked for approval, received it, and the new slate of officers were sworn in, so to speak. Newly drafted President Chad Husby was introduced to the audience. The memorial service for Richard Button was also announced, on Saturday in Homestead.

The night’s program was one of the first in recollection about a group of plants not often seen in these areas: the Gesneriads. Anchored in the popular view by the ever popular African Violet, the family Gesneriaceae offers a far larger array of plants than the ones seen at local supermarkets. Numbering some 2,400 species in 140 genera, the Gesneriads hail from a wide range of near-tropical and tropical countries.

Erna spoke about a number of genera which grow well enough here to give them a try. Some of the genera are: Achimenes, Aeschynanthus, Chirita, Columnea, Episcia, Nematanthus, Kohleria Sinningia and Streptocarpus. Erna brought live examples of these genera, and with some add-on coaching and culture notes from Vice-President Tasker, we are now encouraged to try this fascinating group of plants. Some of the plants seen tonight would mature in a small pot, while others can form flowering curtains meters long.

One of the main points of the program on how to succeed with gesneriads is to use a very porous potting medium, rather than the pure peat moss of retail plants.

Continued next page
Erna recommends a 50/50 mix of Pro-Mix and Perlite, with coarser sponge rock in the bottom of the pot for extra drainage.

Erna also covered a little-seen topic: wick watering, using a synthetic thread run through the potting medium and into a reservoir of water under the plant. The potting medium will absorb water on demand through the wick, saving the grower a lot of watering time.

Erna uses Dyna-Grow liquid fertilizers since they are nitrate-based and not urea-based products. Plants were available for sale, along with great advice to go with the purchases. The local chapter of the Gesneriad Society meets in South Miami on Sunset Drive, more details can be had at: "http://www.gesneriadsociety.org/" - www.gesneriadsociety.org - and, the local chapter is called the Caribbean Basin African Violet and Gesneriad Society.

The room was nearly filled with people, many of whom are rarely seen, and the meeting closed with many happy buyers.

The Chameleon Vine

By John Banta

As we grow older surprises and wonderment occur less frequently so I was gratified with the wonderment inspired by the news of a remarkable new vine just discovered in Chile. The common name “chameleon vine” generally refers to *Combretum fruitcosum*. This new vine from Chile is *Boquilla trifoliolata* and it is most unusual in that the foliage has the ability to mimic exactly any of the leaves of the host trees it climbs upon. The means of communicating the nature of the host tree's foliage to the vine is completely unknown. When the *Boquilla* is not protected by mimicking the foliage of it's host it is heavily damaged by herbivorous beetles.

How does this vine know how to alter the shape, color and even the vein structure and texture of it's own leaves in order to mimic it's host?

As Monroe Birdsy used to say, “it is enough to shake your faith in atheism”.

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Contact – Bob Benaim
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bobbenaim@gmail.com
Membership Application - 2017

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