Greetings from the (Interim) President

Welcome to Fall and the hope of cooler weather. I would like to introduce myself: I was elected by the board to serve as your interim president as Ron Keifert is unable to complete his term. Although I am not an expert in any field of horticulture (and I know many of you are) a love of gardens and gardening has long run in my family: my mother, grandmother and great grandfather were all known for their gardens (unfortunately all in temperate climates so I have had a lot to learn about the tropics.) I am a retired MDCPS biology teacher and still teach a biology for biology majors class at Miami-Dade College. Retirement has allowed me to increase my volunteer time at Fairchild. I currently volunteer with Mary Collins in plant propagation, with Carl Lewis on the Million Orchid Project, as well as a cashier at various plant sales. Your board and I have some interesting ideas for improving our society. We look forward to working with all of you and hearing your ideas for our society.

Lise Dowd

Next Meeting: Monday September 22, 2014

The Orchids and Aroids of Ecuador

The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society is pleased to present Ivan Portilla who will speak on The Orchids and Aroids of Ecuador on Monday, September 22nd at 7:30 pm. The meeting will take place at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, 10901 Old Cutler Rd., Coral Gables, in the Corbin Building.

Ecuador, with its unique geology and numerous microclimates is the ideal host for thousands of orchid and aroid species. This program will feature a pictorial tour of orchids and aroids in their native habitat with remarks on each plant.

Ivan Portilla, Vice President of Ecuagenera, a family owned business, whose mission is to protect, grow and market Ecuadorian species of ornamental plants by establishing a sustainable management of the resource within the concept of preservation. Ivan has been involved in all aspects of the business and is the primary point person for sales throughout North America. Ivan will bring plants that will be available for sale after his presentation.

There is no admission fee and the public is invited to attend this presentation.

There will be plants donated by Sid and Regina Gardino (Gardino Nursery) for Raffle.

Refreshments will be served.

For more information please visit www.tfeps.org

or, call 305 232-2257

2014 OFFICERS:

President: Lise Dowd (305) 662-2368
Vice President: Marie Nock (305) 232-2257
Secretary: Craig Morell (305) 667-1173
Treasurer: Bob Benaim (305) 793-9755

2014 DIRECTORS at LARGE:

Steve Forman (305) 662-2368
Debbie Lamb (305) 251-8675

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT:

Marnie Valenti: (305) 233-5929

2014 DIRECTORS:

The board consists of TF EPS officers, the immediate past president, and elected directors at large.
To add to our member collection, we are also asking our usual friends at nurseries and plant shops to participate by donating. Their generosity in the past has been tremendous and is only matched by our own members’ generosity.

As always, we will accept cash and checks, but no credit cards.

Remember that even if you have no plants to bring, you can still support your society by being there and bidding on some great plants. This is our biggest fundraiser of the year and provides the funds for us to operate and to keep our membership fees low.

Another way that you can donate is to volunteer your time as we will be seeking volunteers for many positions and there will be a sign-up sheet at the September meeting. Our hospitality committee is anxious to have your help in providing a favorite snack to help fill our table. Emalyl Israel will provide a sign-up sheet at the September meeting for the refreshment table.

NOTE:

Minutes to the June 2014 meeting are unavailable for posting at this time. Our Secretary is out of the country on vacation and as such the minutes will appear in the October 2014 newsletter.
GMO to the Rescue

By John Banta

Genetically modified organisms are often viewed with suspicion by many people. Yet, GMO's are potent horticultural tools. The history of the American Chestnut, *Castanea dentata*, provides an example of what a useful tool this procedure can be. The American chestnut was once the most common and valuable tree in our forests. The 100 foot tall trunks provided the poles for the telegraph that fostered our railway system. The prolific production of nuts was basic to productivity of the forest wildlife. This great natural American resource was destroyed around 1904 by the introduction of Asiatic chestnut trees that hosted a bark fungus, *Endothia parasitica*. That fungus killed over 3 billion American chestnut trees. There are a number of foundations and organizations that are attempting to restore this great resource to our forests through breeding programs. A most promising development is the transfer of a gene from wheat plants that interferes with fungal toxins. This ability to move useful genes from plant to plant offers us solutions to many horticultural problems.

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Contact—Bob Benaim 305-793-9755 or, bobbenaim@gmail.com

NOTE: One of our members is missing a large, clear Pyrex bowl used for the Judge’s luncheon on Friday, May 30, 2014 at the Plant Show and Sale held at Fairchild’s Garden House. Maybe someone put the bowl away for safe keeping; if you might know the whereabouts of the Pyrex bowl please contact Brenda Martinez at: 305-794-8818 or, Martinez.b@ewm.com.

Tropical Fern and Exotic Plant Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 902094, Homestead, Florida 33090-2094

___ Individual Membership $15  ___ Household Membership $17
___ Life Membership $125  ___ Life Household Membership $150

(Yearly dues are for calendar year: January—December)

This is for a New Membership ___ or, for Renewal ___

Member Name: ____________________________________________

Name of Additional Member: _________________________________

Street Address: __________________________________________

City: _____________________________ State: ___________ Zip + four: _______+ _______

Email: ___________________________________________________

Telephone: ________________________________ Amount Enclosed: __________________