

# TROPICAL FERN AND EXOTIC PLANT SOCIETY, INC. NEWSLETTER

Volume 17, Issue 31

January 2018

## MEETING REMINDER •

Monday, January 22, 2018 at 7:30 pm in the Garden House

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden , Corbin A

Guest Speaker: Chad Husby

Our New Vice president, Chad Husby, will give a slide presentation about a trip to Thailand that he and Dr. Brett Jestrow of Fairchild undertook to find new plants for the garden in December 2017 after Hurricane Irma. During this trip they traveled to many nurseries, gardens and private collections from Bangkok to south Thailand and east Thailand. As a result 22 large boxes of new plants from ferns and lycophytes to conifers, flowering trees, succulents, aroids and epiphytes were introduced to the garden and are currently being acclimated to south Florida.

Some of the new plants will be on display for the talk.

Refreshments will be served.

Dr. Chad Husby is Botanical Horticulturist at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden where he has worked since 2015. He focuses on plant exploration, plant introduction, plant propagation, horticultural research and education.

His plant introduction work has taken him to more than 20 countries. He has a Masters Degree in Horticulture from Virginia Tech, a Master in Applied Statistics from Ohio State University and a Ph.D. in Biology from Florida International University.

The regular meeting of the TFEPS was held on Monday, November 27, 2017. Secretary, Craig Morrell was away but I have attempted to reconstruct the meeting for you. Please be understanding of any forgotten items or unintentional errors.

Due to the Holiday and many members traveling we had only 49 members in attendance. The meeting was called to order at 7:40 pm by president Chad Husby. Bob Benaim, treasurer reported the balance of \$14,290.14 in our treasury. Bob also gave us a list of several new members who have recently joined our society. Please introduce yourself and make them welcome.

The Raffle table was beautifully provided by Oasis Nursery and Scott Cohen. There were some incredible plants available and sales were brisk bringing in \$80.00 for the society in spite of the low attendance. Thank you to Oasis and Scott for providing such a nice array of plants and to Ralph and Skye for handling the auction.

As always, Emaly Israel, Hospitality chair, put together an appetizing and delicious table which was greatly enjoyed by everyone. Our thanks to the members who also brought treats to share. This gesture is always welcomed by Emaly as well as the general membership.

It's unfortunate that attendance was so light because those of you who were not able to attend really missed a wonderful presentation by Debra DeMarco, Landscape Architect. It was flawed only in that our video system was not working properly causing many interruptions in her power point presentation. None the less, It was a very interesting account of a garden tour that Debra took to upstate New York.

Debra A. DeMarco, B.S., Ornamental Horticulture, is the owner of D.D.M. Horticulture Services, Inc. in South Miami, Florida. She is a horticulturist knowledgeable in plant materials from Zone 4 to Zone 10b. A graduate of Delaware Valley College of Science and Agriculture (Doylestown, Pennsylvania), she has taken additional business and professional courses at both Clunyhill College and Harvard University. Debra has received the first place award for landscape display excellence for the Philadelphia Flower Show. DDM has received eight awards and Recognitions from the FNGA Landscape Award Program.

There was no regular meeting held in December but the society did host a lovely Holiday party. Looking forward to seeing you at the January 22 meeting where Chad Husby will be the speaker and the raffle table will be provided by Fantastic Ferns and Linda Bell.

See you there,  
Marnie Valent  
TFEPS Co-President

## Goodbye Citrus

By John Banta

Hurricane Irma harmed Florida's citrus harvest. This year's harvest was only about 31 million boxes. The biggest factor in the diminished harvest wasn't the storm but rather bacteria. *Candidatus liberbacter spp.*; the cause of citrus greening disease. This bacteria is spread by an insect, the citrus psyllid, *Trioza erytreae*. This combination of the insect and bacteria was accidentally introduced from Asia and is killing the billion dollar industry in Florida. The United States Department of Agriculture projects the Florida citrus harvest for 2023 to be zero boxes.

How can this happen to us? The bacteria and psyllid have been present in Asia for many years yet their citrus production remains unchanged. The answer is simple. *Oecophylla*, a genus of ants known as weaver ants because they use their larvae to sew together leaves to make their nest in trees. The citrus growers in Asia don't harm the ants even though the ants are quite aggressive and have a nasty sting and bite. The ants also tend and protect insect scale that feed upon citrus trees. Asian citrus growers recognize the value of the weaver ants. The ants ruthlessly police the trees and kill any insect (other than a scale). Thus the Psyllid has little chance to infect trees with disease.

For the lack of an ant our billion dollar citrus industry will soon be history.

*Please welcome new members:*

*Paul Marcellini*

*Bonnie Kieiman & Stuart Bornstein*

*Renee Molina*

*Thomas & Isabel Fitzgerald*

*Karen Johnson*

*Althea A. Harris*

*Brian Hufford*

Dear TFEPS Members,

As you'll recall when the TFEPS election was held in January, Marnie Valent and I agreed to be Co-Presidents for a year on the condition that you would agree to get more involved on committees, as Vice Chairs or as volunteers for specific events. The officers, directors and committee chairs participated in a half-day planning meeting on January 6<sup>th</sup> and in addition to looking at ways to break down jobs/roles into smaller pieces, we agreed on some additional projects/activities as well. At the session we clarified the TFEPS mission which is *to promote tropical fern and exotic plant knowledge, experience and enthusiasm and foster the introduction and exchange of plants.*

To this end we will continue our ongoing activities as well as adding a few.

For now,

Ellis Brown will be working to plan a Garden/Nursery Tour for later in the year.

Paul Marcellini will explore the development of a Facebook Page for the Society that will enable more sharing of pictures and plants.

Chad Husby has some wonderful programs being planned with horticultural experts who are new to our group.

Important dates to remember are:

- Monthly Meetings – the fourth Monday of January through  
June, September and November
- \* TFEPS Show and Sale – May 26 – 27, 2018
- \* TFEPS Auction – October 22, 2018

We want to encourage you to bring guests to our meetings, show and auction so that they can experience what we have to offer as a group. We're excited about the year ahead and hope that you are too.

Sincerely,

Marie Nock

TFEPS Co-President

## **TFEPS Holiday Party**

**Marnie Valent, Event Chair**

**We celebrated the holidays with a wonderful dinner held on December 6, 2017 in the Garden House at Fairchild. The Garden House was festive with red and green table covers and interesting centerpieces. Lovely guitar music was presented by Rob Friedman who entertained us with many traditional holiday songs. The society provided roast turkey and spiral cut ham as well as beverages while the membership was asked to bring an appetizer, side dish, or dessert. Our hospitality chair, Emaly Israel did an excellent job of organizing and presenting the buffet. What a beautiful table it was and quite a feast. We really do have some wonderful cooks in our group and they all brought one of their specialties. My heartfelt thanks go out to everyone for your contributions as well as to those who volunteered to assist with bartending, food service, decorating, and of course clean up.**

**In lieu of a gift exchange we opted for a raffle this year which turned out to be quite a success. Fairchild donated a few plants for this effort and we were both surprised and pleased to see that several members also donated plants. Each member was given a raffle ticket upon signing in and a drawing was held following dinner. It turned out to be quite an event with many great plants given away to a lot of very excited members. Another big thank you goes to all of you who brought such nice plants to make our raffle so exciting and to Reggie Whitehead for drawing the winning tickets.**

**Unfortunately many of our members were away or had prior commitments and were unable to attend. We hope that you will put it on your calendar for next December 13, 2018 and plan to attend and share a special recipe with us.**

**Regards,**

**Marnie**

## 2018 Raffle Table

January 22, 2018

Fantastic Ferns

Linda Bell

February 26, 2018

Jose Lopez

Tom Moore

March 26, 2018

C an't Grow Squash

Wicked Mike's

April 22, 2018

Ree Gardens

Rory Antolak

May 26 & 27, 2018

Annual Show & Sale

May 28, 2018

Ralph Hernandez

Bob Benaim



### **MOUNTING PLAQUES**

Made of 1" x 3" Pressure Treated Lumber

12' x 12" - \$ 7.00      15' x 15" - \$10.00

18' x 18" - \$13.00      24" x 24" - \$20.00

Contact—Bob Benaim 305-793-9755 or,

[bobbenaim@gmail.com](mailto:bobbenaim@gmail.com)



## Membership Application - 2018

YEARLY DUES ARE FOR CALENDAR YEAR JANUARY—DECEMBER

We offer 4 different memberships options:

- Yearly: \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 15.00 for individual  
          \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 17.00 for two members at the same address  
Lifetime: \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 125.00 for individual  
           \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 150.00 for two members at the same address

This is for a New Membership: \_\_\_\_\_ or for Renewal: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please Print**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: H or C: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: H or C: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code + 4: \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_

**H = Home Phone C = Cell Phone**

Enclose check payable to: TFEPS

Please mail to: TFEPS – Membership

P.O. Box 902094

Homestead, Florida 33090-2094