

Bromeliad Society



OCTOBER 2026 Volume 59 Number 10



The President's View

**By Michael O'Neal,
BSH President**

moneal37@gmail.com



A Time of Change

As we move into the last few months of the year, there's a lot changing around BSH and the broader bromeliad community.

We've lost some longtime members this year, while others are dealing with health issues that have made it harder for them to participate. We recently purchased a thicket of trees to be planted in memory of Margo Racca, and I think that's a fitting way for BSH to remember someone who was part of our bromeliad community for so many years.

At the same time, we're seeing quite a bit of change in the other direction—new activities, new opportunities, and some old traditions returning in new ways. Next year will bring a new slate of officers as well as the opportunity to bring some new members onto the board. It's another chance to continue involving new people and new ideas in the future of BSH.



We Really Need You at the October Meeting

First, I want to make a special request for everyone who can to attend our October

OCTOBER Program Dennis Cathcart See page 11

Zoom info:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89412131955?pwd=KcnmZawPlxsZ6M7Cgyaazm4pEbiX4h.1>

Meeting ID: 894 1213 1955 Passcode: 194524

HOSPITALITY IS N-Z

There will NOT be a raffle.

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meeting.

This is the meeting where we will vote on our candidates for the coming year, and **we need a quorum of members present to conduct that business**. With several of our regular attendees unable to participate right now, it's particularly important that the rest of us show up.

We also have another very good reason to be there. **Our good friends Dennis and Linda Cathcart will be joining us for what may be their final visit as Tropiflora winds down and they begin whatever comes next. It may also be Dennis' final BSH program.** Dennis and Linda have been an important part of the bromeliad world for a very long time, so I hope we can give them a great BSH turnout.

Our First Joint Fall Sale



Last month we tried something we've never done before—a joint sale with the Houston Cactus & Succulent Society. It was also our first fall sale in many years.

I'm happy to say it went well. Our sales were

comparable to our recent spring sales, while also putting BSH and bromeliads in front of a different group of plant enthusiasts.

We handed out quite a few membership pamphlets, talked with a number of people about the society, and had several people express interest in coming to our next meeting.

Hopefully we'll see some of those new faces at our remaining meetings this year. If we do, please take a minute to introduce yourself and make them feel welcome.



Looking Ahead to Spring

We're also making real progress on several things we've been discussing throughout the year.

The board has approved an agreement with Mercer Botanic Gardens that will bring our annual spring Show and Sale back to Mercer after a long hiatus on **May 21–23, 2027**. I'm excited about returning to a place that has such a strong connection to Houston's plant community and about the opportunities it gives us to introduce more people to bromeliads.

We're also seriously exploring holding our spring sale at Jimbo's Nursery. Jimbo's has a strong social media presence and does a great job of promoting its events, which would give us another opportunity to put bromeliads and BSH in front of a different audience. We've also talked with them about some fun activities and promotions that could make it more than just another plant sale.

There are still details to work out, but I'm excited about the possibilities.

We're trying something different with our November meeting as well. We'll meet on a **Saturday afternoon at Plants For All Seasons** on the north side of town, with **Graeme Barclay joining us live via Zoom from New Zealand**. Besides making his presentation possible, the different time and location give us a chance to make the meeting more accessible for our north-side members and those who have difficulty attending during the week or driving at night.

Unfortunately, I'll be out of town and will miss it, but Gordon will be there to keep things running smoothly in my absence—perhaps a little practice for next year if you decide to give him the job full-time.

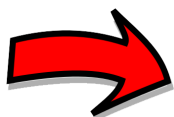


Taking Bromeliads Beyond Our Meetings

Thanks to everyone who has volunteered to give a garden club program this year. I especially want to thank Mitch Fontenot. Mitch has stepped up to give several presentations for other societies and groups and will be speaking again at Mercer on October 14.

He's also been working with Mercer on a permanent bromeliad display there. The original display ran into an unexpected problem involving treated wood, but we're continuing to explore another way to make the display happen.

This is exactly the kind of outreach we've been talking about—taking our knowledge and enthusiasm for bromeliads beyond our own meetings and putting them in front of people who may not know much about them yet.



Moving Forward

There is a lot changing. Some of it isn't easy. But there's also a lot happening that gives me reason to be excited about where BSH is headed.

We've tried a new fall sale with another plant society. We're returning our Show and Sale to Mercer. We're exploring something new with Jimbo's. Members are giving presentations in the community. We're working on a permanent bromeliad display. And we're meeting people who may become our newest members.

One thing that struck me at the fall sale was how much the idea of a bromeliad community seemed to resonate with some of the people we talked with. We weren't just selling them plants. We were telling them about a group of people who share their interest, who can help them learn to grow those plants, and who enjoy sharing what they've learned with each other.

That's an important part of what BSH is. We show up, we participate, we share what we know, and we care about each other. In that spirit, I especially want to wish Allyn the best and let him know we're thinking of him.

And showing up is particularly important this month. **Please come to the October meeting if you possibly can.** We need you there to help conduct the business of the society, to welcome anyone who discovered us at the fall sale—and to give Dennis and Linda a BSH welcome that shows how much their many years in the bromeliad community have meant.

Reminders

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October is election month.

Nominees are:

President Gordon Stowe

VP Sheila Ross

Secretary Linda Whipkey

Treasurer Shirl Stowe

Director Chris Goodgame

Director Dru Lundquist

Attend meeting to vote

The December Party is coming up. Make plans for December. 5

6:00pm Cash Bar, Social Time and Auction Plant Preview

6:30pm Dinner and Social time

7:30pm Rare Plant Auction

Los Tios at

9527 Westheimer Rd.,

Raffle for September

Brought in \$76

Donors

Winners

M. Fontenot
Malcolm
Jim Piccolo
C. Lee
Ruby Adams

Shirl Stowe
Don Green
Debbie Taylor
Zandra Keast
Vickey Gurka
Mitch Fontenot
Ruby Adams
Rick Richtmyer

Bromeliad Glossary

Study the following terms and interact with the “Tell Me More” on the website for a future competition.

ABC's - a workshop usually held in the spring for members; basics of bromeliad care are covered

Annual Elections – at the October Meeting an election takes place for officers and board members whose terms have expired. The newly elected take over in January.

Annual Show Party - a gathering of members held after the Annual Show in which there is an auction for rare plants.

Anther -the male part of the flower containing pollen

Bi-generic- the result of crossing two different genera

Bract - a modified leaf or scale, typically small, with a flower or flower cluster in its axil. Bracts are sometimes larger and more brightly colored than the true flower, as in poinsettia.

Bromeliad Annual Show and Sale =- an exhibit of bromeliads and their artistic arrangements based on a BSI standard show in which awards are given; plants are available for purchase.

Bromeliad Cultivar Register (BSR) - a listing of bromeliads with descriptions and pictures for identification of plants; found on the BSI web site (bsi.org)

BSI - Bromeliad Society International; parent society of Houston society; membership required for board members and officers.

Bulletin - the monthly newsletter for the society; it contains information about growing, pictures of blooming plants, a President's page and important announcements.

Christmas party - the gathering held in place of a monthly meeting in December; at a restaurant and with an auction for plants.

Common genera for the Houston Area =

Aechmea

Ananas

Billbergia

Cryptanthus

Dyckia

Guzmania

Neoregelia

Tillandsia

Vriesia

Conformation - When viewed from above, plant is symmetrical.
In profile, the typical shape of the species is present

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Cultivar – a word derived from “cultivated variety;” a plant that is selected and reproduced by man.

Epiphyte - a plant that grows on another plant but is not parasitic, such as the numerous ferns, bromeliads, air plants, and orchids growing on tree trunks in tropical rainforests.

Family (In biological classification) - family is one of the eight major taxonomic ranks; it is classified between order and genus; bromeliads belong to the *Bromeliaceae* family of plants.

Floridanus - referring to Florida

Fulgens - referring to shining

Genus - Genus encompasses a group of species that are closely related; Example *Canus lupus* (wolf), *Canus familiaris* (dog)

Genera - plural of genus.

Grex - a group of species or hybrids; applied collectively to the off spring of a given cross from one seed pod.

Habitat - living location; bromeliad habitats in nature include tropical cloud forests, rainforests, semi-deciduous forests, savannahs, rocky, sunny areas and more.

Hospitality - attendees of meetings volunteer by bringing in snacks for the meeting. Last names are broken into two sections, A-M and N-Z; sections alternate months; the bulletin announces which section has the current month.

Hybrid - the offspring of two plants or animals of different species or varieties, such as a mule (a hybrid of a donkey and a horse).

Hydric (of an environment or habitat) - containing plenty of moisture; very wet: Compare with mesic and xeric.

Inflorescence - the complete flower head of a plant including stems, stalks, bracts, and flowers.

Mesic (of an environment or habitat) - containing a moderate amount of moisture. Compare with hydric and xeric.

Microclimate - a division of a climate area; Houston is in a humid, subtropical climate. There is climate variation within the Houston metropolitan area.

Photosynthesis- process by which green plants, convert light energy into chemical energy. During this process, these organisms use sunlight, carbon dioxide, and water to produce glucose (a form of sugar) and oxygen

Pistil—the female part of the flower

Pup - an asexually produced plant; pups can be separated from the mother plant when they are about one-third the mother’s size; it usually has the same genetic traits as the mother plant.

Raffle – that part of the monthly meeting in which attendees buy chances to win plants

Rhizome - an underground stem

Saxicolous - living among rocks

Scale – an infection of tiny insects that forms on leaves and stems of bromeliads; parasites.

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Show and Tell – portion of the bromeliad meeting in which individuals bring plants to exhibit or identify

Species - the level of scientific classification, which typically groups animals that are so similar that, when they breed, they produce fertile offspring.

Sport - a plant that is morphologically different from the parent; Sports may differ by gene, foliage shape or color, flowers, fruit, or branch structure. The cause is thought to be a chance genetic mutation

Stoloniferous - plants with a creeping horizontal plant stem or runner that takes root at points along its length to form new plants.

Stoma - a tiny opening on a leaf for the exchange of gases

Streptophylla—"twisted leaf"

Terrestrial - a plant that grows on or in land supported by soil. Other types of plants are aquatic (living in water), epiphytic (living on trees) and lithophytic (living in or on rocks).

Trichomes - from the Greek *trikhōma* meaning "hair", are fine outgrowths or appendages on plants; on bromeliads they often give a silvery appearance.

Tropiflora - a vendor in Florida which provides plants for the show auction and the seedlings given away; many members purchase plants here.

World Bromeliad Conference - an international conference of bromeliad enthusiasts usually held in early summer in Florida; sponsored by Bromeliad Society International.

Xeric (of an environment or habitat) - containing little moisture; very dry. Compare with hydric and mesic

Zoom - each monthly meeting is transmitted to the internet via Zoom; members get the link in the monthly bulletin.

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Don't Forget:

Membership dues in the Bromeliad Society Houston are \$20 for individual \$30 for family.

The membership goes from January to January.

To join, send your check to:

Allyn Pearlman
6422 Bankside Drive
Houston, TX 77096

With your check, include your address, cell phone/home/work phone numbers; your birthday month and day and your email address. The email allows you to receive the monthly bulletin and important communications. Also, designate a phone number to call in case of an emergency cancellation of the meeting.

COMING EVENTS

Change of Venue and Day
Nov. 7

Meeting at Plants for All Seasons
21328 TX-249, Houston, TX
2:00 pm
Speaker: Graeme Barclay

Join us for a **special Saturday afternoon meeting** as internationally known bromeliad speaker **Graeme Barclay** joins us **live via Zoom from New Zealand**. We'll meet **November 7 at 2:00 PM at Plants For All Seasons** in the mobile building behind the store
Map on next page

SUNDAY, NOV.15

LET'S GET TOGETHER!!!!

**FINAL 2026
QUARTERLY
BRUNCH/
LUNCHEON**

CELLAR7

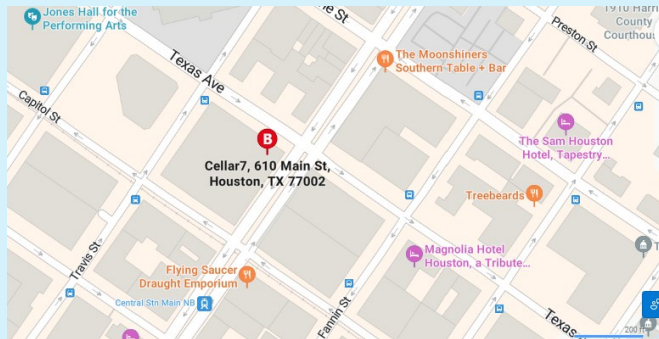
610 Main Street
Houston, TX 77002

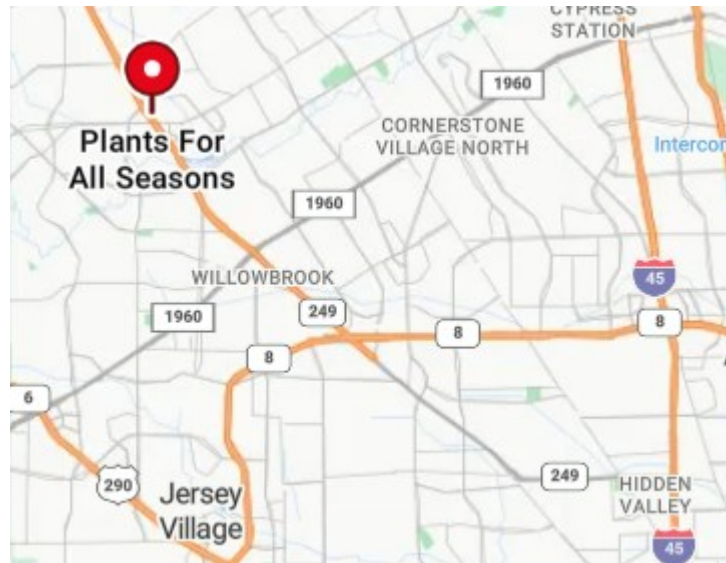
(713) 222-0119

Sunday, November 15

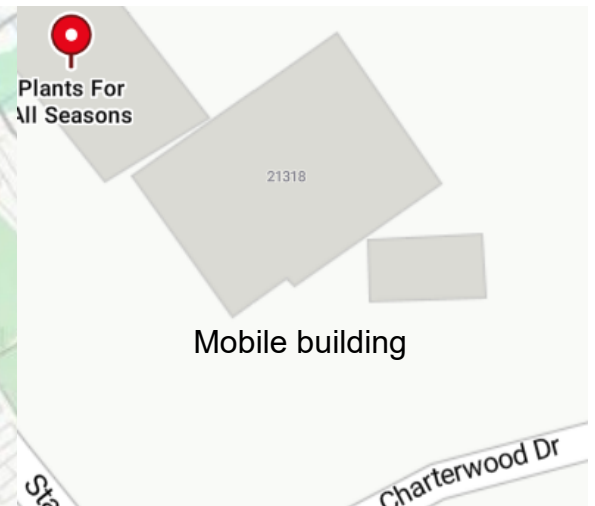
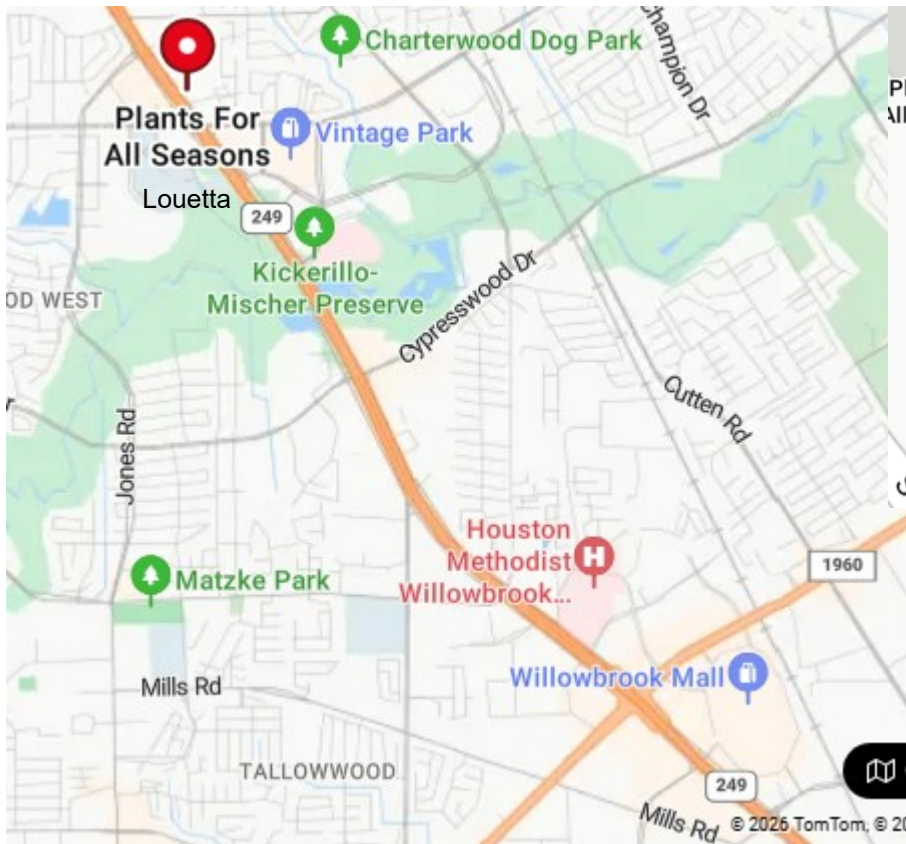
1:00 PM

Incredible Brunch selections in a central location.





From Beltway 8 (both ways) take the 249 exit. Follow 249 to Louetta Exit



From 1960, take Louetta exit on 249

Nominees for 2027

President Gordon Stowe member since 6/17; Gordon has been an avid Bromeliad enthusiast since 2009. He has built 2 green houses and a covered Dyckia structure in his yard in addition to planting bromeliads in ground garden areas. He has served on the board of directors for Bromeliad Society Houston more than once. Gordon assists with technology in program presentations and Zoom productions. In addition, he assists with auctions for the Houston Society and has also provided auction support for the SW Guild and several world conferences. Gordon has served the last two years as Vice President of the Society and planned and arranged the monthly programs as well.

Vice President Sheila Ross active member since 2024; Career as Petroleum Geoscientist at Exxon. Worked in both the Development and Exploration arenas. Spent entire career with Exxon in Houston. Married to Jim Piccolo. We met at Exxon. No children. We both enjoy traveling, cooking, hiking, and biking and try to do as much of those things as possible. I love nature and being out-of-doors, and fill that need through gardening. My passion for all things tropical in the garden was fueled by my mother's passion for that. My first bromeliads were plants that my mom shared with me and they always seem to be the ones that continue to do the best! The bromeliads I have are mostly Aechmeas and Neos but through my short time with the Bromeliad Society Houston I've been introduced to others such as Billbergias and Cryptanthus which I'm thoroughly enjoying incorporating with my Aechmeas and Neos. I look forward to serving on the Board with BSH and hope to contribute to the success of BSH through this position. I've still got a lot to learn and am encouraged knowing that I've got lots of experts at BSH to help grow my knowledge!

Secretary Linda Whipkey joined society in 1984, current bulletin editor and chair of Growth and Engagement. Spent most of my career in education (high school and adult learning). My brome collection numbers about 100. No favorites, just the ones that look pretty.

Treasurer

Shirl Stowe has been a member of the

Bromeliad Society Houston since 2016 when she gained an interest in Bromeliads after meeting and subsequently marrying member Gordon Stowe. Over the subsequent years she has become more familiar with the varieties of Bromeliads and their characteristics. She shares in the care of those in their greenhouses and yard. She enjoys trying to identify unmarked plants and those she sees in other's gardens. Shirl has served as president of BS/H for two years and subsequently served as Past President on the Board of Directors.

Director 2027-2029 Dru Lundquist. Dru Anne joined Bromeliad Society/Houston in 2024, after much prompting from her cousin Michael O'Neal. Her interest in plants began with her grandmother, who grew African violets, and with her Uncle Merrill. Over the years she has dabbled in African violets, micro-miniature sinningias, orchids, and pretty much anything that she figures she can get to grow in her backyard. That backyard is a great source of relaxation, joy, and experimentation. A retired school librarian and a musician, Dru Anne has lived in Houston for 33 years, and is also an avid supporter of the Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Houston, having sung with the Society and having served on their Board of Directors for a little under 20 years. Since joining BSH, her current interests are tillandsias and billbergias, but really anything is fair game.

Director 2027-2029 Chris Goodgame member since 2023 .

Christopher Goodgame is a candidate for the BS/H Board of Directors. He has been growing Bromeliads (with a failure-heavy early starting) since 2016, starting with Tillandsia and then once he got a better apartment and a car (motorcycle-only before then) was able to actually buy other broms that weren't only off the internet. Christopher is a member of several other local and national plant societies covering Bromeliads (the first plant society he joined being BS/H), Ferns, Carnivorous Plants, and Orchids.

DENNIS CATHCART

At Our General October Meeting
Our dear friends Dennis and Linda Cathcart will join us to
share
FIFTY-ONE & DONE!!!!
(A RETROSPECTIVE OF TROPIFLORA)

As always, it is primed to be a wonderful presentation.

He will bring plants to sell
No raffle

Meeting Date
Tuesday, October 20, 2026
Time
Social Time: 6:30 PM
Meeting & Program: 7:00 PM
Location
Metropolitan Multi-Service Center
1475 West Gray Street
Houston, TX 77019

Show & Tell

Share something from your collection!

Bring an interesting bromeliad to share with the group. Whether it's a show-stopper, a recent acquisition, an unusual species, something currently in bloom, or a plant with an interesting story, we'd love to hear about it. Show & Tell is a great opportunity to celebrate successes, learn from each other, and exchange growing tips with fellow members.

Refreshments

Members whose last names begin with **A–M** are asked to bring refreshments to share with attendees. Thank you for helping make our meetings welcoming and enjoyable for everyone.

Social Time

Catch up with old friends, meet new growers, exchange tips, and talk bromeliads before and after the meeting.

BULLETIN BOARD



October Birthdays

John Edmonson	10/3
Kenneth Gardner	10/28
Marsha Krumrey	10/25
Frank Lee	10/5
Rick Richtmyer	10/24
Linda Whipkey	10/6
Daniel Wolf	10/30



We have a large selection of Aechmea, Billbergia, Cryptanthus, Dyckia, Neoregelia, and Tillandsia. Please compare our prices and our quality.

15019 8th Street West, Santa Fe, TX 77517 ■ 409-925-6933

www.jimbosnursery.com



Houston Orchid Society

www.houstonorchidsociety.org

Regular meeting first Thursday of month at 7:30 PM

First Christian Church | 1601 Sunset Blvd



Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

www.tgcfersoc.org

Regular meeting third Sunday of month at 2:00 PM

Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center

2020 Hermann Drive., Houston, TX 77004



Houston Cactus and Succulent Society

www.hcsstex.org

Regular meeting fourth Wednesday of month at 7:00 PM

Metropolitan Multi-Service Center

1475 West Gray, Houston, TX 77019

Officers, Directors, Committees

PRESIDENT

Michael O'Neal

SECRETARY

Don Green

VICE PRESIDENT

Gordon Stowe

TREASURER

Allyn Pearlman

PAST PRESIDENT

Scherie Townes

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Through 2028

Ross Thyer

Mitch Fontenot

Through 2027

Malcolm McCorquodale

Noreen Tolman

Through 2026

Sheila Ross

Vickey Gurka

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PUBLICATIONS

Allyn Pearlman

PROGRAM CHAIRMAN

Gordon Stowe

STANDING COMMITTEES EX-OFFICIO

Cherie Lee & Margo Racca

PLANT SALES CHAIRMAN

Allyn Pearlman

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Vickey Gurka Don Green, Ruby Adams

HOSPITALITY

Shirl Stowe

BROMELIAD CULTURE

Rick Richtmyer

Scherie Townes

MEMBERSHIP

Allyn Pearlman

COURTESY

Debbie O'Neal

SEEDLINGS

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DIRECTORY and BULLETIN

Linda Whipkey

SHOW AND TELL

John Schmidt

EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS

Linda Whipkey

RAFFLE

Cherie and Frank Lee

GARDEN TOURS

Gordon and Shirl Stowe

REGISTRATION

John Sarkisian

HISTORIAN

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ZOOM COMMUNICATION

Michael O'Neal

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Allyn Pearlman

CONSERVATION

Ross Thyer

GROWTH AND ENGAGEMENT

Linda Whipkey

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Daniel Wolf