

SOUTH BAY BROMELIAD ASSOCIATES NEWSLETTER

REGULAR CLUB MEETING: 1:30 p.m.

First Sunday of the month*

Peninsula Center Library

701 Silver Spur Road, Rolling Hills Estates, CA

Website: www.bsi.org/webpages/sbba/

**Exceptions: July Summer Picnic, August Show/Sale,
December Holiday Party*

2025 SBBA OFFICERS

President—Nada Chatwell

VP/Programs—Ted Johnson

Treasurer—Ray Vanveen

Membership/Secretary—Sherry Faust

Auctioneer—Ted Johnson (with Don Debok)

Newsletter Editor—Katherine Poehlmann

Refreshments—Pat Powers & Mallory Hart

SBBA March 2 Meeting: “All About Clivias”

Norm Peterson, Clivia expert, will describe their history, geographic location, species, propagation, and culture. These beautiful plants blend very well with bromeliads in the home landscape. Norm has decades of experience with many plant species. He loves sharing his knowledge, so don't hold back with questions.

Societies that Norm currently belongs to: International Palm Society, Southern California Palm Society, Cycad Society, International Bromeliad Society, American Begonia Society, Palos Verdes Begonia Society, Long Beach Begonia Society, Orange County Begonia Society, Ti Plant Society, Los Angeles International Fern Society, American Orchid Society, North American Clivia Society, Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society, San Diego Bromeliad Society, South Bay Bromeliad Associates, Texas Fern Society, American Camellia Society.

Wow! When does the man sleep??

ANNOUNCEMENTS

► **SBBA Board Meeting March 2.** At the Peninsula Center Library, on the 1st floor near the elevators. Noon to 1:15 before the general meeting. It's a public place so whoever arrives first, gather tables and chairs. Since there may be a shortage of chairs, you may want to bring your own. All SBBA members are invited to attend, but if not on the Board, you may not actively participate or vote. Please submit any suggested agenda items in advance to President Nada Chatwell. Minutes of the meeting will be provided to the membership at a later date.

► **2025 Officers and Committee Chairs.** Until now, names and phone numbers have been shown in the upper right corner of this page. Since the newsletter is shown on the BSI Affiliate Member site, open to public view, phone numbers will be omitted in future for privacy. If you are a dues-paying member, please refer to the roster kept by the Membership Chair Sherry Faust. Ask her for a copy at any club meeting. If your contact data changes, please notify her so that she can make updates. Your current email address is important if you wish to receive the newsletter and any other club announcements.

► **Meeting refreshments.** Thanks in advance to Jackie Colman, Don & Judy DeBok, Jerry Messer, Sherry Faust, and Pat Powers.

► **SBBA Plant Auction.** Please let Ted Johnson know a week before the meeting how many plants you wish to sell. There is a limit of 50 (fifty) on the total number of auction plants so that we can vacate the library's community room before the maintenance man comes to clean up at around 4:40. Ted's contact data is in the roster. **Special note:** 20 of Barbara Smiley's plants will be among those auctioned at this meeting.

► **Remembering Paul Isley.** Hard to believe that it's been a year since we lost our dear friend. A solemn Requiem Mass will be celebrated in memory of Paul on March 18th at 4 p.m. at the historic Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church, 515 W Opp St, Wilmington, CA 90744.

Paul (nickname Ty) was a very gregarious individual who loved striking up conversations with anyone he encountered in any locale. Last week Paul's business partner Jerry Robinson's daughter said: "This Substack essay was in my inbox today (track I mentions Rainforest Flora; the other tracks deal with other topics) and it is truly a lovely vignette about Ty's ability to draw in strangers with his stories and how that was then reflected upon Rainforest Flora. A short and wonderful tribute. Just wanted to share with you and then let you share with whomever else would find this heartwarming and welcome for an otherwise ordinary Wednesday."

The author is Sean Faussett, an entertainment lawyer in Los Angeles. One of the many strangers Paul connected with in a chance encounter that made a lasting impression on him. Here is the link to Sean's moving essay: https://faussettesq.substack.com/p/garden-aisle-bromeliaceae-revisited?utm_campaign=post&utm_medium=web

Part of Paul's impressive legacy to the bromeliad world is a series of online free videos entitled "Tilly Talk." Here are a few to get you started:

Air plants for beginners: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s09wriUDXaM>

All about trichomes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OSQ25ceasYI>

How to separate Tillandsia clumps: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AojxgG4OU1M>

[Check the right margin of your computer screen to find more intriguing videos]

► **Free Weekly Newsletter from the National Gardening Association:** Reasons to sign up:

- Get fresh new gardening tips created by hundreds of gardeners worldwide
- Gain access to free articles, tips, ideas, pictures and everything gardening
- . Every week see the 10 best gardening photos to inspire your gardening projects

Register here: https://garden.org/special/offers/newsletter_signup.php

► **Remembering Barbara Smiley.** A few dozen of Barbara's friends and admirers gathered with family members on 2/15 to exchange fond memories of a truly remarkable human being. Whip smart, she entered college at age eleven by passing the entrance exam with flying colors.

Before becoming ill, she served as our SBBA President. Overqualified for the job, since at one time she was a VIP at two prominent Southern California companies: Director of Research, Korn/Ferry International, and Assistant to SVP International Customer Relations at NCR Corporation/El Segundo.

After she retired, she devoted herself to projects like Charlie, her garden, and a wide variety of arts and crafts. Visit her Facebook page to see lots of lovely photos of the aforementioned “projects.”

<https://www.facebook.com/barbara.smiley.33/>

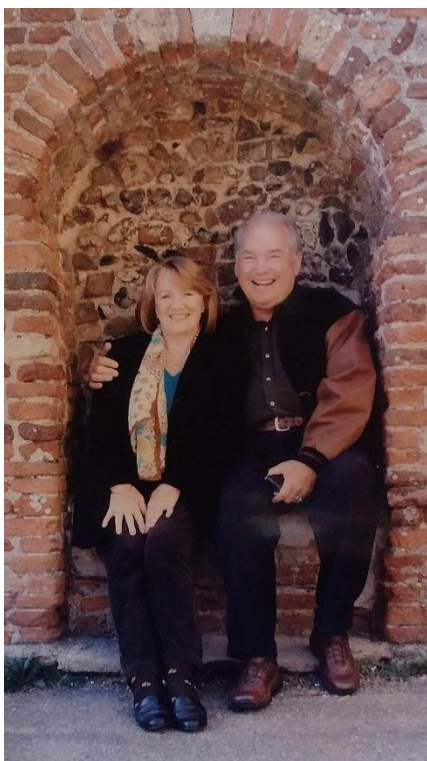
Bidding against Barbara was futile at SBBA auctions. When she trained her sights on a specific bromeliad, she was determined to own it. She was all “take charge” in the kitchen, too. Most of us knew her as our generous host for many SBBA potlucks. She confided that her preference would be to organize and prepare everything herself but deferred to the wishes of club members eager to show off their own culinary skills.

Few people know about her heroic involvement in a dangerous rescue operation. On August 2, 1990, several thousand American workers were in Iraq when the Gulf War began. These included several hundred contractors, one of whom was Barbara’s former husband Edward. He and eleven colleagues were in Iraq for three days on a business trip. They were scheduled to fly home on the day war broke out. Saddam Hussein closed the airports to all departing flights and took all foreigners hostage. The twelve men were trapped.

Dismayed and annoyed that our U.S. State Dept was doing little or nothing to get the hostages released. The twelve wives formed a group called “Coming Home.” They networked with families and support groups to bring media exposure to the situation. Here is a link to a November 1990 conference called “Families of American Hostages in Iraq.” [Note: ads and intro material can be skipped. Conference begins at 1:25. Barbara speaks at 12:20]

<https://www.c-span.org/program/news-conference/persian-gulf-hostage-families/10381>

The wives went to Iraq at their own expense and at great risk to request the release of their husbands after four long months of anxiety and stress. They succeeded (good PR for Saddam) in December 1990. The media covered the event (<https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1990-12-07-mn-6194-story.html>)



After Barbara and Edward divorced, and she partnered with Charlie Pribus, she kept Edward’s last name because (in her words) “Smiley sounds so cheerful.” If there were a time when she wasn’t cheerful, we in SBBA didn’t see it.

Here are photos of happy, “smiley” times.

Barbara and Charlie together again. May they rest in peace.