

TROPICALDISPATCH

EPIPHYTE ISSUE May - august 2013



A Message from the CEO

Selby Gardens is home to one of the world's largest living collections of epiphytic plants. That is something to take pride in. But more than that, it is also home to more than 900 dedicated volunteers who collectively provided more than \$1 million dollars in much needed service to this organization last



Selby Gardens is also home to community members who make up our board of trustees - unpaid leaders who personally sacrifice time away from their businesses and their own families to ensure the health and well-being of these botanical gardens remain stable for others to enjoy.

Our donors and members make up another important branch of the Selby Gardens family tree. Through their financial support we are able to conduct important scientific research, provide valuable education and community programs, maintain the Gardens health and appearance, and plan for its future.

And when the Ann Goldstein Children's Rainforest Garden opens later this fall under the banvan grove near Marie Selby's former family home, children, as well as their parents and grandparents, will have a new reason to feel at home when they visit Selby Gardens. In the field station-withina-rainforest, children and families will experience the thrill of discovery, curiosity and creativity in what is essentially a living classroom. Visitors of every age will have the opportunity to explore the world of plants year round from a treetop perspective.

Selby Gardens is a special place for as many reasons as there are visitors (more than 130,000 yearly). When the new garden feature opens, we look forward to introducing the next generation to the exciting career paths of botany and horticulture. Inside this issue of *Tropical Dispatch*, our staff enthusiastically shares the wonder of plants surviving in harsh conditions, ways to bring the outdoors indoors to beautify your home and the miraculous diversity of tropical plants.

Even more importantly, we hope that every visitor feels at home at Selby Gardens and each subsequent trip to the Gardens continues to open up a whole new world of botanical appreciation.

Cordially,

Thompull.

Thomas Buchter, CEO

Marie Selby Botanical Gardens

Hours & Admissions

The Gardens are open 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM every day except Christma Day. Please check the website for special event and weather closings.

Admission Members Free, Adults \$17, Children 6-11 \$6, 5 & under free

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MARIE SELBY BOTANICAL GARDENS

TROPICAL DISPATCH • VOLUME 40 • ISSUE 2

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MISSION

To provide an oasis of inspiration and tranquility, while furthering the understanding and appreciation of plants, especially epiphytes.

VISION

To touch as many people as possible through our urban waterfront garden that is the world leader in conservation and display of epiphytes. Visitors and volunteers alike experience the Gardens beauty, gaining a better understanding and greater appreciation of the natural world.

PROGRAM SPONSORS

Selby Gardens programs are sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Council on Arts and Culture, and are paid for in part by Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax Revenue





ADDRESS CHANGES

Mail: Membership Marie Selby Botanical Gardens 811 South Palm Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34236 Email: membership@selby.org Phone: (941) 366-5731, ext. 231

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Cover: Epidendrum, taken in the Boracayan Wildlife Refuge in Costa Rica, as part of a Selby Gardens field expedition. Photo by Daniel Perales.



News from the Gardens

The Ann Goldstein Children's Rainforest **Garden is Underway**

The banyan grove at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens is undergoing a transformation as the Gardens readies for an all-new interactive feature opening this fall. In March, Selby Gardens broke ground on the Ann Goldstein Children's Rainforest Garden, a place for children and families to discover and develop a life-long appreciation for rainforest plants. The new garden is expected to serve families and thousands of school children annually with innovative, hands-on learning opportunities. For news and updates, visit crg.selby.org. (see more about the AGCRG on page 9)



Unleash your inner generosity

MARCH 5 AT 7AM - MARCH 6 AT 7 PM



Giving Partner Challenge

Selby hit it out of the park with the 36-Hour Giving Challenge in early March. Friends of the Gardens helped raise more than \$25,000 through the online philanthropic event, which was promoted on www.selby.org as well as through Facebook and Twitter. Of nearly 300 participating nonprofit organizations, Selby finished in the top 10% of organizations for the amount contributed and in the top 20 for the number of gifts made. Now, that's impressive! Be sure to Like Us on Facebook at facebook.com/selbygardens and Follow Us on Twitter @selbygardens to learn about more exciting ways to support your Gardens.



A Fresh Perspective for Herbarium Specimens

The botany department recently celebrated the reopening of the newly renovated Herbarium Mounting Room. This is where volunteers meticulously prepare orchids and gesneriads for their higher purpose as specimens for scientific study. The room renovations improved energy efficiency and added storm protection by replacing a garage door with a framed-in wall. Fresh paint enhanced the floor and walls. A 12-foot mounting table was also stripped and refinished.

Toscano de Brito, Selby's Curator the of Orchid Research Center, has been named Courtesy Curator, Herbarium, at the Florida Museum of National History at the University of Florida in recognition of his contributions to their collections and research.

New Staff Members Join Selby Gardens Team



Tracy Calla has joined the Selby horticulture department as collections horticulturist. She will be responsible for participating in the daily care of our priceless greenhouse living collection and brings seven years of commercial horticulture experience to the position.



Jean Walker has joined Selby's development team as membership assistant. Originally from Hartford, CT, Jean has resided in Sarasota since 2010 and said she "feels lucky to work at Selby Gardens" and loves "feeling I am doing something that will help to perpetuate the gardens."

Impressive Epiphyte Diversity at Selby

photos by Bruce Hols

A recent study by Dr. Gerhard Zotz, head of the functional ecology department at Oldenburg University in Germany, is interesting not only because it reports that 9% of all plant species in the world are epiphytes, but because his study builds upon research originally reported in the Selby Gardens research journal, Selbyana.

Zotz cites papers published by former Selby botanists Michael Madison in 1977 and W. John Kress in 1986. The Kress study determined there were 24,600 species of epiphytic plants across the globe found in 876 genera from 84 plant families. The more comprehensive Zotz study found 27,600 species in 913 genera from 73 plant families. As our fieldwork studying plants in their natural habitats has expanded and our access to online, multi-institutional databases has improved, our census data has grown more reliable.

Of the epiphytic plants documented in the Zotz study, orchids account for nearly 70% while bromeliads make up 6% of the epiphyte population. There are additional plant families rich in epiphytic species including ferns, Piperaceae, Ericaceae, and Melastomataceae. Selby Gardens is widely known as having the most comprehensive collection of living epiphytic plants in the world, particularly those from the lowland tropics. Selby's impressive collection represents 11% (3175) of known epiphytic plant species, 55% (500) of epiphytic genera, and nearly 70% (50) of epiphytic plant families... truly a collection of global significance!



America

family for access to light.

Epiphytes can be found throughout

South America, the continent with

the greatest plant diversity on

Earth. Here, aroid and bromeliad

epiphytes compete with groundbased lianas of the Marcgravia

South

(Venezuela).

Central America (Panama). The cloud forests of Costa Rica and Panama are particularly rich in epiphytic plant species. Here, a tree surrounded by a cattle pasture, hosts a plethora of epiphytes from the aroid, bromeliad, gesneriad, orchid, and fern families.





North America (Florida). With 80 species of epiphytic plants, Florida ranks by far as having the highest species diversity of these plants in the continental U.S. Four species can be seen in this photograph, Tillandsia recurvata (ball moss), Tillandsia setacea (needle leaf airplant), Tillandsia usneoides (Spanish moss) and Pleopeltum polypodioides (resurrection fern).

Titanium Plants of the Tropical World

reprieve comes in the form of Selby Gardens' mission which focuses on the understanding and appreciation of epiphytes. Epiphytes are plants which live and grow on other plants, rocks and in trees without taking sustenance from their hosts. That means plants that live this lifestyle (which account for 10% of all plant species), do best when left to their own devices and Mother Nature's care.

(images courtesy of Phil Nelson)

Good news for plant lovers who lack a green thumb! The Selby Gardens Greenhouse Manager Angel Lara has identified some "Bullet-Proof Epiphytes" that can be regularly found throughout the Gardens or in the conservatory. They are special because they are hardy, resilient and indestructible. If one of these "wonder plants" catches your attention during your next visit to Selby, grab your camera and enter the photo in next year's annual photography competition! (see page 9 for more info)



Visitors to Selby Gardens will find Florida's native butterfly orchid, Encyclia tampensis, while gazing above eye-level toward the tops of Selby's trees. These consistent bloomers come in many varieties, are extraordinarily colorful and extremely low maintenance. Hybrids of this plant such as Encyclia Lee Ward are equally tough and highly adaptable.

Encyclia tampensis, Florida's native butterfly orchid

Native as well as non-native Tillandsia are another type of "bullet-proof ephiphyte" in the Bromeliad family. These species thrive in Florida's humid climate. Eschewing tender loving care and fertilization, these guys are the toughest of the tough. Gardens explorers will find an abundance of this spikey species in bountiful display throughout the trees surrounding Selby Gardens.



Tillandsia fasciculata, the cardinal airplant, depends on hosts only for support

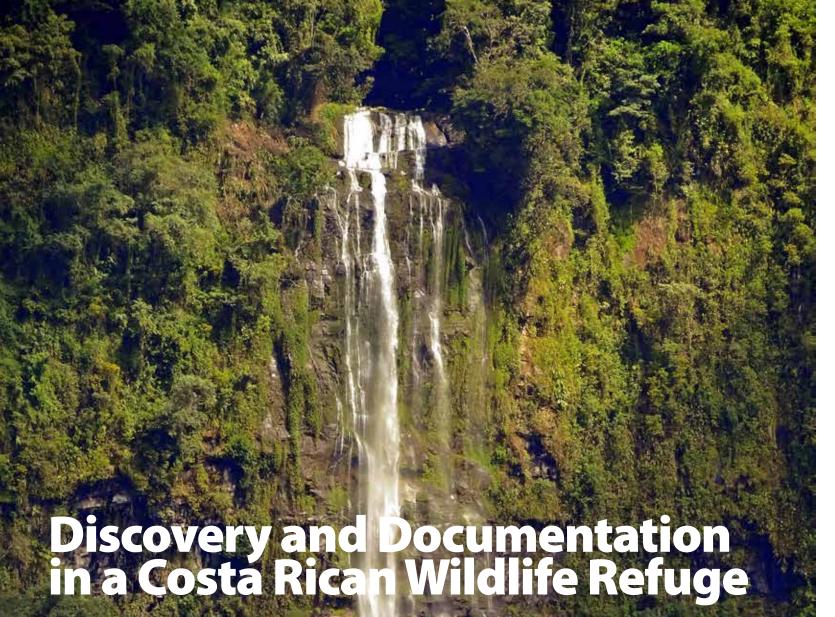


Cymbidium madidum, bullet-proof yet rare, grassy orchid

Rare Orchid at Selby

A rare and exotic epiphyte, Cymbidium madidum from Australia, is an attractive orchid with grass-like leaves and long pendulous yellow to brown inflorescenses (flower cluster). Varieties of these natural beauties have strong pigmentation that can flash brown stripes or multicolored hues to onlookers.

Celebrating 37 Years — Marie Selby Botanical Gardens The Tropical Dispatch May – August 2013



Last December, Selby Gardens was invited for a one-week tropical exploration of Boracayan Wildlife Refuge in a Costa Rican cloud forest. The expedition was led by three Selby staff members: Bruce Holst, Laurie Birch and Angel Lara, who were accompanied by world-renowned orchidologist Dr. Robert Dressler and photographer Daniel Perales.

The 5000-acre Refuge is home to many hundreds of plant species, including four species described as new scientific discoveries by Selby staff and collaborators since the first botanical inventory in 2003. The site is also a key location for migrating animals along Costa Rica's southwestern coast. The major objective of the recent trip was to assist Refuge staff in establishing the Walter H. Esworthy Botanical Laboratory, named in memory of the husband of long-time Selby volunteer Ann Esworthy. Refuge managers hope to utilize the laboratory equipment and facilities to document and conserve the botanical diversity found there through the collection of living and preserved botanical specimens.

In addition, the trip provided an excellent opportunity for Selby Gardens' staff to experience the tropics and see plants growing in their natural habitats — information which is very helpful for the maintenance of the Selby living collection.

photos courtesy of Bruce Holst

Located next to the wildlife refuge, Diamante Falls is one of Costa Rica's most notable waterfalls cascading down a lush, rocky face from 3,300 feet.



This panoramic view was taken looking down from the refuge toward the Pacific Ocean. It is approximately 2,500 feet above sea level.



Photography gives scientists a sense of a plant's 3-dimensional structure. Here, Angel and Daniel are photographing an orchid on a fallen branch in the refuge.



Refuge horticulture staff member Freddy López Arias is pictured here holding an epiphytic cactus. These are huge, shrubby epiphytes that grow high up in the trees.



The property contains two waterfalls. This is typical of the lush vegetation found in the refuge and shows the smaller of the two waterfalls in the background.



Drymonia decora, a gesneriad, was an exciting find for the Selby scientists because this was only the second time it's been documented in its native habitat.



Boracayan field crew from L to R: Bruce Holst, Guido López Arias, Laurie Birch, Dr. Robert Dressler, Angel Lara, Don Jaimie and Daniel Perales

The Tropical Dispatch May – August 2013

Volunteers Deliver Success

In 2012, Selby's family of enthusiastic volunteers donated a staggering 61,000 hours of service valued at over \$1.3 million. These individuals are the heart of the Gardens, providing support to help Selby's 45 employees keep the Gardens growing and lovely. More than 250 dedicated volunteers convened at the annual appreciation dinner under the Banyans in April. This spectacular event, presented by Mattison's, celebrated those who have given 25+ hours of their time and energy to the Gardens.





Get Digging!

Selby is the place for those who love flowers, fresh air and digging in the dirt. Adults and youth are invited to join the Gardens volunteers. Summer volunteer orientation will be held Saturday, June 1. The Selby Explorers seeks epiphytefriendly teens looking for experience with orchids and other plants. To register and for details, visit the Get Involved tab at www.selby.org.

Membership Comes With Privileges

Selby Gardens members receive discounts on services, dining, plants and LOTS of other great stuff from area **Gardens Partners!**

Learn more at selby.org/ membership/gardens_

Education Grants Will Support New Programs and Collaborations at Selby Gardens

Thanks to two EdExplore NEXT grants, many more students in the Sarasota/Manatee area will be impacted by Selby Gardens in the coming school year. The grants, awarded through the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County and supported by the Patterson Foundation, help connect classrooms with community experiences in art, science and history.

The first grant of \$10,000 will support curriculum development for the new children's rainforest garden scheduled to open

this fall at Selby Gardens. The second grant was awarded for a partnership with Mote Marine Laboratory. In total, the two organizations received \$25,000 to support the development of a series of new explorations that combine science, technology, language arts, and fine arts.

Both institutions are working with area teachers and the Sarasota County School Board to develop useful tools for teachers and students as they examine the natural world. Through the use of Safari Live and other technology, Selby Gardens and Mote Marine will be able to reach students before and after site visits.



A Gift For Future Generations



Gulf Coast Community Foundations SVP of Philanthropy Veronica Brady, Alfred Goldstein, fellow CRG supporter Bev Koski

Thanks to the community's generous spirit, Selby Gardens is advancing a long-held dream to create a children's rainforest garden on its campus. The garden, which is currently under construction, will be known as the Ann Goldstein Children's Rainforest Garden and is expected to open later this year.

After Ann Goldstein died in 2011, her husband and well-known local philanthropist, Alfred Goldstein decided that the Children's Rainforest Garden would provide a great opportunity to benefit the community while honoring the memory of his late wife. In 2012, he and Jean Weidner Goldstein, whom he married in 2012, contributed the lead naming gift to move the project forward. "Ann had a special place in her heart for children, learning and the environment," said Goldstein. "This is one of the most fitting and appropriate ways I can think of to honor her memory."

As the banyan grove at the garden undergoes its transformation into an

elevated rainforest garden featuring a canopy walk, waterfall, amphitheater, fern canyon and educational programming, Goldstein looks forward to the impact the garden will have on Sarasota's children.

"It's so important for young people to stimulate their minds, ask questions and look at things they've never seen before," he said. There are still many opportunities to become involved with this exciting project and contribute to its future. For more information, contact Ann Logan at (941) 366-5731, ext. 266 or alogan@selby.org. Look for future donor profiles, highlights and updates about the children's rainforest garden in *Tropical Dispatch* and online.

Mother Nature Inspires and Educates This Summer at Selby



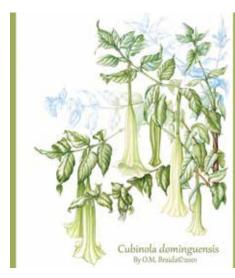
"Passing the Twig" by Bey Zeiss, 1st Place B&W, 2006.

33rd Annual Photo Contest & Exhibit

The Museum of Botany & the Arts will exhibit photos from the Natural Florida annual photo competition through June 2. This exhibit is highly regarded by area professional and amateur photographers for the quality and breadth of its subject matter.

Selby Instructors Shine

The annual Summer Showcase for the Museum of Botany & the Arts. Featuring the artwork of Selby Gardens' talented instructors, the array of subject areas is astounding. Meet the teachers from 1-2:30 pm on the second Saturday of each month through August 11. For information on classes visit the Calendar of Events on www.selby.org.



Selby Through the Eyes of **Young Adults**

Instructors exhibit opens June 6 in Through May 24 experience scenes of natural Florida through the eyes of high school students from Riverview and North Port. This amazing showcase of up-and-coming talent is on display in the historic Selby House.



"Clivias" by Angela Maria Isaza.

Exotic End of Summer

Batiks Botanicos: Viva Florida exhibit begins August 15 in the Museum of Botany & the Arts.

DIY Mounting Made Easy with Greenhouse Manager Angel Lara

The art world collides with the plant world when it comes to epiphytes. Here is a simple and fun way to mount them for display, for indoor or outdoor enjoyment. The main goal is to anchor the roots so they don't have to work too hard to attach leaving them free to spend their energy on their own growth and development.

STEP 1



Find a host. This could be a piece of driftwood, fence, cork, wooden plaque, tree fern or any other material for the plant to latch onto. Determine where to attach the plant – preferably an area where a small amount of water can collect such as an "elbow" or "crotch."

STEP 2



Gather materials. You'll need 2-3 12-inch pieces of mounting tape, wire or repurposed hosiery, chosen host material, epiphyte, and if hanging – a drill and S-hook.





Remove epiphyte from container and tease or loosen the roots.



For best results, orient new growth towards the mount so the epiphyte can latch quickly and begin the process of development.



Wrap mounting tape around host and older growth areas with a loose anchor tie.

STEP 6



Wrap an additional piece the same way and create a snug tie. This step is key, as the epiphyte will not attach successfully to the mount if it can move. If necessary, depending on the size of your plant, secure a third





If hanging the mount, drill a hole large enough to insert an S-hook. Hang where desired.







For additional how-to tips, Angel will be teaching a Potting & Mounting class on July 11. Reserve at www.selby.org. All materials in this tutorial are available for purchase in the Garden Shop.

A Shining Gift for the Community

A 25' lighted bromeliad tree stands majestically in front of the Christy Payne Mansion at Selby Gardens each year as the centerpiece for Lights in Bloom. The stately and artistically arranged natural wonder has welcomed visitors to the annual Gardens display each holiday season since 1997 (prior to this, the tree was composed of poinsettias).

The season officially kicks off during a tree lighting ceremony at the beginning of December and rivals anything on the White House front lawn. For the past three years, lights have been added to the effect. This year more than 2,000 LED lights helped bring the towering tree to life. The Selby horticulture team estimates that more than 100 man hours are dedicated to planning, constructing and disassembling the bromeliad tree. The tree design is updated annually under the specifications of Lights in Bloom event producer, Bob McComb, so as to complement and enhance overall guest experience.

When it's time to dismantle all the decorations and store them away for a coming season, the living tree continues to give back. Volunteers and staff man a special one-day sale. More than 700 bromeliads that comprised the statuesque tree are dispersed into the community where they continue to brighten the doorways and welcome guests to other homes. Proceeds from the bromeliad sale help keep the gardens growing and beautiful throughout the year!



The care of the Earth is our most ancient and most worthy, and after all our most pleasing responsibility. To cherish what remains of it and to foster its renewal is our only hope.

—Wendell Berry

Nature's Way of ReUsing and Replenishing

Selby Gardens regularly gives a very valuable gift to the community. And while many residents may have benefitted, not many are aware they have Selby Gardens to thank. It is rich in nutrients and it is highly prized by gardeners. Can you guess what it might be? Compost!

Thanks to hardworking crews of staff and volunteers, Selby Gardens carefully collects its garden debris and decaying plant matter. Periodically, the stored material is trucked out to the County's landfill in Nokomis where it is converted into usable compost that

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is distributed free of charge (when it is available) to any resident who would like it, providing they bring their own shovel and container. Compost is not only beneficial for plants, but it also helps retain water and the nutrients it contains means less fertilizer is needed/used.

Call 941-861-5000, for supply availability and for locations throughout the county.

What Orchids Can Teach Us About Survival

Epiphytic orchids are primarily found in tropical rainforests where 70% of the 25,000 known species of orchids make their homes high above the ground in tree canopies. This presents problematic living conditions such as limited water and nutrient availability. Orchids are very clever and very adaptable. In order to survive in challenging environments, they have developed survival skills. Here are a few ways orchids show they are brainy as well as beautiful.



Orchid seeds. Most epiphytic orchids produce tiny seeds, the size of dust. Some of these microscopic seeds contain small hooked extensions so that when they are dispersed by wind they can adhere to axes and twigs to colonize. Photo by Bruce Holst



Acampe papillosa. Many orchids have special types of roots coated with sponge-like velamen, a covering that helps them absorb water and nutrients and adhere to their host. Photo by Phil Nelson



Pseudobulbs. Water-storage is a breeze for orchids thanks to an organ known as a pseudobulb, normally green in color and photosynthetic. Photo by Wade Collier



Brassavola tuberculata. The thick and succulent leaves of epiphytes are efficient at storing water. Photo by Phil Nelson



Campylocentrum grisebachii. Because it has no leaves, this orchid has adapted to use its roots and photosynthesis to process food. Photo by Luiz F. Varella



Phymatidium delicatulum. Twig epiphytes are usually very small and have short life cycles. This is to ensure the plants will mature and reproduce before the twig breaks and falls. Photo by Carla Royer

Celebrating 37 Years — Marie Selby Botanical Gardens The Tropical Dispatch May – August 2013

Artistically Celebrating All Things Plant & Garden



Thanks to a grant from The Woman's Exchange, this year's Plant & Garden Festival was transformed into a horticultural happening of artistic proportions! In addition to hard-to-find plants and accessories, the two-day festival included dance performances, interactive chalk art displays and live music. Instructive demonstrations covered a range of topics from landscape design to nature printing, bonsai and ikebana arranging as well as cooking with herbs and artistic pursuits. Support from event sponsors, The Mosaic Group and ABC7, perfect weekend weather, great food and refreshments and lively, festive atmosphere, many guests were overheard saying, "Can't wait to return next year!"

A Gift that Will Continue to Give for Years to Come

Wedding/Anniversary gifts and special occasions – everyone loves a custom orchid arrangement from The Garden Shop at Selby. Now offering same-day delivery within the Sarasota and extended area, Selby's Master Gardeners and plant shop staff will design the perfect arrangement to reflect your someone special's personality. Place your order now by calling The Garden Shop at ext. 242 or stop by for other gift ideas including everything from jewelry to books, puzzles and more.



Selby Associates Raise More Than \$25,000

The Selby Associates announced having one of their best fundraising seasons since the organization was founded in 1980. November's Wine, Dine & Pine event and a chance drawing held at the 38th Annual Plant & Garden Festival delivered more than \$25,000 of financial support to the Gardens. Wine, Dine & Pine broke attendance records with more than 225 guests. A lucky grand prizewinner walked away from the Plant & Garden Festival with a plethora of tickets and passes to local theatre productions, museums and festivals. Selby extends a special thank you to the talented planning committees, generous sponsors and donors for their dedicated effort.



Proceeds from the Associates' endeavors will be used the new Ann Goldstein Children's Rainforest Garden, which is under construction with expected completion this fall, and Selby's living plant collection and research programs.

In more news, membership in the Gardens Associates is even more attractive with the addition of new categories and discounts. For details visit Selby.org/get-involved or call (941)-366-5731 ext. 231.



With camels, fire eaters, belly dancers and snake charmers, Nora Johnson, Bianca Lawrence, Cornelia Matson, Karen Orchid Ball 2013 transported attendees on a magic carpet ride to a faraway place, "Midnight At the Oasis." The gala, chaired this year by Wayne & Mindy Rollins, was a veritable feast for the eyes, ears and palates of nearly 250 guests, many of whom were clad in sumptuously colored silks, caftans and

Auctioneer extraordinaire, Michael Klauber, kept the bidding lively and spirited for this year's auction which included hand-crafted, nature-inspired jewelry by New York Jewelry Designer David Lee Holland, adult dinner party in the new Ann Goldstein Children's Rainforest Garden, children's party at Selby Gardens and, of course, orchids, orchids, orchids!

Hardworking committee members Donna Jernigan Baker, Sylvia Barber, Jamie Becker, Ariane Dart, Pauline Joerger,

Misantone, Margarete van Antwerpen and Emily Walsh helped to produce an unforgettable evening for guests that

Thanks to the many generous sponsors who helped make this year's Orchid Ball a tremendous success in support of Selby Gardens' year round mission of tropical plant conservation, education, horticulture and research. Sponsors included Sarasota Magazine, David Lee Holland, Mindy and Wayne Rollins, Ariane and Robert Dart, Observer Media Group, Black Bird Home Gallery, Margie and Dr. Kelvin Cooper, Ellen and Joel Fedder, Gulf Coast Community Foundation, Hazeltine Nurseries, The Misantone Family, Northern Trust, Michael Saunders / Nora and Billy Johnson, Serbin Printing / Mail-It LLC, Tandem Construction, Margarete van Antwerpen and The Windsor of Lakewood Ranch.









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MANASOTA, FLORIDA





* No raindate, refunds, exchanges, reciprocals or guest passes

Tickets available online at www.selby.org by June 14

Loads of activities and entertainment for kids of all ages

Great selection of outdoor fare and beverages available for sale

Bring folding chairs and lawn blankets for prime fireworks viewing, but no coolers please

\$17 members / \$20 non-members + member guests / Children 11 & under-free (tickets required)