

October 22, 2023 MINUTES of Gainesville Bromeliad Society

The meeting was a field trip to Cactus Island Nursery located at 9650 N.E. 132nd Terrace, Williston, FL 32696. The nursery is owned by James Freeman.

Meeting start time 2:05pm. Bob Stevens, President, was absent. Steve Provost, VP, made several initial comments.

The November GBS meeting is 11/26 at 2pm at the Millhopper Branch Library. This is the holiday meeting so there is no speaker program. There will be the election of officers and other activities. In addition, a number of plants have been purchased from a former GBS member in Ocala who is downsizing her collection. These will be offered to GBS members at the November meeting at less than market prices per the desire of the former GBS member. Next year's speaker program will also be previewed.

GBS has been given the opportunity to sell plants at the Gainesville Garden Club's plant sale fund raiser on Saturday, February 18, 2024. Members were requested to identify plants that they would be willing to donate for the sale. Such plants will need to be provided in a presentable condition and be labeled.

The World Bromeliad Conference will be held Wed 5/22-Sat 5/26/2024 in West Palm Beach. Members can go to bsi.org to register for the WBC and make hotel reservations. Given that the WBC will likely be in some other state in 2026, attending the WBC this year in Florida is a convenient opportunity.

Steve then introduced Jim Freeman as an award winning oil painter, an accomplished bagpipe player and the founder of the Cactus Island Nursery here in Williston.

Jim gave the group some early life background and a description of events leading up to his starting the cactus nursery. He then discussed the types of cactus he is growing including comments on pest control, fertilization and potting soil characteristics. For more detailed information about the soil mixes he recommended visiting his web site: <https://cactusislandacres.com>. Following this discussion, Jim gave the group a tour of his nursery stopping at his several greenhouses and describing the cactus in each. The cacti growing in pots in a display area bed were also described.

Meeting adjourned about 3:20 with a head count of 21.