

BEGONIA CHATTER



Astro Branch American Begonia Society <i>4513 Randwick Drive</i> <i>Houston, Texas 77092-8343</i> <i>(713) 686-8539</i>	<i>Next Meeting:</i> DATE: December 1, 2019 TIME: PLACE: PROGRAM: Meeting Canceled
DECEMBER 2019 ISSUE	www.begoniahouston.org

MEETING CANCELED!

The December 1, 2019 meeting of the Astro Branch of the American Begonia Society has been canceled. At the September 8, 2019 meeting Tom Keepin motioned that the December 1, 2019 meeting of the Astro Branch of the American Begonia Society be canceled due to the Thanksgiving celebrations taking place the Thursday before. It was decided that the meeting not be moved to the second Sunday due to the hectic Holiday schedules of our members leading up to Christmas and New Year's Day.

Our Christmas Celebration will be held on January 5, 2020 at West Gray Multi-Service Center. We will have our Christmas feast along with our annual gift exchange and door prize gifts. Our Christmas Feast will be a Pot Luck Dinner. We wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

We look forward to seeing everyone in January 2020.



B. 'Curly Merry Christmas'

MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 3, 2019 MEETING

The November 3, 2019 meeting of the Astro Branch of the American Begonia Society was held at the West Gray Multi-Service Center located at 1475 West Gray Street. President Janet Carpenter presided over this meeting calling it to order at 2:08 P.M. Janet thanked everyone for coming and thanked our hostesses **Brenda Andrews** and **Janet Carpenter**. Janet welcomed and introduced our guest speaker **Leora Fuentes** and her daughter **JuliAn Kabazi**. Janet commented that Leora was her idol as the #1 in container growing of begonias. The minutes of the October meeting were published in the Begonia Chatter and were approved as written. Treasurer Tom Keepin reported that our bank balance is still very healthy with 2 minor expenses totaling \$48.57. Our Sunshine Lady Donna Williams was not at the meeting due to a trip that was previously planned. A get well card was passed around for member Ruby Lewellyn. Ruby fell and broke her hip and was operated on Friday morning October 1, 2019. Ruby is taking rehabilitation at the Buckingham located at 8580 Woodway Drive, Houston, TX 77055-2423. Cheery cards can be sent to Ruby's home address **441 Oak Lane, Houston, TX 77024-6603**. Bill Claybaugh was not in attendance due to problems with his throat. Tom Keepin volunteered to get a card and send it to Bill for the Astro Branch. Cheery cards can be sent to Bill at **1702 Country Club Drive, Crosby, TX 77532**.

It was announced that there would not be a meeting in December due to the closeness to Thanksgiving Day. Our Holiday Party will be held at the January 5, 2020 meeting. We will have our gift exchange and door prize exchange. The menu will be Pot Luck. All exchange gifts need to be plant or plant related and **must be wrapped**. There was no maximum or minimum dollar amount placed on exchange gifts. Our meeting schedule for 2020 was discussed and the only meeting that will be canceled will be Sunday, July 5th. President Janet Carpenter held a discussion for our need for elections. Midge Gorman agreed to move up to President, Gloria

Hunter agreed to stay on as Secretary, Tom Keepin will remain as Treasurer and National Director. No one volunteered to take the position of Vice-President. Tom Keepin explained the duties of the Vice-President as being there to officiate meetings when the President is not able to attend the meeting and to make arrangements for programs for our meetings. Tom also explained that most times programs are usually decided in the business meetings prior to the following month's meeting.

Members were asked to consider when they wanted to have our Annual Picnic. Suggestions were April or May. The Southwest Region Get-together will be held April 29-May 2, 2020 in Fort Worth, TX. Leora Fuentes said to start lots of plants for the plant sale. Janet announced that Hostess Chair Kathleen Murphy was stepping down due to back problems....Mel Babb volunteered to take over as Hostess Chair.

Janet asked for any further business and there being none introduced our guest speaker Leora Fuentes. Leora spoke about how she grows her contained atmospheres and spoke about some that she had brought with her. Leora donated a beautiful contained atmosphere of *B. blanchii* for our Raffle.

After Leora completed her presentation it was decided to have our drawings before members would be able to purchase the plants Leora had brought with her.

The drawing results are as follows:

Door Prize:

B. Orpha C. Fox – won by Cheryl Lenert

Name Tag:

B. 'Kristy' – won by Gail Warren

B. 'Torch' – won by Tony Robert

Raffle:

B. *blanchii* – won by Gail Warren

B. 'Richmondensis' – won by Midge Gorman

With the drawings completed members were able to purchase plants that were brought by Leora and the meeting was adjourned at 4 P.M. so members could casually shop.

Respectfully submitted

Gloria Hunter

Gloria Hunter, Secretary

PROCESSING AND GROWING BEGONIA SEED

On Sunday, October 6, 2019 the monthly meeting of the Astro Branch of the American Begonia Society's program was dedicated to teaching Astro Branch members how to harvest and process Begonia seed. They were also walked through the planting of the seed once it is processed and deemed viable. The seed from *B. sericoneura* was used. All members present participated in planting the seed of *B. seuriconeura* in 1 oz condiment cups with holes punched in the bottom for drainage. The medium used was 50% perlite and 50% vermiculite. The seed was scattered on the top of the medium, then the planted condiment cups was placed in to a tray holding distilled water so the medium could draw up the water to completely moisten the medium. The planted condiment cups were then placed in a clear container with a clear lid to begin the germinating process in the member's home environment. Tom Keepin was instructing so his seeds were planted at a later date that as on Wednesday, October 13, 2019 at his home and placed under lights in his home office.....germination was noted on October 23, 2019. It is now November 22, 2019 and it is estimated that full germination has been achieved at about 75% of the seeds planted.



(*B. sericoneura* seedlings as of Saturday, November 23, 2019)

The seedlings will grow for another 2 or 3 weeks then they will be thinned and placed into 1 oz. possibly 2 oz. condiment cups (depending on root mass) with at least one other seedling to continue their journey to becoming mature plants. Begonias are gregarious and like to grow in groups. This will be their first transplant and the medium will be potting mix normally used for Tom's begonias with an extra scoop of perlite added. The transplanted seedlings will be watered in using the same method as before (from the bottom) in rainwater with fertilizer added at ¼ strength. This will send them on their journey of becoming healthy mature plants.



WEATHER FORECAST FOR DECEMBER 2019

According to the United States Weather Service, Houston and the surrounding areas fall in Region 7 of the National Weather Map. Here is what they predict our weather will be like for the month of December.

Our temperatures will be slightly below normal and our precipitation will be near normal. Our average temperatures should range from 36 degrees in the North to 49 degrees in the South. Our coolest December temperatures will be December 3rd thru 6th, 10th thru 12th, 17th thru 21st, 24th thru 24th and 31st. Our warmest December temperatures will be December 1st, 8th & 9th, 14th thru 17th and 22nd & 23rd. There will be scattered thundershowers and periods of rain most likely around December 2nd thru 4th, 9th thru 11th, 16th thru 19th, 23rd thru 26th and 30th & 31st. It is possible that there will be snow over the North the last half of the month.

PRUNING, PLANTING AND TRANSPLANTING

December

4 th & 5 th	Pisces
9 th & 10 th	Taurus
13 th & 14 th	Cancer
22 nd & 23 rd	Scorpio
26 th , 27 th & 28 th	Capricorn
31 st	Pisces

January 2020

1 st	Pisces
5 th & 6 th	Taurus
10 th & 11 th	Cancer
18 th & 19 th	Scorpio
22 nd , 23 rd & 24 th	Capricorn
27 th , 28 th & 29 th	Pisces

- Planting and Transplanting are best done in Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces with Cancer being the best.
- Best Pruning for quick growth is first Taurus and then Capricorn.

*(The pruning, planting and transplanting dates above are taken from the **Harris Farmer's Almanac for 2020**)*

Begonia barsalouxiae



Janet Carpenter grows *B. barsalouxiae* in a large container in her home. Unfortunately 2019 has not been a very good year for Janet, as she was back and forth to California most of the year. Not being home most of the year means her contained atmospheres were neglected. *B. barsalouxiae* is one of them. Janet sent me a picture of a growth at the base of the plant and wondered if it was a flower structure. Friends that are very good with contained atmospheres were contacted. The growth at the base of the plant is a result of “inadequate resources”. That has now been remedied and the plant is doing much better and growing as it should, putting up a flower stalk and new leaves. The pictures are of the plant as a result of “inadequate resources”...I found it interesting and wanted to share them with you.



ASTRO'S November 2019 Meeting

Contained Atmospheres



B. blanchii



Our speaker Leora Fuentes preparing to talk about contained atmospheres.



B. bognerii



B. ignita



B. ionophylla



Janet Carpenter with her purchases.



Shopping frenzy!



Gloria Hunter with her purchases.



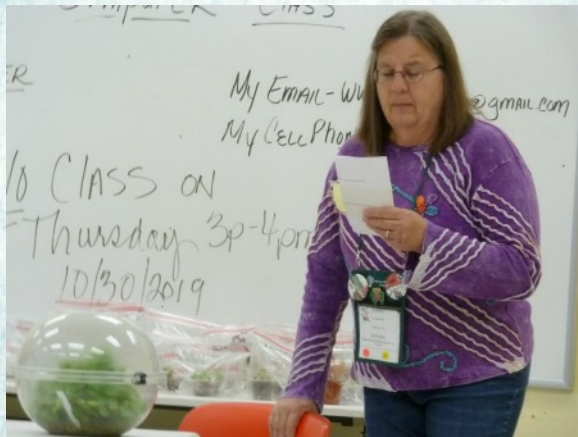
Less frantic shopping.



Paying for their new treasures.



Plants for sale.



President Janet Carpenter conducting the business meeting.



Brenda Andrews examining her purchases.



Malcolm McCorquadale chatting with Tom Keepin.



Cheryl Lenert giving cuttings of *B. ionophylla*



Tom Keepin with his acquisitions.



Gail Warren (l) & Gloria Hunter comparing purchases.



Midge Gorman with her purchases.



Gail Warren won *B. blanchii* that was donated for Raffle Plant.



Tony Robert with *B. 'Torch'*



Cheryl Lenert with *B. 'Orpha C. Fox'*



Midge Gorman with *B. 'Richmondensis'*



Gail Warren with *B. 'Kristy'*