

BEGONIA CHATTER



Astro Branch American Begonia Society <i>4513 Randwick Drive</i> <i>Houston, Texas 77092-8343</i> <i>(713) 686-8539</i>	Next Meeting: DATE: November 4, 2018 TIME: 2:00 PM PLACE: West Gray Multi-Service Center PROGRAM: Strange & Unusual Begonias
NOVEMBER 2018 ISSUE	www.begoniahouston.org

STRANGE & UNUSUAL BEGONIAS

The November 4, 2018 meeting of the Astro Branch of the American Begonia Society will be held at the West Gray Multi-Service Center, located at 1475 West Gray Street, in Activity Room 1. Our Refreshment Hostesses for this meeting will be **Glenda Perry** and **Sandra Rigsby**.

The doors will open at 12:30 P.M. for us to set up our meeting room. If you can help us with set up it would be greatly appreciated. Between 1:00 P.M. and 2:00 P.M. members can enjoy refreshments and socialize with members and friends we only see at meetings. President Janet Carpenter will preside over this meeting. Please remember to wear your name tag. If you are unable to locate your name tag please contact Tom as soon as possible before the day of the meeting so he can have a replacement for you at the meeting. Our Program this month will be

Strange & Unusual Begonias This will be a member participation program lead by Johnny Williams.

If you have a begonia or two perhaps three that are unusual or very different from what we normally find being grown in this area, please send Johnny an email (williams.johnny@att.net) so that the plant(s) can be included in the discussion. Also please bring the plant or plants so members can see how beautiful they are and why they are considered unusual.

We are looking forward to seeing you at this meeting. Our program will be very interesting and educational. Our Refreshment Hostesses will have lots of tasty treats and cool drinks. We will also have our usual drawings.

See you there!

MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 7, 2018 MEETING

The October 7, 2018 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 in Activity Room 1. President Janet Carpenter presided over this meeting. Janet called the meeting to order at 2:00 P.M. She thanked all for attending and thanked the hostesses who were **Jane Anderson, Brenda Andrews and Irene Bragg**. Guests at this meeting were Janice Shaw and Shannon Williams. Minutes from the September 8, 2018 meeting were published in The Begonia Chatter and were approved as written. Treasurer Tom Keepin reported that our bank balance is still healthy. Sunshine Lady Ruby Lewellyn passed around a sympathy card for Sandra Rigsby whose brother just passed away. We all welcomed Mike Bragg to the meeting as he is recovering from a resent illness.

Nominations were made last month for election of new officers and those names were read by Cheryl Lenert. She called for nominations from the floor and there were none, so Cheryl Lenert made a motion to accept the slate as it stood. The motion was seconded by Mel Babb. A vote was called, and the slate of officers was approved by acclamation. Cheryl then swore in the new officers who were: **President: Janet Carpenter, Vice-President: Midge Gorman, Secretary: Gloria Hunter, Treasurer: Tom Keepin**. The new officers will take over at the next meeting on November 4, 2018. Tom showed us a copy of the Louisiana E Branch Newsletter which he will forward to us so we can read it. It is edited by Freda Holley and is for the Louisiana Branch that communicates primarily electronically.

Our program this month was "This Summer's Begonia Survivors." Tom Keepin led the program by stating that this a very bad summer for plants. Members then described some of their plants that had done well and some that had not made it through the summer. Several members brought in

plants to show us how they are looking and for advice on what to do with them now. Many of the rhizomatous go dormant when temperatures rise well above the norm, but many of them are beginning to come back. Tom said we Should not toss any "dead" plant for 6-8 months because they may be one that will revive with better weather. Tom passed around photos of some of his plants. They were very pretty. Cheryl pointed out that it is very important NOT to overwater droopy-looking plants as they can easily be killed this way. The drooping leaves are one way the plant copes with the extreme heat. She said it would be much better to mist them. Bill Claybaugh made an interesting point about systemic anti-fungals. He has learned that spraying with s systemic anti-fungal property stays with the leaf. He asked members to look for systemic anti-fungal sprays as they have become difficult to find. Johnny suggested that Southwest Fertilizer probably has some and he will check on this.

Cheryl announced that there will be a judged Federation (Houston Federation of Garden Clubs) Flower Show on Friday, October 12th, at the First Christian Church on Sunset Blvd.

Janet reminded us that there are two conventions coming up next year. The first is the SW Region Get-Together which will be May 1-5 in Austin. The second is the ABS National Convention which will be September 3-8 in Sacramento, CA.

Janet asked what program we would like to have next month. After some discussion it was decided it will be on **Strange and Unusual Begonias** and Johnny Williams will give the program. He asked that any members growing unusual begonias send him an email so that the plants can be included in the discussion. We then had our Raffle, Door Prize and Name Tag Drawings. The following ere winners: Jane Anderson, Mel Babb, Sue Botts, Janet Carpenter, John Cole and Ruby Lewellyn. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 P.M. by President Janet Carpenter.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Williams

Donna Williams, Secretary

In Memory of Brad Thompson

Our friend, author, artist and prolific begonia hybridizer passed away on Thursday, October 25th at 5:30 P.M. Brad Thompson has been hybridizing begonias for all the many years that I have known him. There are currently ten hybrids listed in the ABS registered begonias. Brad's hybrids are being grown in every begonia collection around the world. Brad's hybrids span the gamut.....canes, shrubs, rhizomatous and rexes. I wouldn't be surprised if he didn't even dabble in thick-stemmed. I don't think there is a begonia he hasn't tried to cross at one time or another. There are hundreds if not thousands of Brad's hybrids circulating the globe and bringing beauty to untold collections and joy to the collectors.

The Begonia World has lost a true artist in hybridizing. I am sure Brad has left behind crosses still maturing in their seed pods anxious to amaze us once again. Our friend may be with Mother Nature in her garden now, but we are blessed with his creations to give us beauty and joy for years to come.

Brad lived in California...and that is where he made his wonderful creations.

Thank you Brad!



PRUNING, PLANTING AND TRANSPLANTING

November

7 th & 8 th	Scorpio
11 th , 12 th & 13 th	Capricorn
16 th , 17 th & 18 th	Pisces
21 st & 22 nd	Taurus
26 th & 27 th	Cancer

December

4 th & 5 th	Scorpio
9 th & 10 th	Capricorn
14 th & 15 th	Pisces
19 th & 20 th	Taurus
23 rd & 24 th	Cancer
31 st	Scorpio

- 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.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

Happy Birthday wishes to our members born during this month of November. We hope your special day is a truly special one.

Mike Bragg	November 4 th
Dehlia Mullins	November 10 th
Gail Warren	November 10 th
Donna Williams	November 30 th

"Today is the day to wrap yourself up in your favorite memories and to think about all the Happiness you've yet to discover."



photo by Marvin Vipond

Begonia 'Looking Glass'

by Joan Coulat

Begonia 'Looking Glass' is an extremely distinctive cane-like hybrid created by noted hybridizer and Branch member, Patrick Worley. It has been around for approximately 15 years and was awarded the Best New Introduction at a national convention and show.

It is classified as a Superba. Its leaves can measure nearly a foot by 7" or 8". The obverse of the leaves is solid silver only broken by dark green bands following the veins. The reverse is a rich oxblood-red. The flowers are a medium pink. It is a shy bloomer and is really grown for its attractive and eye-catching foliage. A well-grown specimen can easily reach six feet in height.

There is no doubt that this plant is a hybrid that was planned. It was bred specifically to create a silver-leaved cane that consistently produced those silver leaves. All too often a plant with a silver pattern to its leaves only shows it in juvenile leaves or on leaves that grow under certain temperature or light conditions.

Classic selective breeding techniques used two unnamed canes with complex

backgrounds created by Worley. He used other plants with the potential to produce silver-leaved progeny to make these two parents, including the attractive, but somewhat difficult B. 'Orpha C. Fox.' Careful selection and back-crossing resulted in a generation that contained four with nearly solid silver leaves. Only one of those was selected and named B. 'Looking Glass.'

Culture is basically the same as for other canes. The soil mix should be loose and well-draining. Fertilizing should be done according to package directions during the growing season.

If grown in conditions that become cool as the days grow short, the plant will tend toward dormancy as reflected in some degree of leaf drop. Stop fertilizing and reduce watering. If it is being grown in the house or a heated green house, this dormancy will be barely noticed. This plant also experiences attacks of powdery mildew, particularly toward the end of the summer and early fall. Preventative spraying with a product like Bayleton works wonders. Mealy bugs tend to like this plant a little more than others, so vigilance and an effective pest management program are recommended if mealy bugs are spotted.





Ruby Lewellyn won B. U-508

Astro Branch October 2018 Meeting



Malcolm McCorquodale
won B. 'Catalina'



Janet Carpenter won B. 'Orpha C. Fox'



Jane Anderson won B. 'Hot Tamale'



Tony Robert won B. 'Orpha C. Fox'



Janet Carpenter calling the drawing tickets.



John Cole won a potted rhizomatous.



Pat Hiscock (l) & Tom Keepin



Sue Botts won B. 'Bashful Bandit'



Mel Babb won an alocasia.



Tom Keepin conducting the meeting.



Cheryl Lenert installing Officers.



Irene Bragg talking about the plant she brought.



Brenda Andrews discussing her plant while Tom Keepin displays it.



Members listening to the program.



Jane Andrews - "OMG I won"



Tom Keepin discussing the young plants grown by Eddie Litchfield.



Bill Claybaugh telling us about his plants.



Eddie Litchfield's plants grown from cuttings.



A couple of begonia beds in Tom Keepin's garden.