

BEGONIA CHATTER



<p>Astro Branch American Begonia Society <i>4513 Randwick Drive</i> <i>Houston, Texas 77092-8343</i> <i>(713) 686-8539</i></p>	<p><i>Next Meeting:</i> DATE: May 6, 2012 TIME: 1:00 P.M. PLACE: Home of Debbie Norris PROGRAM: Planting Unusual Containers</p>
<p>MAY 2012 ISSUE</p>	<p>absastro.net</p>

PLANTING UNUSUAL CONTAINERS

The May 6, 2012 meeting of the Astro Branch of the American Begonia Society will be held at the home of Debbie Norris, 3332 Prospect Street, Houston. We cannot meet at the Houston Garden Center because it is Cinco de Mayo weekend. The park will be packed. Directions to Debbie's home will be included in this publication.

Our Refreshment Host and Hostess' for this meeting will be **Pat Perry, Tony & Donna Robert & Lucy Melara.**

President Donna Robert will preside over this meeting. There will be a short business meeting to keep us all up to date on what is going on with the Astros, Southwest Region and National. We will be meeting in Debbie's back yard and garden so please bring your favorite lawn chair.

Our Program this month will be **Planting Unusual Containers.** Tom Keepin will show us a variety of unusual containers we can use to plant our begonias in to not only show them off but make a conversation piece. We will plant some and raffle them off.

We will have our Name Tag and Raffle Plants as usual.

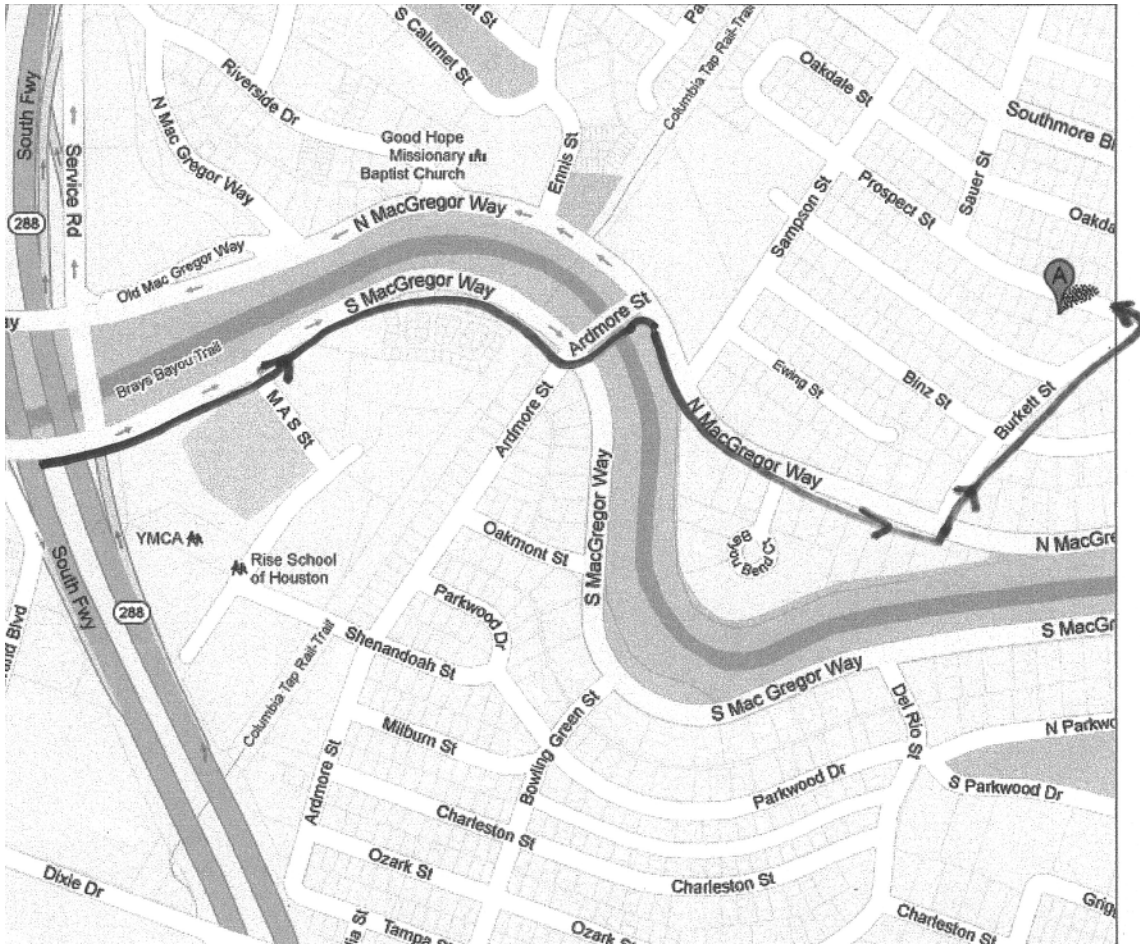
We will also have a short discussion on preparing your plants for show. "Begonia Fiesta" will be held in San Antonio May 16 thru 20, 2012. We hope we have some members that will be showing some plants. We are told the trophies are very nice.

Please make plans to join us for this meeting. We feel you will learn a lot and get the opportunity to see the garden of one of our members and see how she grows. Our Refreshment Host and Hostess' will have lots of tasty treats for our enjoyment and nice cool drinks to quench our thirst.

See you there!



Directions to 3332 Prospect for May's Meeting



Take Hwy 288 to South MacGregor Exit. Take the exit and go east along Brays Bayou. The first light you come to is Ardmore. Take a left to go to the north side of the Bayou. Turn right on North MacGregor. Pass Sampson Street on your left and then turn left on Burkett St. At the entrance to Timbercrest Subdivision. Prospect St. Is the third street on the left. Call 713-523-6057 if you need help.

PRUNING, PLANTING & TRANSPLANTING

May

6 th & 7 th	Scorpio
10 th & 11	Capricorn
14 th & 15 th	Pisces
19 th & 20 th	Taurus
24 th & 25 th	Cancer

June

2 nd & 3 rd	Scorpio
6 th & 7 th	Capricorn
10 th , 11 th & 12 th	Pisces
15 th , 16 th & 17 th	Taurus
19 th , 20 th & 21 st	Cancer
29 th & 30 th	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

WEATHER FORCAST FOR MAY

According to the United States Weather Service, Houston and surrounding area fall in Region 7 of the National Weather Map. Here is what is expected for the Month of May.

Temperatures should be near normal and precipitation should also be near normal. Average temperatures should range from 68 degrees in the North and 74 degrees in the South. Coolest May temperature days are 1-2, 7-10, 14-17, 22-24, and 28-30. The warmest May temperature days are 5-6, 12-13, 20 and 27. The greatest potential for showers and thunderstorms are about May 1, 6-9, 13-15, 21-23 and 27-30. Severe weather threat is highest over the north. Expect spotty heavy rainfall for the entire region. (Taken from **Harris Farmer's Almanac 2012**)

ANNUAL FUND RAISER 2012

The Annual Fund Raiser for the Astro Branch of the American Begonia Society was held on April 14th. Another Place In Time located at 1102 Tulane is where we held our Fund Raiser again this year.

If we had put in a special request we couldn't have asked for a more perfect day. It was a sunny day with a moderate breeze and temperatures in the mid 70's. We had a little over 1.000 beautiful plants grown for us by our friend Debbie at JLL Greenhouses. We had Species, Cane-like, Shrub-like, a few Thick Stemmed, Rhizomatous, Trailing/Scandents, Rexes, and the species semperfloren B. fisherii, which is native to Mexico.

We were scheduled to open a 10:00 A.M. but the crowd gathering and waiting for us to open was becoming quite large. Mike gave his permission for us to go ahead and open at about 9:45 A.M. to relieve the congestion. Needless to say our sales area was very crowded, but everyone was polite and busy gathering trays of plants to take home and add to their collections. Business was steady the entire time we were there. Our friend Kathy Huber, Garden Editor for the Houston Chronicle gave us a very nice write up in the Saturday morning paper with color pictures. Many of our customers came in with the article in hand. Thank you Kathy! Mike purchased the plants we had left for the shop, so we didn't carry any plants home other than the ones we bought from Mike. Our checking account got a very nice infusion of cash. After the bill from JLL was deducted we cleared \$2,728.85.

Our thanks to Allen Manes for being our cashier. Also to everyone that came to shop and then stayed to help with sales. We missed those of you who couldn't join in the fun.

It was a very busy day but we all had a lot of fun seeing our regular customers and meeting new ones.



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY
TO YOU!**

Happy Birthday wishes go out to all our members born in the months of April and May. We apologize, but somehow we overlooked printing the birthdays in the April Chatter.

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| Tom Anderson | April 28 th |
| Francis bones | May 24 th |
| Irene Bragg | April 5 th |
| Darrin Duling | April 29 th |
| Midge Gorman | May 8 th |
| Guadalupe Hoelscher | May 6 th |
| Edna LaFour | April 1 st |
| Allen Manes | April 3 rd |
| Lucy Melara | April 2 nd |
| Gary Moffatt | April 25 th |
| Darlene Morris | May 27 th |
| Gale Pierce | May 26 th |
| Jeff Stagg | April 25 th |
| Faye Stansberry | April 23 rd |
| Dianna Wilkerson | April 18 th |

May your birthday be one that is filled with delight, with pleasant surprises from morning to night – and may all the joys that this day brings to you happen over and over each day all year through

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

**PLEASE CONSIDER
VOLUNTEERING**

As everyone knows, Mildred and Orval Love have moved to Nacogdoches. It is a very long drive for them now so they will be attending meeting infrequently. Mildred and Orval were our Club Historians and are in possession of our scrap books. We are looking for someone to take over this position. Your job will be to maintain our scrap books and add to them when we have events and meetings where pictures are taken. It would be nice if you are not shy about using a camera.

We will have a discussion about this at the meeting. The need was thrown about at the Annual Spring Picnic for members to think about

**PLEASE MAKE
A NOTE**

Our member Betsy Ginsburg and her husband Gus will be moving to New Orleans, Louisiana on Tuesday, April 24th. Please make a note in your Membership Roster of her new mailing address.

Betsy Ginsburg
8014 Belfast Street
New Orleans, LA 70125
E-mail: betsy@beechnutconsulting.com
Telephone: ?

We will miss Betsy at the meetings and wish her good health and happiness in New Orleans. Betsy has family in New Orleans.



WELCOME NEW MEMBER

Please welcome our new member to the Astro Branch.:

Anna L. Escobar
15210 Walters Road
Houston, TX 77068
Telephone: 281-587-9946

Ana was the guest of Lucy Melara at our Spring Picnic on April 1st Ana had such a good time at the picnic that she joined that day.

Welcome Ana, we are so happy to have you as a member of our group.

MINUTES OF THE APRIL 1, 2012 MEETING

The April 1, 2012 meeting of the Astro Branch of the American Begonia Society was called to order at 3:00 P.M. by President Donna Robert. This meeting was called in the middle of our Spring Picnic because of something urgent that had come up. President Robert took a couple minutes to thank everyone for coming to the picnic and provided such a wonderful array of delicious food to eat. Tom and Peter were thanked for opening up their home and garden for the picnic. The business we needed to handle was Cinco de Mayo weekend and what to do about a meeting. Debbie Norris volunteered her home and garden for our May 6, 2012 meeting. It was felt that the park would be very busy on that weekend. The date could not be changed because Mother's Day is the following weekend. Everyone thanked Debbie and her husband Cliff for volunteering. The meeting was adjourned at 3:23 P.M. Peter asked that everyone remain in the area for a group picture. Peter pointed out that we haven't had a group picture taken in several years. Peter took the picture and everyone went back to enjoying the afternoon in the garden or having another helping of dessert.

While we're here we can give you a short recap of the Spring Picnic. April 1, 2012 was a

very beautiful day. If we had made a request for a day, we couldn't have done any better. The day was sunny in the mid 70's with a light breeze. We had a very good turn out of members and several guests, Jean Schwenke, Stella Skilling, Noreen Tolman, David Hoelscher and Ana Escobar. Cold drinks such as beer, wine, iced tea and bottled spring water were plentiful. The fried chicken was delicious and all the salads, baked beans and other complementing dishes were wonderful and plentiful. We can't forget the sweet tooth pleasing array of desserts. We have good begonia growers and fabulous cooks. The day was very relaxed and everyone had a chance to leisurely walk through the gardens and greenhouses and to sit in the shade and enjoy a nice conversation with other members. President Donna Robert called a short business meeting to order which we discussed above. When the meeting was adjourned Peter took a group picture and we had drawing for some nice door prizes and small plants.

So to summarize we missed all of you that could not join us for this event. We had a very beautiful day given to us by Mother Nature and had a nice home and beautiful gardens to enjoy. We also had lots of good friends to chat with and delicious food to eat. The day was very relaxed. Thank you all for making it a day to remember.

Happy Growing!

Tom (Respectfully submitted
for Betsy Ginsburg, Secretary)





Dear Editor,

Our April meeting was at Tom Keepin's and Peter Lloyd's home and garden. What a great day to be outside – it was warm but not Houston hot and the humidity was definitely bearable. Maybe I didn't notice because the plants were so amazing. Tom's garden and garden room are so inspiring. It's hard to comprehend the energy and dedication it takes to maintain such a beautiful place. The relaxed atmosphere gave us time to reconnect with everyone. Catching up on what's been going on and seeing people we haven't seen in a while. I can't forget to mention the food – my goodness we never go hungry at any of our events. We have not only great begonia growers but amazing cooks.

If you weren't able to come to the party you missed a very relaxing day. Our meetings are always informative but it's also nice to reconnect with our begonia buddies on a Sunday afternoon.

Gail MacGregor





SPRING PICNIC at TOM KEEPIN'S by Jane Anderson

Mother Nature did not play any tricks on us even though it was April 1st. The day was perfect... warm, nice breeze, great friends and guests and fabulous food.

The first thing I saw when I walked up the drive way was a fence full of sweet peas. I've never had much luck with them in Houston, but my Grandmother always had them in Indiana. It's one of my favorite "flower memories." Approaching the garden, the back yard is quite a visual experience. Water fountains and unusual plants and flowers at every turn. This also includes looking up in the tree canopy. I particularly loved the arrangement of private vignettes surrounded by exotic plants.

I want to thank Tom and Peter for hosting our Spring Picnic. Special thanks also to Teresa for working behind the scenes to get all the wonderful food coordinated.

*Several years ago I read an article in the **2007 Begonian** written by Rekha Morris. She described a visit to Tom's garden in great detail. Even though some of the plants have changed it's a great article written by an expert. This article actually enticed me to visit Tom's garden the first chance I could.*

Who would believe that this piece of paradise would be only one block off a busy Houston freeway!

Happy Gardening,

Jane Anderson





Dear Editor,
Just a note to let you know how thoroughly enjoyable the picnic meeting was. The atmosphere was very relaxed with lots of visiting going on ... something that we never seem to get enough of. Everyone seemed to have a really good time. I hear we even got a new member!
Your house and grounds are lovely (I just had to do the tour twice!) with gorgeous begonias and interesting plants everywhere and wonderful flower smells. With the weather cooperating, it was the perfect day for a get-together. The food was terrific too; fried chicken, a multitude of salads and side dishes and scrumptious desserts. Think Brenda will share her grape salad recipe?

Thank you so much for sharing your house and yard,
Janet Carpenter



