

The Begonia CHATTER

*Newsletter of the Astro Branch
of the American Begonia Society*



FOUNDER: THOMAS KEEPIN

Astro Branch

American Begonia Society
13410 Balcrest Drive
Houston, Texas 77070

Next Meeting:

DATE: February 2, 2025

TIME: 2:00 PM Official Meeting starts
(Board meeting starts at 12:30)

PLACE: Plants for All Seasons,
21328 State Hwy 249

PROGRAM: *Terrarium Technique* by Doug
Byrom

Snack hosts: Gail Warren and Gloria
Hunter

President:

Kathleen Murphy

Vice President:

Jennifer Francois

Treasurer:

Ann Stiefel

Secretary:

Gloria Hunter

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hi all,

I hope you are all doing well after all the snow and ice from the Polar Vortex. AND all your Begonias have survived the onslaught from Mother Nature. We know that we have at least one more onslaught of freezing weather this season.

Janet Carpenter and I went to Freeport last week to pick up Brenda Andrews' Begonias that the Andrews family had so graciously offered. We plan a pruning and propagating program to share all these plants with you.

Speaking of programs, in February our program will be presented by Doug Byrom on his method of preparing and growing Begonias in closed containers. Since Doug always wins all the ribbons in closed containers class at the Meetings/Conventions he is the perfect person to present this program.

Also plan on a Board Meeting before our regular meeting at 12p.

See you all Sunday. —Kathleen

Terrariums Doug Byrom's Technique

Member Doug Byrom, who is an active member in the Austin chapter, who also organizes multiple plants sales per year, including the big one at the annual Get-Togethers, will present his newest technique for creating terrariums. Specifically, he will introduce his substrate recipe. He will also bring a few begonias. Both the substrate and begonias will be for sale, so be sure to bring a few extra dollars.



Remembering Brenda Andrews, who we learned passed away. An article about her lasting contributions to our Branch is forthcoming.

Chairs:

Membership
Ann Steifel

Seed Fund

Janet Carpenter

Webmaster & Nat'l Rep.

Malcolm McCorquodale

Newsletter

Rosa Brennan, Editor

Begonia Meeting – January 12, 2025

Members present – Gloria Hunter, Janet Carpenter, Jennifer Francois, Ann Stiefel, Kathleen Murphy, Malcolm McCorquodale, Tom Keepin, Peter Lloyd, Rosa Brennan, Cynthia Moody, Irene & Mike Bragg, Gail Warren, and Sue Botts.

Our meeting is being held today instead of January 5th because Plants For All Seasons was closed for the holidays, as is their tradition.

Guest – John Cole, Brenda Andrew's grandson – He came to let us know that she has recently passed away. A tuberose Begonia was presented to John. Members shared memories of Brenda and how so many of our members had been touched by her knowledge and love of begonias.

Ann introduced Irene Resinger, our guest at the meeting. Ann mentioned that she had missed a couple of meetings because of her recent move. Still unpacking, but she is moved in.

President Kathleen Murphy welcomed everyone and thanked hostesses, Rosa & Kathleen for refreshments.

Gloria read the minutes, corrections, approved with corrections.

Treasurer's report for November & December– Beginning balance - \$4,056.09 Ending balance \$4,044.04. Brief discussion about taxes and discussed Bank of America's help to set-up credit card payments for registration for Convention / Gathering. Rosa & Ann will work together to find a solution. Irene passed around sign-up sheet for hostess for 2025 to bring refreshments.

Program for next month may be a visit from Begonia member Leora Fuentes.

Old Business: Convention Get Together – we have a signed contract for Hilton Inn at 249 & 1960, near Willowbrook. Also access to 3 rooms in a row for our use to meet, display & sell plants etc.

The room rates will be \$109 with breakfast and free parking included. We may use the restaurant for banquet & award presentations. Dates are May 14th – 18th, 2025, Wednesday through Sunday.

We are still looking for goodies to fill gift bags. Examples given fertilizer, pens, notepads, Microlife, worm castings, water, snack items Gloria & Gail will check with Huntsville seed ladies donating any leftover seeds they may have.

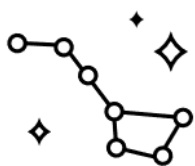
Brenda's grandson, John, asked if anyone was interested in a field trip to Freeport. Brenda had a large collection of begonia's that he would like to donate to the group.

Meeting adjourned.

—Gloria Hunter, secretary

PLANTING GUIDE—FEBRUARY 2025

Weather forecast:



Sign	Day
Taurus	February 4th & 5th
Cancer	8th & 9th
Scorpio	18th & 19th
Pisces	1st, 27th & 28th



Feb. 1-5: Rainy periods and very cold.

Feb. 6-11: A few showers, mild, then turning very cold.

Feb. 12-21: Sunny and mild

Feb. 22-28: A few showers; frigid.

Generally, 2 degrees below average temperature, and precipitation will be 1" below average.

BEST PROPAGATION DATES: February 10, 11, 12, 20, 21, & 22

The best days to take cuttings for propagation are during Aries, Leo, or Sagittarius signs when the moon is in a waxing phase.

***Begonia* Immersion Day at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden Saturday, February 15, 2025**

On Saturday, February 15, 2025, the Mae Blanton Dallas Fort Worth branch of the American Begonia Society, and Glenn Dickerson, Curator, will host an open house of the *Begonia* Species Bank Collection at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden. This will be the first opportunity for the public to view the world-renowned *Begonia* collection with roughly 1,500 taxa in their new location, The Conservation Greenhouse. Our collection is a Nationally Accredited Plant Collection by the American Public Gardens Association – Plant Collection Network.



Schedule for the Day:

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.: Open House in the Conservation Greenhouse

1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.: Wisnu Ardi will speak in the Lecture Hall about his research and about *Begonia* diversity in Indonesia.

2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.: Reception in The Link



Janet Carpenter gave a presentation on re-potting plantlets grown from seed.



Gail Warren with her raffle prize *B. 'Kristy'*.



Cynthia Moody.



Gloria Hunter with raffle prize *B. scapigera*.

All photos by Peter Lloyd and Tom Keepin.



Rosa Brennan, Gloria Hunter, Janet Carpenter, and Ann Stiefel work on re-potting.



Jennifer Francois



Our newest member: Ann Resinger and her raffle prize *B. 'Jean Pernet'*.



John Cole, grandson our dear and recently departed Brenda Andrews, with his raffle prize *B. rajah*.





Kathleen Murphy, Tom Keepin, Irene and Mike Bragg, Malcolm McCorquodale.
Mike and Irene won the challenge to grow B. 'Don Miller'.



Malcolm McCorquodale

Begonia ionophylla



The Prizes table.

Please remember to:

- 1. Wear your name tag, and*
- 2. Bring a donation for the raffle table!*

Mark your calendar: Next meeting is March 2, 2025.