

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: April 6, 2025 2:00 PM Official Meeting starts (Board meeting starts at 12:30)	PLACE: Plants for All Seasons, 21328 State Hwy 249 PROGRAM: <i>Grooming for healthy, happy plants! Bring your plants you need help with to make show worthy!</i> Snack hosts: Janet Carpenter & Irene Bragg		
March 30, 2025 Issue	www.begoniahouston.org		
President: Kathleen Murphy	Vice President: Jennifer Francois	Treasurer: Ann Stiefel	Secretary: Gloria Hunter

BEGONIA RENDEZVOUS



THE 2025 ABS NATIONAL CONVENTION & SWR GET-TOGETHER HOUSTON, TEXAS

May 15th through the 17th

*Commemorating the 45th anniversary
of the Astro Branch's charter.*

Hilton Garden Inn—Northwest/Willowbrook
 7979 Willow Chase Boulevard
 Houston, Texas 77070

Hotel Tel: 832-912-1000, ask for AMS rate
 [When booking on-line, select Special Rate, Group Code "AMS"]

Chairs:	Membership Ann Steifel	Seed Fund Janet Carpenter	Webmaster & Nat'l Rep. Malcolm McCorquodale	Newsletter Rosa Brennan, Editor
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President's Message

Hi Begonia Lovers,

I'm so happy for this beautiful spring weather where there are surprises every minute!

Whether it's dry and windy, or an unannounced spring shower, it keeps us in awe of the whims of nature.

In anticipation as HOSTS for the Astro presentation of the American Begonia Society and Southwest Region Convention, we now knuckle down to the nitty gritty details.

First and foremost is Registration: If you have not already done so, there will be forms at our meeting that you can use for registration and Ann Stiefel and Rosa Brennan can facilitate the process. Also book your rooms now.

Entering your exceptional plants: There is a new process for entering your plants to show this year which is being showcased (pardon the pun) at this convention. The plant entry will be online which will reduce congestion on Wednesday at the show desk. Not to worry, there will be helpers to assist you if questions arise regarding classification, etc.

Hospitality: Also, on Wednesday night we are staging a plant swap and meet and greet, hopefully on the patio. Save some of your seedlings/begonias for swapping with new friends. We will need hosts and hostesses for this gathering. Janet Carpenter is in charge of the Hospitality Suite and is welcoming your donations and baked goods and help with manning this station.

Please don't forget all those items for the welcome bag: Jennifer Francois is managing this project. We are in the process of setting up a Memorabilia Booth; more later on this but we will also need volunteers to man this area.

We are counting on all Astro members to be available to contribute their time: manning set-up for the Plant Show and Plant Sale, as greeters, donations to the hospitality suite, and decorations committee for the banquet. There is ample opportunity to assist in physical set-up of tables on Wednesday, these include for the Plant Show, Plant Sale, and meeting rooms prior to the show and breakdown on Saturday. There will be a sign-up sheet for all these activities.

I am always overwhelmed at your generosity and participation in our Begonia community and as Hosts and Hostesses we can look forward to a very successful National Begonia Convention here in Astro territory!

See you Sunday . —Kathleen Murphy

Begonia Meeting Notes – March 2, 2025

March 2, 2025, Meeting Notes

Present were: Sue Botts, Irene and Mike Bragg, Sandy Roden, Dehlia Mullins, Viola Risinger, Ann Steifel, Mel Babb, Tom Keepin, Peter Lloyd, Midge Gorman, Cynthia Moody, Alicia Baker, Cheryl Lenert, Janet Carpenter, Gail Warren, Jennifer Francois, and Marianne Canevaro. Our guest was Shannon Russell from the Windrose Garden Club.

The meeting was presided over by Vice President Jennifer Francois, in the President's absence, and Rosa Brennan took notes. Secretary Gloria Hunter's brother died on Saturday and condolences were expressed by the members present.

Correction to February's meeting notes: Cynthia Moody was present.

Ann gave the treasurer's report. Our ending balance on February 28 was \$4,209.39.

Cynthia and Jennifer were the hosts. Our special treat was King Cake that Cynthia brought. One came all the way from New Orleans.

The May Convention preparations were discussed: Cheryl showed a few examples of merchandise that we might sell at the "Boutique" which will be an area dedicated to selling non-plant merch. She would like your ideas for the Boutique.

Janet spoke to the Hospitality Room. We won't be purchasing alcohol directly for the Hospitality Room, but all are welcome to donate wine, etc. Janet requested that two volunteers make homemade munchies, and she sent around a list of examples. This would be in addition to our Sam's purchases.

Swag bag update: Jennifer needs more stuff. So far Janet and Jennifer have contributed. Plants For All Seasons will also be contributing something.

Collect boxes! Strawberry crates or other sturdy cardboard boxes are needed. Please pick them up throughout your week.

Jennifer reported on the Begonia Immersion Day at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden that she attended. Rosa attended as well.

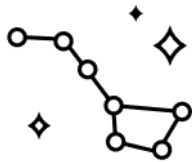
Rosa discussed the John Fairey Garden plant sale next weekend. She will be attending and encouraged others to do so as well.

The meeting was adjourned and Janet presented the Begonias that were donated by Brenda Andrews family. Tom supervised plant cuttings and everyone was able to take home a legacy plant or cutting.

PLANTING GUIDE—APRIL & MAY 2025

April Weather forecast:

- 1-4: Sunny, cool.
- 5-7: Rainy periods, chilly.
- 8-16: Sunny and mild.
- 17-19: Thunderstorms, turning cool.
- 20-22: Sunny, cool.
- 23-30: Scattered thunderstorms, turning warm.



	Best planting dates
Sign	Day
Taurus	April 1st
Cancer	4th & 5th
Scorpio	13th, 14th, & 15th
Pisces	23rd & 24th
Taurus	27th & 28th

BEST PROPAGATION DATES: April 6th & 7th

The best days to take cuttings for propagation are during Aries, Leo, or Sagittarius signs when

May Weather forecast:

- 1-5: Isolated thunderstorms, turning warm.
- 6-14: Thunderstorms, some heavy; cool.
- 15-19: Sunny, turning hot.
- 17-19: Thunderstorms, turning cool.
- 20-22: Sunny, warm.
- 23-31: Sunny, hot.

	Best planting dates
Sign	Day
Cancer	May 1st & 2nd
Scorpio	11th & 12th
Pisces	20th & 21st
Taurus	25th & 26th
Cancer	29th & 30th

BEST PROPAGATION DATES: May 3rd, 5th, and 31st

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



Left: Cheryl Lenert explains how to propagate begonias from leaves.

Below: Dehlia Mullins with her prize.



Above: Gail Warren

Left: Mel Babb, Marianne Canevaro, Shannon Russell, Dehlia Mullins, and Sandy Roden

Photos this page and following pages by Peter Lloyd.



Left: Cynthia Moody (in blue top) getting a cutting off of one of many begonias from Brenda Andrews' legacy collection.



Below: Viola Risinger with her prize.



Above: Tom Keepin with Begonia 'Looking Glass'.



And above right: with Rosa Brennan.

Right: Mel Babb in her Mardi Gras regalia and prize.



Below: Janet Carpenter. Right: Cheryl Lenert.



Marianne Canevaro



Sandy Roden



Jennifer Francois

*Mark your calendar:
Next meeting is
May 4, 2025.*

Please remember to:

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



BEGUILED BY BEGONIAS?

*The Houston Astros Branch
of the
American Begonia Society
welcomes new members.*

**COME AND JOIN US ON THE
FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH
1:00 P.M.
PLANTS FOR ALL SEASONS
21328 STATE HWY 249**

*We're a fun group who loves learning about
and sharing begonias. There are always door
prizes and drawings and the chances of you
going home with a beautiful, healthy begonia
are really good!*

Astro@begonias.org

Voicemail: (832) 541-3411

www.facebook.com/BegoniaHouston

<https://www.instagram.com/houston.astro.begonia.society/>

REGISTRATION FORM

BEGONIA RENDEZVOUS: 2025 ABS NATIONAL CONVENTION & SWR GET-TOGETHER

Welcome and opening reception: Wednesday, May 14th

Hilton Garden Inn—Northwest/Willowbrook, 7979 Willow Chase Boulevard Houston, Texas 77070

Hotel Tel: 832-912-1000 , ask for AMS rate, [When booking on-line, select Special Rate, Group Code “AMS”]

Registrant name(s):

Registrant email(s):

Registrant cell phone number(s):

Home phone number:

Address:

I am a member of the following ABS Branches):

I prefer that the following contact info **NOT** be included in the 2025 Convention Booklet:

(For example, “address”)

Registration Fee: \$40 for individual or \$50 for couple in same household	\$
Late fee (after 4/21/2025) add \$20	\$
Donation: Hospitality	\$
Donation: Plant Sale	\$
Donation: Other (please specify)	\$
Meals	\$
Trophy & Division sponsorships: (from page 3)	\$
TOTAL REGISTRATION FEES	\$

SUBMIT FORM BY EMAIL: RosaGBrennan@gmail.com

TO PAY BY CREDIT CARD: <https://tinyurl.com/2025HoustonPay>

PAYMENT BY CHECK: Make payable to “ABS/Astro Branch” and mail to:

Ann Stiefel
10929 Eagle Drive #1423
Mont Belvieu, Texas 77523

MEALS

Select meals for each person (specify first name):	Name of member #1	Name of member #2
Thursday lunch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harvest garden salad with creamy balsamic dressing • Chicken Marsala • Steamed blended dirty rice • Sauteed green bean with onions and peppers • Vegetarian: Penne pasta tossed in basil, olive oil, tomato, and garlic with side of sauteed squash, broccoli and cauliflower • Dessert: Apple pie Garnished caramel sauce, fresh mint, and strawberry 	\$42 x _____ =	\$
Saturday lunch (before SWR/ABS Meetings): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seasonal and tropical fruit salad • Minestrone soup • Classic Caesar salad with garlic croutons on the side • New Season supreme salad with our champagne vinaigrette • Italian pasta salad (regular and gluten free) • Roasted vegetable salad • Grilled chicken platter • Assorted deli meats • Assorted breads cheeses and relish tray • Cookies and brownie (regular and gluten free) 	\$50 x _____ =	\$
Saturday Banquet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Season Supreme salad topped with dried cranberry, mandarin, candied walnut, tomato and our champagne vinaigrette • Chicken Picatta: seared chicken breast medallion in a light fresh lemon-butter, capers, and parsley • Herb crusted New York strip steak au jus with creamy horseradish • Mascarpone roasted garlic mashed potatoes • Tuscan roasted vegetable medley: carrot, broccoli, cauliflower, squash, and zucchini • Fresh rolls and butter • Dessert: Triple chocolate decadent cake garnished chocolate ganache, fresh mint and strawberries 	\$55 x _____ =	\$
MEALS TOTAL		\$

ITINERARY

Wednesday: Enter plants for Plant Show*
Plant swap

Thursday: Judging in the morning
Judge's luncheon
Plant Show
Plant Sale

Friday: Programs and workshops
Show and Sale opens to public

Saturday: Programs and workshops
Business luncheon
Business meetings
Awards banquet

*For those that didn't register online. [Online Plant Show registration](#) will begin May 1st.

TROPHY AND DIVISION AWARD SPONSORSHIPS

Provide the name(s) to list on the show card as donor(s). Number your choices as first or second (etc.) preference in the event the trophy has already been sponsored:

Name(s) _____

Major Trophy Sponsorships: \$60

<i>Trophy</i>	<i>Sponsor name(s)</i>
Best of Show	
Sweepstakes (Most Blue Ribbons)	
People's Choice	
Rekha Morris Best Species in Show	Austin Area Branch
Best SWR Hybrid	
Lou Dyess Best Cane	Alamo Branch
Dianna Wilkerson Best Rhizomatous	Kenny Wilkerson
Millie and Ed Thompson's Showing is Sharing	
Alice Clark Memorial Award (Best Artistic Entry)	
Wanda and Richard Macnair Award (Best Terrarium)	

Division Award Sponsorships: \$40

<i>Division</i>	<i>Sponsor name(s)</i>
Cane-like: Superba-Type	
Cane-like: All others	
Shrub-like	
Thick-stemmed	
Semperflorens	
Rhizomatous	
Rhizomatous: Unusual Growth and/or Foliage	
Rex Cultorum	
Tuberous	
Trailing–Scandent	
Species	
Unidentified Species (U number species)	
At-Risk Begonias	

TROPHY AND DIVISION AWARD SPONSORSHIPS—CONTINUED

Major Trophy Sponsorships—continued: \$40

<i>Division</i>	<i>Sponsor name(s)</i>
Hanging Container or Wall Pocket	
Contained Atmosphere: Rhizomatous	
Contained Atmosphere: Rex	
Contained Atmosphere: All Others	
Mixed/Other Terrariums	
Heritage Begonias	
Traveling Begonias	
Novice	
Novel Container	
Novel Grown	
Commercial Grown	
New Introduction: Commercial Grown	
New Introduction: Hobby Grower	
Begonia Collections	
Begonia Arts and Crafts	
Begonia Photography	
Begonia Exhibits	
Total Sponsor Contributions. Include Sponsor Total on Registration Form, page 1.	\$