

Austin Area Begonia Society Branch • of the American Begonia Society •

VOLUME 8, NUMBER 11

NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER, 2014

MEETING:

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23

2 P. M. ZILKER
BOTANICAL GARDEN

2220 BARTON SPRINGS
ROAD AUSTIN, TX 78746

CHRISTMAS TREES

FRIDAY, NOV. 21 1-4:30

SATURDAY, NOV. 22
NOON UNTIL 2:30 P.M.

NO DECEMBER MEETING
MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A
HAPPY NEW YEAR

2015 SOUTHWEST REGION
GET- TOGETHER MAY 21-
23 HOUSTON, TEXAS

AMERICAN BEGONIA
SOCIETY CONVENTION
JULY 29- AUGUST 2, 2015
NATICK, MASSACHUSETTS

ZILKER GARDEN FESTIVAL

MARCH 28 AND 29

Begonia 'Betsy' >



TOM KEEPIN ANNOUNCES LOCATION OF SOUTHWEST REGION GET-TOGETHER FOR 2015

Tom Keepin has announced that the 2015 Southwest Get-Together headquarters will be in the Sheraton Brookhollow located at Highway 290 and the 610 Loop in Houston, Texas May 21-23. Rooms are \$89 per night.

On May 20 a judging school is planned for the full day if enough members will respond soon. These student judges will be the clerks for Friday morning. E-mail Cheryl Lenert. lenert@flash.net or call 281-255-9004.

DOUG BYROM ELECTED ABS BUSINESS MANAGER

During the American Begonia Society Business Meeting held August 22 in Fort Worth Doug Byrom became Business Manager while Freda Holley was appointed Chairman of the Publication Committee. The Nominating Committee for the 2015-2017 slate of officers includes Carol Orozco, Linda Lawson, and Richard Macnair.



BRANCH RELATIONS DIRECTOR KEEPIN INTRODUCED 3 NEW ABS BRANCHES

Tom Keepin introduced three new American Begonia Society Branches in Fort Worth August 22.

Florida West Coast Begonia Society founded by Greg Sytch has been meeting for over a year the first Monday of the month in Clearwater, Florida. They do not meet in July or August.

Freda Holley founded the North Central Louisiana Begonia Society which meets the second Sunday of each month at 2 P.M. in Ruston, Louisiana. Freda also founded Louisiana E-Branch, which meets electronically 11 months out of the year by submitting articles, plant information, giving comments, and answering questions for anyone in the state of Louisiana. They will meet one month a year in a city with easy travel for all members.

These new branches received their official ABS Charter, a copy of their constitution and by-laws printed on parchment paper, a check for \$35 from ABS and \$100 from the Tom Keepin Branch Start-Up Fund sponsored by the Astro Branch of Houston, Texas.

ABS NATIONAL CONVENTION JULY 29

The ABS National Convention will be held July 29-August 2 at the Verve Crowne Plaza, 1360 Worcester Rd, Natick, MA. The rate will be \$115 per night for Begonia Revolution New England 2015. To make reservations call 800-265-0339 or visit the website, www.Begonias.org or Buxton's website, www.BuxtonBranch.org. June 29 is the deadline for reservations.

The tour on Wednesday, July 29, will be to the Glass Flowers and Sea Creatures in Glass in the Harvard Museum of Natural History, where 847 plant species and over 3,000 models created by Leopold and Rudolf Blaschka from 1856-1936 are on display.

Then the tour will visit the Lyman Estate Greenhouses in Waltham, MA where 37 acres of gardens and grounds are located.

On Thursday, July 30, Logee's Greenhouses in Danielson, CT will be of great interest since Ernest Logee, eldest son of William, focused his interest on unusual forms of begonias and was one of the original founders of the ABS and also created the Buxton Branch in Massachusetts.

Roger Williams Botanical Center in Providence, RI is the largest indoor garden open to the public in New England. It is the home of the Rhode Island Branch.

Friday, July 31, the attendees will enjoy 8 distinct gardens in Tower Hill Botanic Garden in Boylston, MA—the only botanic garden of its kind in New England. It is the site of the Davenport Collection of more than 199 pre-20th Century apple varieties.

PLANTING ACCORDING TO THE SIGNS

For November the best time to transplant begonias will be November 11-12 Cancer, 21-22 Scorpio, and 29-30, Scorpio.

In December Cancer comes 8, 9, and 10. Scorpio December 18 and 19, and Pisces December 1, 27, and 28. Pruning for fast growth comes November 6, 7, and 8 and December 4, 5, and 31. Capricorn comes Nov. 25, 26; Dec. 23, 24.

AUSTIN AREA BEGONIA SOCIETY BRANCH AND ALAMO BRANCH MEET IN JIM AND JOAN'S HOME

Several members of the Austin Area Society Branch and the Alamo Branch joined the festivities in the lovely country home belonging to Jim and Joan Estes Sunday, October 27, 2014. The attractive front doors were opened to all after most attendees stood in awe below the olive tree in full bloom since it had grown as tall as the bell tower. Butterflies surrounded the white blossoms while we filled our plates with ham, scalloped potatoes, chicken casserole topped with butternut squash, a variety of delicious salads, including a cranberry jello fruit salad, pecan pies, gingerbread, cupcakes, and pumpkin cake owls decorated for Halloween.

Begonias and ferns also attracted attention and many were purchased before the group headed to the greenhouse for some cuttings.

During the short meeting Doug Byrom talked about A & G Nursery in California, where begonias and other plants could be purchased to sell during the Zilker Garden Festival March 28 and 29, 2015, Palm Sunday. Doug suggested that individuals look at the website and tell him about other plants that could fill the space of a delivery truck.

Jim Estes made a motion to purchase \$100 worth of begonia cuttings from Fort Worth Botanic Garden. Valerie Morris seconded the motion, which carried.

These cuttings should arrive in time for all to grow them for the March event. On November 23 the Austin Area Begonia Society Branch will take cuttings from the

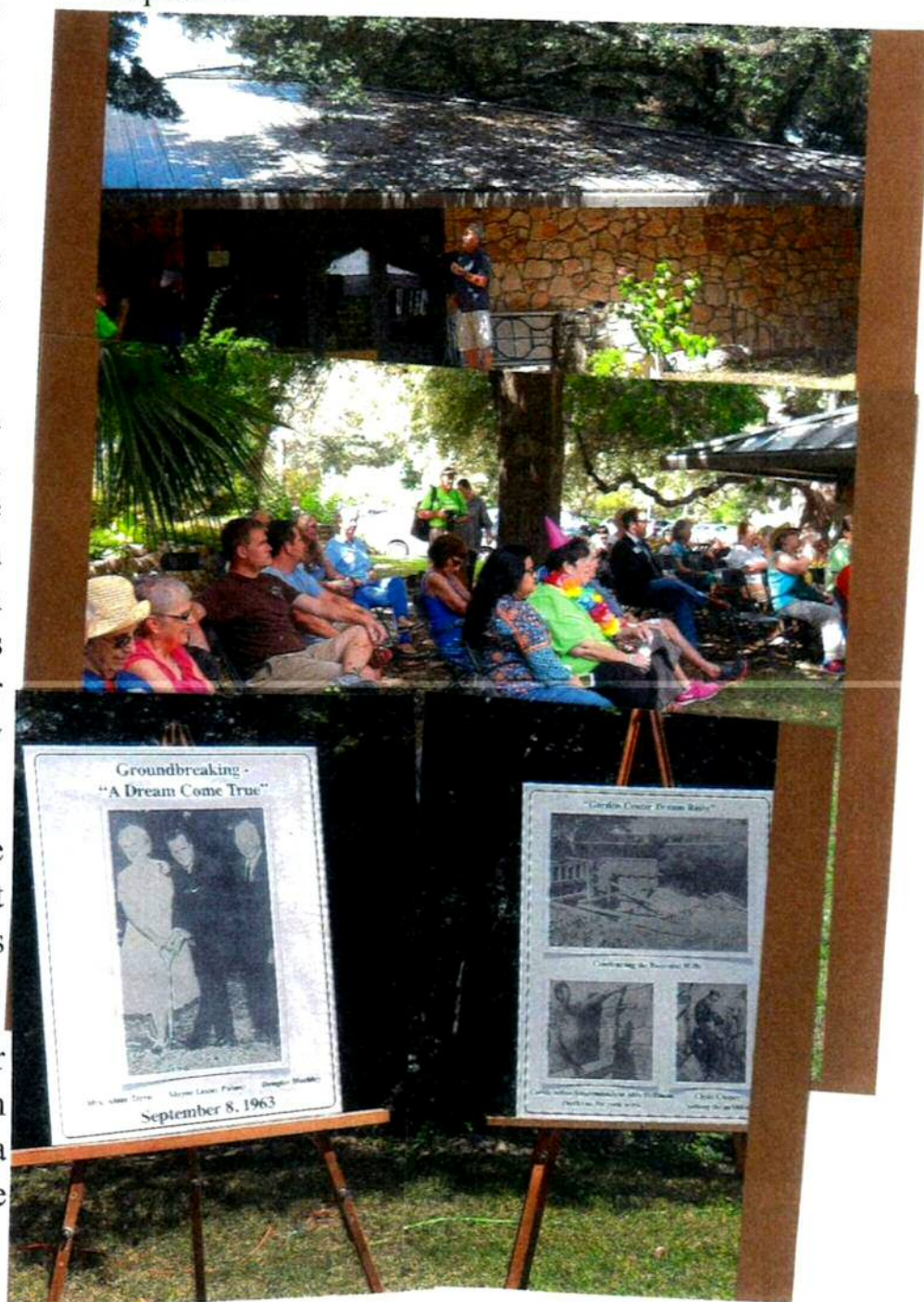
begonias in the Adopt-a-Garden. A contract should be signed soon with Parks and Recreation to maintain the area next season.

Nelda Moore provided new soil to aid the begonias and she has watered the area several times during the year.

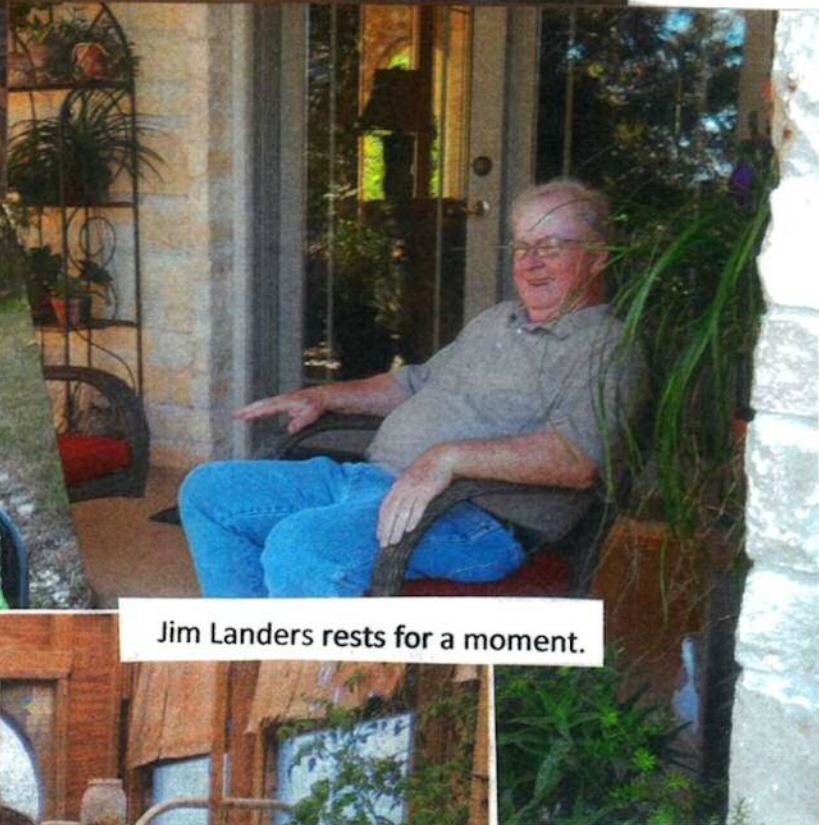
For the 50th Anniversary Celebration she added some of her begonias to fill in the bare space left by critters that ate or dug them out of the soil.

Below are pictures from the event and the next page shows the Lockhart meeting.

Speakers, banners, and visitors near cupcakes.

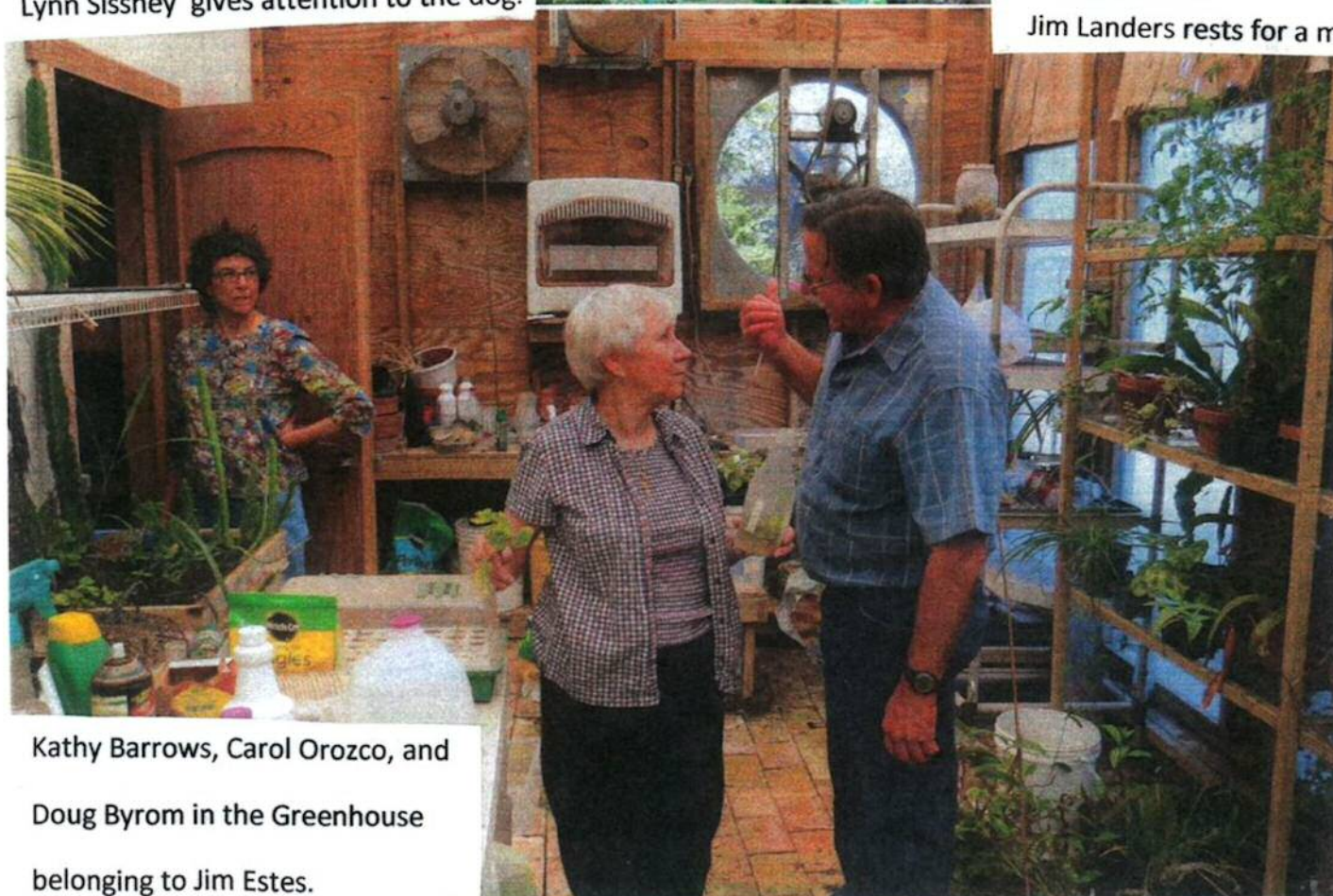


Jim Landers, Vickey and John Cole, Sandy Justice, Carol Orozco, Deva Brown, Arlene Lantz, Nelda Moore, Kathy Barrows, Jackie Johnson, and Valerie Morris listen to Doug Byrom discuss begonias in Lockhart.



Lynn Sissney gives attention to the dog.

Jim Landers rests for a moment.



Kathy Barrows, Carol Orozco, and Doug Byrom in the Greenhouse belonging to Jim Estes.



Photos on this page by Ken Fuchs

Wintering Your Begonias

by Freda Holley
from "The Bayou Begonian"

1. The time to start thinking about winter for your begonias will be the first nights with temperatures in the 60's. By the time the night with 50's come along you want to have your begonias in the house. If you have windows that face north in a room you may place your begonias so that they get natural light. Since begonias really like humidity, you can set your begonias in plastic trays with pebbles and keep a little water there to evaporate; this will keep the air around them moist. Begonias will react to those cool nights just as do most perennials and begin to go dormant; bringing them in before those nights get too cool will arrest that move to dormancy and keep most of them growing - no rule with begonias is every absolute and some begonias will go dormant regardless. If they do, just keep the soil on the dry side and they should revive in the spring.
2. If you have many plants and not enough windows, you may wish to add a fluorescent tube light on a stand. I have a stand shown in the photo in one of our bathrooms on which I raise my seedlings, but it could also be used to keep plants over winter. The lights are fluorescent strips I buy from Walmart; these are simple and complete - all you have to do is plug them in. I have attached these strips to my stand with strands of wire I thread through the tops of the lights and around the shelf supports. Bathrooms are ideal places to keep plants because they tend to have more humidity than most rooms.
3. Be wary of overwatering your plants in the winter since they will have slowed their growing process and will not use much water. Begonias never like their feet kept wet.
4. The good news is that many of your begonias will now come into their glory, particularly if they receive enough light. Cane begonias, tuberous begonias (which we cannot grow here), and shrub begonias bloom in summer, but most rhizomatous and thick stem begonias bloom in winter. First, they must have about 6 weeks of reduced light so you will not begin to see their blooms until just at the end of the year. Given ample light, many will be spectacular.
5. The best of all worlds for your begonias will be a heated greenhouse. I have already moved most of mine inside and will try to get them all in before the end of October. I begin with the largest and then try to make sure I have my favorites first. So long as it doesn't freeze, I will continue bringing them in until I almost cannot walk the isles of my greenhouse!
6. Even in the greenhouse and certainly inside the house, most begonias will lose many, many leaves as they adjust to the new location. Don't be concerned, this is natural. I always look forward to the shortest day of the year in December; almost like magic once this has come and days begin growing longer, new leaves will begin to emerge and you will see the first buds developing on the winterbloomers. There are a few rhizome begonias such as *B. crassicaulis* that loses all its leaves at the end of summer so that the bloom peduncles erupt from the bare rhizomes. After the bloom cycle is complete, new leaves cover the rhizome. Yes, begonias are always full of surprises!

