



VOLUME 10, NUMBER 6

NEWSLETTER

JUNE, 2016

**NEXT MEETING:**

**JUNE 26 2 P.M.**

**PLACE OF MEETING:**

**802 GREAT BRITAIN**

**AUSTIN, TX**

**78748-6503**

**CELL 415-0940**

**EVENTS AT ZILKER  
BOTANICAL GARDEN:**

May 16-June 24 Woodland  
Faerie Trail

June Member Dues \$10

June 18 Orchid Society New  
Growers' Seminar

July 16 and August 6:  
Travis County Master  
Gardener's Education

August 20 Beekeepers Show  
And Sale

September 3 Cactus and  
Succulent Sale

September 17 Texas  
Bamboo Society Show

March 25-27, 2017  
60<sup>th</sup> Zilker Garden  
FESTIVAL

## PLANTING BEGONIAS IN CONTAINERS

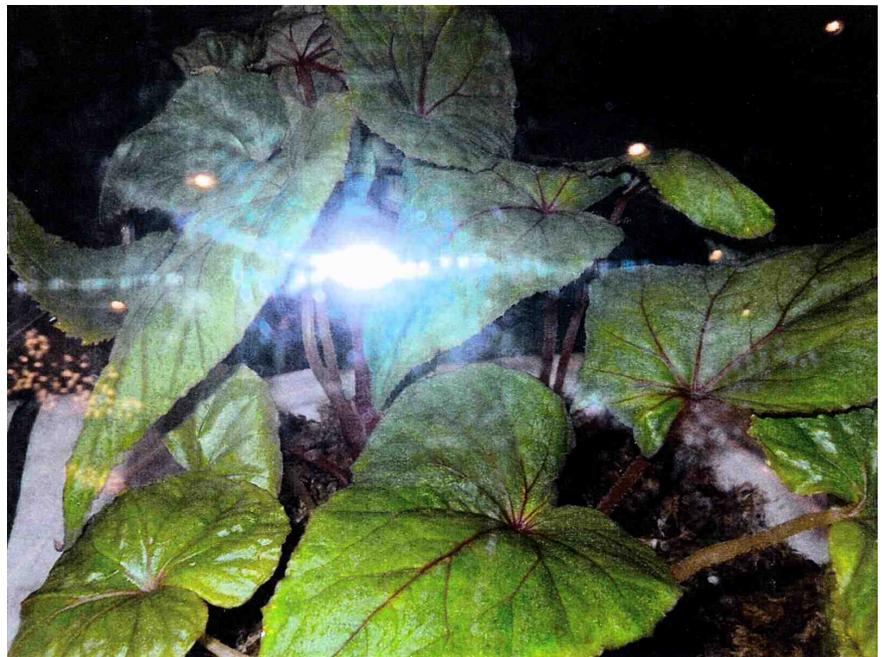
The Austin Area Begonia Society members will meet at 2 P.M. in Valerie Morris's Greenhouse on June 26, 2016, to plant begonias in hanging baskets. Her home is located in South Austin at 802 Great Britain 78748. Most of the members have assisted Valerie to load the U Haul with plants for the Zilker Garden Festival booths at this address.

Please bring gloves, scissors, and small tools that are needed such as a scoop to dig in the potting mixture.

During the business meeting Lynn Sissney will report for the Nominating Committee.

On May 1<sup>st</sup> during the last business meeting the begonia seed that looked like dust was planted in round containers and labeled. Those plants probably are up since May 18th and these will be bumped up during the July meeting.

## DOUG BYROM ACHIEVES AWARDS IN SOUTHWEST REGION/ABS PLANT SHOW



This container entered by Doug Byrom received the Best of Show and the Class Commendation in the Holiday Inn in Richardson May 5 - 7 during the Southwest Region/ABS Get Together. Doug gave a daily tally of the money and the donors on a board for the Challenge Fund that grew to over \$7500.

The next Get Together will likely be held in San Antonio, but in 2018 the Southwest Region is considering co-sponsoring a celebration with the American Begonia Society during the three hundredth anniversary of New Orleans. Hotel sites will determine the dates, but there is a possibility that the meeting will be in May in the Louisiana city.

Doug brought the beautiful crystal trophies that were presented for the first time. The Rekha Morris Best Species Award will be sponsored each year by the Austin Area Begonia Society Branch. A new award in honor of Wanda Macnair will be presented for the Best Contained Atmosphere Begonia.

A seminar that was held on May 5 in the Dallas Room attracted 33 members. A panel of begonia growers and hybridizers — Randy Kerr, Freda Holley, Doug Pridgen, and Johnny Williams — explained about growing conditions in their area and then concluded that an owner must know where the begonia originated to try to coax the plant to grow. Some of them discussed the use of fertilizer with sphagnum moss in a sterile climate. Others used fertilizer on week old seedlings. One used an aspirin in a gallon of water while others used bottled water or rainwater, and they just planted in potting soil without the hot water treatment of moss or soil.

The tour through the Fort Worth Botanical Garden Conservatory was quite interesting since some of the pepper trees had fruit in the canopy and another had several star fruit on the ground in the simulated habitats.

Botanical Research Institute of Texas provided a fascinating tour rooted in sustainability of seeds, plants, environment as well as the planet itself. The vegetative roof carpeted with plants over several different layers of building material provides cooling and heating as well as an ecosystem for birds, butterflies, and plants that grow in very little soil. The land surrounding the area sustains native plants and grasses to reduce pollution and erosion. The building itself is constructed with recycled materials from the Health Hospital that was demolished. Pressed plants and seeds have been preserved for study. Rare books are carefully guarded in a room where only 5 visitors were allowed at a time. One botany book had once been owned by Federalist Charles C. Pickney and several told about hemp.

A boxed lunch was served in the Camellia Room where Cynthia Richie gave a humorous account of the beginning of the Begonia Collection and the Mae Blanton Begonia Society. Bob Byers welcomed everyone and informed members about his year as director and his vision for the future with the begonia species secure. Charles Jaros showed the Unidentified or U numbered begonias, some of which were included in the auction.

The banquet began at 7 P.M. in the Dallas Room. Bobbie Price used terrariums as centerpieces that were won by someone at each table.

Doug served as Master of Ceremonies, Leora Fuentes recognized the persons responsible for working on the Get Together Committee, and Nelda Moore and Cheryl Lenert presented the awards. Charles Jaros and Johanna Zinn announced the scores for the winners in the Plant Show before the exciting auction.

## PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

**Elizabeth Cassimatis** became the unsung hero who has worked diligently behind the scenes for years. As the 2016 recipient of the **Marguerite Vernon Award** she joyfully accepted the \$50 certificate given by the Mae Blanton Branch.

On behalf of the Southwest Region Nelda Moore presented the **Mae Blanton Service Award** to two deserving members — **Johanna Zinn** and **Charles Jaros**, who always work so tirelessly during the Plant Shows.

**Bobbie Price**, who has done an outstanding job in promoting begonias within and beyond the

region, lovingly accepted the **Begonia Ambassador Award** from Cheryl Lenert of the Astro Branch.

**Don Miller** very deservedly became the **Hybridizer of the Year**.

Nelda Moore appreciates the many votes for these outstanding 2016 winners. She, Doug Byrom, and Joan Estes worked on the Southwest Region Awards. Thank you for your time, your votes, and your kindness in selecting the winners.



Don Miller's **B. 'Chameleon Way'**  
RHIZOMATOUS Cleft in Richardson, Texas  
May 5- 7



The day of the Plant Sale with Cheryl Lenert, Deva Brown, Carol Notaras, Sally Savelle, Sandy Justice, and others.

**AUSTIN AREA BEGONIA SOCIETY BRANCH  
OF THE AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY  
MINUTES OF MAY 1, 2016**

The Austin Area Begonia Society Branch met at 2 P.M. in the Greene Room in the Austin Area Garden Center in Zilker Botanical Garden, 2220 Barton Springs Road, Austin, TX 78746, on May 1, 2016. The following members were present: **Doug Byrom, Vickey Cole, Betty Dunn, Jim Estes, Joan Estes, Ken Fuchs, Jackie Johnson, Jim Landers, Arlene Lantz, Nelda Moore, Valerie Morris, Verlene Schoen, and Lynn Sissney.**

No minutes from March 20, but the garden was filled with begonias and the newsletter provided pictures of the newly-planted bed with the names of those who worked.

Valerie Morris reported favorably concerning sales during the Zilker Garden Festival of April 2 and 3, although all expenses were not subtracted. Nevertheless, begonias were promoted in the Greene Room Exhibit and during the successful sale.

Vickey Cole presented a detailed report about the Austin Area Garden Council of April 12; however, no final report about profit was given, but attendance was the best in years with 4000 visiting the flower show in the auditorium. Beer was sold and both days the vendor ran out. Wine will be considered for the next festival. The council donated \$300 to Justin Wood for his work in the parking lot both days. There is a need to attract more donations and volunteers from clubs and other partners to host the festival and to provide more information to vendors, volunteers, and visitors concerning directions to find the areas in the gardens. A survey during the event included how the attendees learned about the event. All representatives were invited to Umlauf to join their 25th year celebration.

Doug Byrom reported about the Challenge Fund for ABS and the Fort Worth Botanic

Species Bank. He also presented a step by step demonstration for opening the packages of species seeds, shaking a few on the white paper, and planting them on the damp soil in the covered containers that would be placed in a cool area with some light.

MOTION: Members voted to sponsor a Rekha Morris Best Species Trophy each year at the Southwest Region/ABS Get Together Plant Show.

MOTION: This group will pay \$25 for the Faerie Home and Garden. Lynn Sissney will have it displayed this month.

Both motions passed.

The next meeting will be at 802 Great Britain Blvd, Austin, TX 78748.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nelda Moore, Secretary

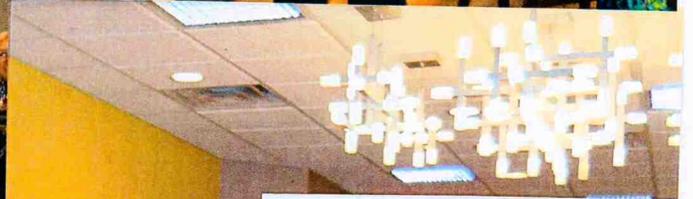




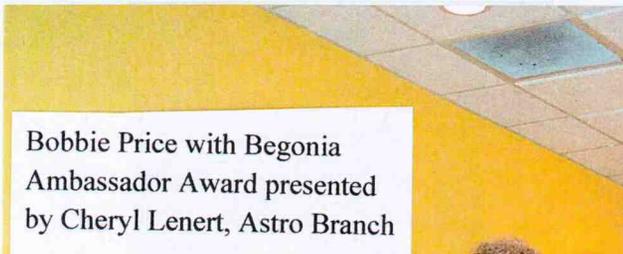
Johanna Zinn and Charles Jaros  
with Mae Blanton Service Award  
with Nelda Moore and Doug Byrom



Elizabeth Cassimatis with award  
from Mae Blanton Branch—  
the Marguerite Vernon Award



Don Miller, Hybridizer of the Year  
2016



Bobbie Price with Begonia  
Ambassador Award presented  
by Cheryl Lenert, Astro Branch



Photographs by Joe Moore

