



VOLUME 13, NUMBER 7/8

NEWSLETTER

July/August 2019

**AUSTIN AREA BEGONIA SOCIETY BRANCH WILL NOT MEET IN JULY AND AUGUST
SEPTEMBER MEETING WILL BE ANNOUNCED LATER**



BEGONIA 'SALSA' novel container by Pi Stone at the 2019 SWR Show

To vote for the American Begonia Society Officers for 2019-2021 send the following slate to MELISSA WORTON, 3722 TANNER LANE, SAN DIEGO, CA 92111 BEFORE JULY 31, 2019:

President – Butch McDole

First Vice President – Stephanie Rose

Second Vice President – Stephen Maciejewski

Secretary – Frances Dresher

Treasurer – Wendy Corby

AABS WEBSITE http://www.kenfuchs42.net/aabs_index.html

**AUSTIN AREA BEGONIA SOCIETY BRANCH
OF THE AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY
MINUTES OF JUNE 23, 2019**

The Austin Area Begonia Society Branch of the American Begonia Society met at 2 P.M. June 23, 2019 in the Greene Room of the Austin Area Garden Center in Zilker Botanical Garden, 2220 Barton Springs Road, Austin, TX 787 46. Present were the following members: **Charlotte Boyle, Doug Byrom, Vickey Cole, Ken Fuchs, Jackie Johnson, Jim Landers, Nelda Moore, Valerie Morris, Verlene Schoen, and Geneva Townsend.**

No minutes were written for the May meeting.

Doug Byrom said that the balance in the treasury was about \$5000.

Vickey Cole, Club Representative for AAGC, submitted the dates for meeting for 2019-2020. The society will not be able to meet on September 22; therefore, members will work on a tour of the Fort Worth Botanic Garden. If this does not work, the meeting and program will be held in someone's home or garden. It would be a beneficial tour for all to visit Fort Worth Species Bank.

Valerie Morris, treasurer, will send a check for the Platinum Category for the Holiday Greetings Donation Request 2019 in *The Begonian*. The check will be sent by September to **Frances Drescher, 11529 Riverchase Run, Palm Beach Gardens, Florida 33412.**

Doug Byrom will no longer serve as president of this society. All members have enjoyed all of the work

that he has done. He has kept us together with excellent programs and has worked diligently and happily for several years. He has supplied us with begonias and under his guidance, he has provided a beautiful begonia garden in Zilker Botanical Garden for all visitors to enjoy.

Officers will include the following who stepped up to keep the begonia society going after becoming a branch around 2009, when Jim Estes and Joan Estes were co-presidents. Doug Byrom has the charter from Florida.

Vickey Cole – President

Jackie Johnson and Valerie Morris – Co-Vice Presidents. They will work on members to host and provide programs.

Valerie Morris – treasurer

Nelda Moore – secretary and editor of the newsletter with Ken Fuchs, Webmaster.

No meetings in July, August, and December.

Jim Landers and Vickey Cole brought begonias, but an exchange program needs to bring us plants that all can enjoy.

Respectfully submitted,
Nelda Moore, Secretary



Bobbie Price welcomes visitors at the Begonia Species Bank at the Fort Worth Botanical Garden.

HORTICULTURE

It was an unusual winter and spring in Central Texas with cool and rain, hot and dry, followed by enough stormy weather to grow irises, wildflowers, and volunteer tomato plants that would not freeze when all tender vegetation was protected. As a result, the iris show was successful and many begonias are growing outdoors after surviving the hard freeze.

Begonias are as forgiving as irises. Not much water in winter! Never overwater or let them sit in water! Never overpot a begonia!

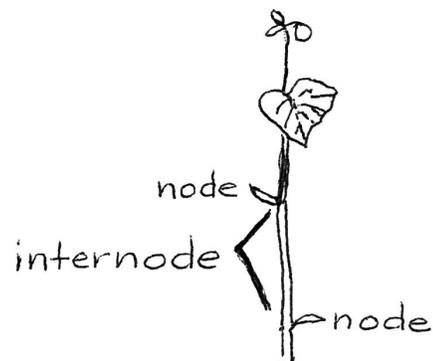
Now that warmer weather has arrived and the begonias are growing outdoors in a shady area on the patio with good air circulation, these plants can be fertilized with a solution of a small drop of Super Thrive (vitamin) in a gallon of water. Using a watering can, slowly water the soil around the begonia that had been watered the day before or even an hour before. Never fertilize a dry or sick begonia. Then routine feeding can proceed every two to four weeks instead of with each watering. Use 10-10-10 (nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium) or for more blooms use 10-15-10 since phosphorus promotes blooming for about a month. Always use a smaller amount of fertilizer (dilute) than what is on the package, and it is better to rotate the brand of fertilizer that you use. Remember that plants need light, but not direct sunlight. They do not like too much wind so watch the leaves for burn, brown edges, or crispness and move to a sheltered area. The begonias need to be turned sometimes so they can be shaped.

SHAPING BY PINCHING AND PRUNING AND GETTING NEW PLANTS FOR GIFTS OR SALES

To keep your begonias growing you want to take cuttings or when the begonia is young, you want to pinch the small plant to shape it. Most of these stems and cuttings or leaves will become new plants.

Canes and other begonias can be pruned occasionally. Water the plant thoroughly by allowing the water to seep out of the container. Then examine the stems to see that they are firm. Find 3 or 4 nodes above the soil and cut each stem. Using the rooting powder (if you choose), dip the stem and plant it in a pot leaving 2 or 3 nodes above the mixture of vermiculite and perlite that is damp. Then water the plants from the bottom. Place them in good light and use a clear covering to provide a greenhouse effect.

When the parent plant sends up shoots from the roots or branches, try to pinch out the dagger-shaped growing point on the end of each branch. This will bring more basal shoots and branches to form a fuller plant. Continue to check on the plant to make it symmetrical. By cutting certain stems during the plant's growth, your plant will have better air circulation and better health.



B. *manicata*



B. 'Joe Hayden'



B. 'Cowardly Lion'



B. *thiemei*

BEGONIA 'BASHFUL BANDIT'



Greg Sytch created this begonia in 1996 by crossing *B. manicata* X *B. 'Joe Hayden.'* From the seedlings he chose 3 and the name came to him after Virginia Jens named *B. 'Bodacious Bandit,'* and he named *B. 'Kissing Bandit'* after the cartoon character.

This rhizomatous palmately lobed vigorous begonia grows everywhere if it is not kept wet.

Greg, who was born in New Jersey, taught reading in middle school in Tampa Bay, Florida. In 1994 he was newsletter editor for the Pinellas County Branch in Florida and a contributing editor of *House Plant Magazine.* He was also appointed Horticultural Correspondent for *The Begonian.*

In New Port Richey, Florida he became a hybridizer who was interested in twisted foliage, spiraled leaf types of begonias and relied on *B. 'Cowardly Lion,' B. manicata, B. thiemei,* and *B. 'Joe Hayden.'*

