

B. 'Mr. Hunt'

B. 'P'

The
Begonian

● September/October 2008

The Begonian

Publication of the American Begonia Society

American Begonia Society

Founded January 1932 by Herbert P. Dyckman

Privacy Policy

Aims and Purposes

To stimulate and promote interest in begonias and other shade-loving plants.

To encourage the introduction and development of new types of these plants.

To standardize the nomenclature of begonias.

To gather and publish information in regard to kinds, propagation, and culture of begonias and companion plants.

To issue a bulletin that will be mailed to all members of the society.

To bring into friendly contact all who love and grow begonias.

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Cover

Front: Everyone was struck by the dramatic leaf of **Brad Thompson's** hybrid: *Begonia* 'Mr. Hunt.' It was a part of the Northhaven Garden exhibit table put together by Don Miller.

Back: The beautiful painting that became the logo for the convention was by **Breau Larrison**, the daughter of **Kenny** and **Dianna Wilkerson**.

In This Issue

The 2008 Convention was a wonderful experience from the tours to the seminars and show, everyone had a marvelous time. In this issue find the winners and sample the experiences as reported verbally by **Janet Brown, Charles Jaros, and Charles Henthorne** and photographically by **Charles Henthorne, Mary Bucholtz, Johanna Zinn** and **Malcolm McCorquedale**.

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*Striking displays such as this one with *B. maculata* and *B. brevirimosa* captured by Johanna Zinn were all around the hotel at the Convention.*

Presidents Message

I hope all the branches have gotten their Holiday Ad contributions into **Wanda Macnair** because the cut-off date is September 1st. If you haven't emailed her and let her know that the donation is coming and she can send it in to Freda to put into the November/December issue of the *Begonian*. Look in the July/August issue for her article on the holiday ads. If you are wondering what this money is used for it is to supplement the publishing of the *Begonian*. What with the cost of mailing going up all the time, there is always a need. Wanda's email address is in the back of the wmacnair@msn.com.

It is also the time of year that the ABS has the Annual Business meeting. This year it is going to be in San Francisco. I talked about it in the last *Begonian* so I hope you can come. We have a great time and the dinner at **Carol Notaras'** will be the greatest. Look in this issue under "Coming Events" and it will give you the reservation information that you need.

I would also like to thank **Rekha Morris** for all the time that she has devoted to taking trips to India and Mexico to collect species and seeds for the ABS. At the convention in Houston during her seminar and at other times she passes out seeds and grows many plants for us to auction off to make extra money for the conservation fund and ABS. I don't think ABS members realize how much time it takes for her to collect, identify and just generally get ready to go and return from one of her trips. ABS owes her a big thank you for her generosity with her time, the seed donations that she has made to the seed fund and the work she has done with the Save the Species program.

A couple of things I want to remind you of. Did you mark the 2009 Convention dates on your calendar? April 28 to

May 3, 2009 in West Palm Beach, Florida. Try and come, you'll like it.

Be sure and check the web site too. **Julie Vanderwilt** is still adding stuff to it. A million hits - can you believe it - that's hard to believe. It is a great site and so much information. Julie also needs all the branches to send their current officers, meeting schedule and sale or other activities so it can be posted on the web site.

Mary Sakamoto

Editor's Notes

I would like to thank those who responded to my cry for help with this issue: Janet Brown, Mary Bucholtz, Malcolm MacCorquodale, Charles Jaros, Charles Henthorne, Dianna Wilkerson, and Ann Salisbury on the convention and all the other authors who helped to round out this issue with their contributions as well.

I must say, I was disappointed that I received not one letter or email from those attending the convention about their experiences there even though I heard so many saying there what a great time they were having. Remember, letters to the editor are one way to share your thoughts and ideas with others about begonias or begonia events that don't involve more than a few minutes and are always of great interest to readers. First time contributors are especially welcome! I know summer is a busy time, but...! I saw a little sign in a garden I visited the other day that said "If you have time to read this, you have time to weed a little!"

Here in Louisiana, summer has set in although we were lucky to have a couple of rains in July and only this week has the temperature regularly climbed into the 90's.

No Vacancy: The Necessary Art of Culling

Or

What to Do When Your Begonia Collection Explodes
by **Dianna Wilkerson, Fred A. Barkley Branch, OK**

Don't be too hard on yourself. It happens to everyone at some point. You tell yourself that it's just one cross. Just one. But it doesn't end there, does it? Why no. Just one more, then another. Like an addiction, be it potato chips or stiletto heels, you always need one more. Before you know it, you're awash in tiny green babies created by your own hand. You have 8,349 begonia babies vying for the same four square feet of space you can actually dedicate to them. Obviously they all can't stay. But how do you decide who lives and who dies? How can you make decisions like this without finding yourself in therapy for the next three years? Never fear. There is a way that doesn't involve psychoactive medication.

The first principle is to make haste slowly. A frightening number of plants will look exactly the same until the first real leaves come in. This usually doesn't happen until about 5 to 6 months along. Don't start culling too soon lest you pitch a plant that is truly unique and worth keeping. The best plant you have may be the last one to show its individuality. Give them a chance to show you what they are.

One of the most important personality characteristics in plants is the ability (or not) to resist disease. Mildew is a prime concern. Your fellow growers and the buying public will curse your name forever if you bring them a stunningly beautiful plant that drops its leaves every other week due to mildew damage. A regular regime of spraying might mitigate some problems, but consider that not all people are comfortable spraying their plants. A lovely plant that remains perpetually damaged from disease is not so lovely after all.

Keep in mind what you are looking for from the cross to begin with. Are you looking for something radically different from either plant? Are you looking for something similar, but with a different bloom color? As you see plants that fail to meet your morphological criteria in one way or another, cull them.

After disease resistance and morphological characteristics consider overall vigor. As you look at the overall group, there will be those who are growing like mad, that are middling along and those who are alive, but aren't happy about it. The ones who are merely existing should be culled.

Once you have whittled your rag tag band down to the ones you think may be worth keeping, inflict them on your friends by propagating enough of them to parcel out around the country. After about six months, call them up and see if your friends will still speak to you. Ask for feedback. Did it die? Take over the greenhouse? Stare at them sullenly? Whine and demand special treatment? Are their friends laughing at them or stealing cuttings of it?

It's not an easy process. No one said it would be. Don't give up. If you are having a hard time making the tough choices, call a fellow begonia obsessed friend and lean on them when it gets rough. Keep your wits about you and remember that throwing out plant material does NOT make you a bad person, even though you may feel like scum on the bottom of the ocean. Keep the faith and keep growing.

Begonias: *The Great Adventure*

ABS Convention 2008: Houston, Texas

May 14th-18th

by *Janet Brown*

The following first appeared in the Westchester Branch Newsletter, edited by Janet Brown. We thank it and Janet for permission to use it here.

The Tours

We arrived on Tuesday afternoon and had dinner at the hotel. The food was excellent and the rooms very comfortable but of course we wouldn't see much of them because the busy schedule began at 9:00 am on **Wednesday** as we boarded the bus for our first tour. It was a long drive but a scenic one and we had our first and only Texas thunderstorm a short time before arriving at our first stop. This was frightening only to the Californians and routine to our very skillful lady driver. By the time we reached our destination the rain had quieted to a drizzle and we were able to enjoy a most amazing garden. 75 acres beautifully landscaped and designed. Owner and Master Gardener **Jeri Guyton** is shown in the first photo page in one of her inter-connected gardens. The gardens and several "houses" (i.e. The Party House, The Guest House, The Barn) are connected by the magnificent gardens and ponds. There were turkeys, guinea fowl, chickens, and dogs as well.

Next stop was **Cheryl** and **Charles Lenert's** lovely new home built on 10 acres of woodland next to a park. It is a lovely setting and Cheryl has plenty of room for her begonia collection, including a newly installed greenhouse. The rain had stopped and we were able to enjoy a superb Texas lunch on the lawn prepared by the members. The desserts were home made by the "Martha Stewart" of Houston, **Brenda Andrews**. We asked for recipes!

On **Thursday** we were away early for a very full day. The entire day was within the city limits of Houston and we discovered what a beautiful city it is. First stop was the fairyland garden of **Theron** and **Olga McLaren** (the last photo above). The McLarens are collectors and their back yard is filled with birdhouses, watering cans, sculptures as well as every kind of plant and tree you can imagine.

Right next door is the charming home and fern filled garden of **Ted & Jean Richardson**. They are long time members of the Gulf Coast Fern Society and have more recently become enthralled with begonias. Ted Richardson is an architect and he has made many changes in the old house most adding to the outside wonders. Ted's grandfather was Edward W. Redfield, a contemporary of John Singer Sargent, and the home is filled with wondrous paintings done by the artist. (See photo #5 for some of their plant treasures.)

One more stop before lunch and it was showstopper. Every plant and tree was labeled! We took notes and made resolutions about emulating the Boones. We all agreed we had never seen a botanical garden so meticulously labeled. The garden held a most interesting collection of plants from daylilies to begonias.

We were again treated to a great Texas lunch at the Herman Park Garden Center. Another recipe was asked for—the amazing banana pudding! And the last stop was the small but enchanting garden of **Gay Estes** (see photo #4).

Friday we were driven to another amazing home and garden and one we were very eager to see. Dr. **Bill & Marion**



Tours gave us a chance to see begonias growing in the ground. **Bill Claybaugh's** hybrid B. 'Stars and Stripes' in his garden above left. In the garden of **Ted and Jean Richardon** below were both rexes and canes. Seminars were also great ; at one of those **Charles McGough** showed us how to turn our fast food containers into artistic pots for our begonias and then he displayed examples in a show exhibit. All photos by **Mary Bucholtz**.



Claybaugh welcomed us to their elegant estate in Crosby, Texas. Bill has been a very hard working Conservation Chair for the ABS for many years. His greenhouses and propagating areas show his dedication to the preservation of our species as well as his innovative growing techniques. The area is beautifully landscaped with all kinds of tropicals and many large begonias. We were also treated to a plant sale and came away with many treasures and rare species.

Marion's Newport Garden Club held a judged flower arranging show in the house and it was most interesting. Unusual displays in decorative containers and featuring begonias for our pleasure were everywhere in the house. It gave me an idea to put in a new category for our Westchester show this year.

After lunch we visited Mercer Arboretum and docents were on hand to guide us around. It is a lovely arboretum and many begonias in the grounds added to our pleasure. A bromeliad sale was in progress and we all took an active part in that. I found that tillandsias are very packable! And there were many interesting and beautiful big bromeliads that were not packable. We were too early for the show and it must have been quite spectacular.

The final tour, actually an open house, was held at **Tom Keepin's** wondrous home on **Sunday** morning. His yard and greenhouses are amazing and he has done most of the landscaping by himself. It is a pleasure to visit. His plant room, air conditioned and humidified, is filled with gorgeous things and is a work of art in itself.

The Seminars

Renowned artist, author and begonia hybridizer, **Chuck McGough** gave the first seminar on Wednesday evening.

Chuck uses "trash items" such as plastic food containers and turns them into works of art to hold begonia displays. By the time he is finished with a transformation you would never recognize the original ugly plastic thing. And, of course, the talented Mr. McGough has written a book titled *Creative Recycling* that tells you how to do it with lots of beautiful pictures. He finished his project on Thursday evening and **Cheryl Lenert** finished the evening with a talk and demonstration on "Miniatures & Miniaturizing". Very interesting and intriguing. A plant auction followed.

On Saturday morning we were treated to another exciting, interesting and informative seminar by intrepid begonia hunter **Dr. Rekha Morris**.

Despite lingering effects from the pit viper bite in 2006 she keeps going and going. Her talk was thrilling and the begonias she finds in the wilds of India and Mexico are treasures. She plans the next trip to India in a few months and was granted support from the ABS. We hope she will get all the help we can give to keep up this work. We are very grateful for her enthusiastic and professional plant hunting in many times very dangerous and difficult parts of the world. Be sure to keep up with Rekha's adventures in the regular *Begonian* articles.

The final speaker was a first for an ABS convention. **Dan Heims** of Terra Nova Nursery in Canby, Oregon gave a great talk on "Hardy Begonias from Around the World". He is working with these begonias and their hybrids such as *B. grandis*. And he is well known for his work with tissue culture. Dan brought along several of his hybrids and one in particular caught our greedy eyes. That hybrid is *B. 'Metallic Mist'* and it is gorgeous. These plants were auctioned and went like hot cakes. You can check

out this fabulous nursery on the web. The address is www.terravanurseries.com and it is a very interesting and informative site. Unfortunately the nursery is wholesale only but I'm sure if you called ahead and said you were an ABS member you could possibly tour the place. It must be fabulous.

Actually the last speaker was an add on and a very interesting one. **Deborah Garrett** is the new (just seven months) Curator of Begonias at Fort Worth Botanic Gardens. In that short time Deborah has done remarkable things with the Begonia Collection and is rapidly bringing it back to greatness. Her report was very encouraging and she has a list of goals that starts with "preventing the loss of Begonia species by collecting and maintaining an ever expanding collection of Begonia species. We wish her well in this very important job.

The Show & The Plant Sale

It was wonderful and filled with many interesting species and hybrids. The *Begonian* will have a full report with photos. My photos did not turn out well but I can report that **Tom Keepin** won Best In Show with his *B. partita* in full bloom. There were many terrariums and my favorite was **Leora Henthorne's** *B. 'Peridot'*, a tiny incredibly sweet thing that filled the bowl completely. I was lucky enough to find one at the Claybaugh sale!

The Plant Sale was a tremendous success with begonias lined up at 5 pm for the 7 pm opening. I dawdled at the Show and by the time I got to the Sale it was obviously a sell out. It will be a very successful convention. I did get a few new canes that are doing well. Others were better shoppers and had their plants successfully shipped to California. The Boutique had some very nice begonia leaf

jewelry. **Stephanie Cootz** was lucky enough to win one for a door prize at Cheryl's.

The Banquet & The Awards

The table decorations were lovely and done by that Martha Stewart of Texas, **Brenda Andrews** and her committee. The centerpieces were gigantic collections of all types of begonias and were stunning! Everyone received a small treasure begonia as a favor. The food was excellent and the service matched. Awards Chairman **Ann Salisbury** did her usual excellent job of presenting the annual awards. [Read all about these in a later article by Ann]. as follows:

Herbert P. Dyckman – Mary Bucholtz
Eva Kenworthy Gray – Dr. Bill Claybaugh
Gene Salisbury – Joyce & Doug Pridgen
Margaret Lee – Donna Marsheck
Rudolf Ziesenhenné – Paul Tsamtsis

The Scottish Begonia Society Trophy presented by last year's first winner, **Mike Flaherty**, to: **Leora & Charles Henthorne**. This is the Showing is Sharing award.

Antoon Hoefnagles brought a truly magnificent antique pitcher in the traditional Dutch blue and white from Holland for the auction. The bidding was fierce but **Maxine Zinman** went home with the gorgeous thing.

We all went to bed early after a glorious 5 days. Congratulations to Co-Chairs **Cheryl Lenert** and **Tom Keepin** and their hard working committees on a very successful and exciting convention. We went home inspired and looking forward to Florida in 2009.

Begonias: *The Great Adventure*

ABS Convention 2008

Winners

by Charles Jaros

186 ENTRIES, 35 EXHIBITORS

BEST IN SHOW

B. dregei var partita

Exhibitor – Tom Keepin

SWEEPSTAKES

Tom Keepin – 7 blue Ribbons

Millie & Ed Thompson Showing is Sharing Award

Charles & Leora Henthorne – 26 entries

HYBRID OF DISTINCTION

B. 'Metallic Mist'

Exhibitor - Dan Heims

Kay Tucker Award

B. 'Sophie Cecile'

Exhibitor -

Brenda Andrews

Best Species

B. hatacoa

var. *meisnerii*

Exhibitor -

Charles Jaros

Alice Clarke Award

Begonia Pillow

Exhibitor -

Mary Bucholtz

DIVISION TROPHIES

Division A – Cane-Like, Superba

Division AA – Cane-Like, All Others

Division B – Shrub-Like

Division D – Semperflorens

Division E – Rhizomatous

Division EE – Rhizomatous

Unusual Growth and/or Foliage

Division EEE – Rhizomatous

Distinctive Foliage

Division G – Tuberous Rooted

Division I – Contained Atmosphere

Single Begonia

Division J – Species

B. 'Sophie Cecile'

B. unknown cane

B. malachosticta

B. fischerii

B. 'Small Change'

B. 'Mr. Hunt'

B. longipetiolata

B. dregei var. partita

B. 'Millie Thompson'

B. hatacoa var.

Brenda Andrews

Dianna Wilkerson

Tom Keepin

Leigh Heard Boyer

Tom Keepin

Bill Claybaugh

Tom Keepin

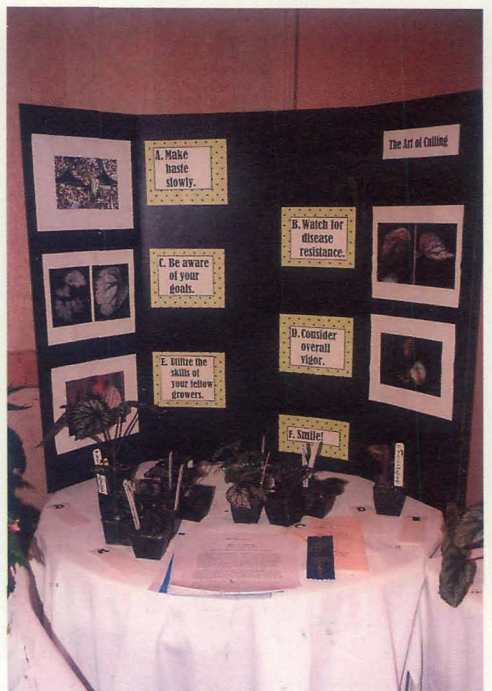
Tom Keepin

Charles & Leora

Henthorne

Charles Jaros

The Begonian



Large or small, *B. dregei* was a winner: below, Best of Show grown by Tom Keepin and top left, best traveling begonia grown by Doug and Joyce Pridden. Photos by Malcolm McCorquodale. There were a number of great exhibits, the one on culling top right illustrates the article by Dianna Wilkerson on page 165.. Photo by Mary Bucholtz.



Division K – “U” Numbers	meisnerii	
Division L – Hanging Containers	<i>B. U521</i>	Charles Jaros
	<i>B. ‘Tom Ment’</i>	Sara Chumley
Division M – Novice	<i>B. hispida var. cucullifera</i>	Jane Anderson
Division N – SWR Hybrids	<i>B. ‘Carmel Browne’</i>	Tom Keepin
Division Q – Traveling Begonias	<i>B. dregei var. partita ‘Spotted’</i>	Doug & Joyce Pridgen
Division S – Contained Atmosphere More than one variety	All Begonias	Charles & Leora Henthorne
Division T – Commercial Growers	<i>B. ‘Luxumberg’</i>	North Haven Gardens
Division U – New Introduction Commercial Grower	<i>B. ‘Metallic Mist’</i>	Dan Heims
Division W – Artistic Photographs Of Begonias	<i>B. brevirimosa ssp. exotica</i>	Johanna Zinn
Division X – Photographs Computer Enhanced	<i>B. bogneri</i>	Charles Henthorne
Division YY – Companion Plants	Red Selaginella	Charles Jaros
Division Z – Crafts	Begonia Pillow	Mary Bucholtz
Division ZZ – Special Exhibits	The Recycled Container	Charles McGough

Cultural Certificates

Brenda Andrews

B. ‘Sophie Cecile’ – 97 points

Carol Orozco

B. ‘River Nile’ – 95 points

Bill Claybaugh

B. ‘Mr. Hunt’ – 96 points

Leigh Heard Boyer

B. fischerii – 96 points

Doug & Joyce Pridgen

B. dregei var. partita ‘Spotted’ – 95 points

Dan Heims

B. ‘Metallic Mist’ – 96 points

Don Miller

Rieger Hybrid – 95 points

Charles Henthorne

B. bognerii – 96.33 points.

Dianna Wilkerson

Unknown Cane – 95.3 points

B. ‘Lady Iris’ – 95 points

Charles Jaros

B. ‘Worley’s Wonder’ – 96 points

B. hatacoa var. meisnerii – 98 points

B. U521 – 98 points

Jane Anderson

B. ‘Kit Kat’ – 96 points

B. hispida var. cucullifera – 97.6 points

B. ‘Fiji Island Sport’ – 97 points

Sara Chumley

B. ‘Tom Ment’ – 96.3 points

B. ‘Lois Burks’ – 97 points

B. ‘Catalina’ – 97.1 points

North Haven Gardens

- B.* 'Bobbie Price' – 95 points
- B.* 'Connee Boswell' – 95.3 points
- B.* 'Benitochiba' – 98 points
- B.* 'Luxemburg' – 98.5 points

Tom Keepin

- B.* 'Small Change' – 97 points
- B.* *longipetiolata* – 98 points
- B.* 'Courage' – 95 points

- B. dregei* var. *partita* – 99 points
- B.* 'Carmel Browne' – 95 points

Charles & Leora Henthorne

- B.* 'Millie Thompson' – 98.8 points
- B. amphioxus* – 97 points
- B. rajah x coriacea* – 95 points
- B.* 'De Elegens' – 95.66 points
- B.* 'Peridot' – 97.66 points
- B. bogneri* - 96 points

ABS Annual Awards

by Ann Salisbury

Herbert P. Dyckman Award

This year's winner is a member who has rendered long term and very outstanding service for the ABS above and beyond the normal duties of a member or officer. This person has been a member since 1969. She has handled a very important position on the board and has conducted the duties of a very delicate and time consuming job with efficiency and charm. She has given innumerable seminars and has won many awards for her plants and photography. It is my pleasure to present the Herbert P. Dyckman Award to our own "Mary Poppins", our Branch Relations Chairman:

Mary Bucholtz

Eva Kenworthy Gray Award

The Eva Kenworthy Gray Award is given to a member who has contributed original material toward helping the rank and file member further their study of begonias. We seldom appreciate the people who do so much for study of begonias. Our winner is one who should be recognized for the articles written for the Begonian and also for the latest project, listing the species. It is my pleasure to present the Eva Kenworthy Gray Award to our Conservation Director:

Bill Claybaugh

The Gene Salisbury Award

The Gene Salisbury Award is given to a grower or Growers who exemplifies the very best in cultural practice, and who brings to us by their careful work the new species and hybrids. These are growers who contribute to our society simply through their

excellence in growing begonias. This year's winner is a team that shows and grows together. What a team. They have many awards for their plants and have always shown the perfect plant. They share their growing expertise with others as well as sharing cuttings and seeds. One thing for sure is they love their begonias. My great pleasure is to present this award to:

Doug and Joyce Pridgen

The Rudy Ziesenhenné Award

This award is presented to a member who issues a publication on begonias that is both excellent in design and content and which contributes to our knowledge and appreciation of begonias. Importantly they also solicit and encourage the writings of others. This year's winner is a very talented writer and has produced a leaflet that has been unusual in that it had color photos long before any others. This newsletter stand out in that it teaches as well as informs. It is my pleasure to announce the winner of this year's award is editor of the *Begonia Leaf*, newsletter of the Sacramento Branch.:

Paul Tsamtsis

The Tim O'Reilly Award

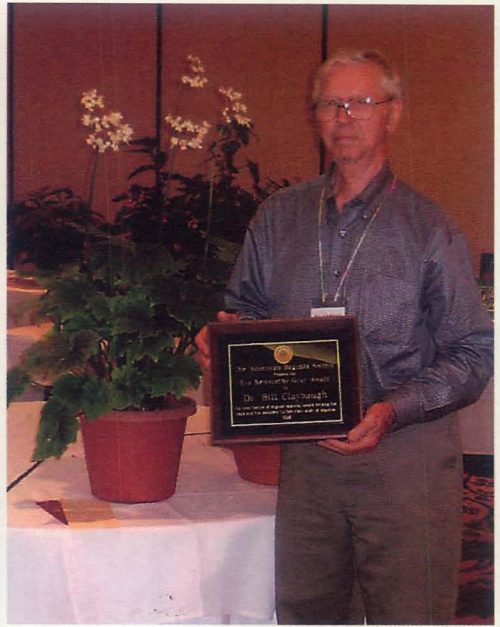
The Tim O'Reilly Award is given to a spouse who contributes so much to our society and does not grow begonias. This year's winner is on the quiet side. Not many words are spoken as he goes around doing all the odd jobs: Moving plants; cleaning pots, making numerous trips to and from plant shows and sales. He never complains about the duties bestowed upon him. He also has the time to be our ABS Secretary:

Richard Macnair

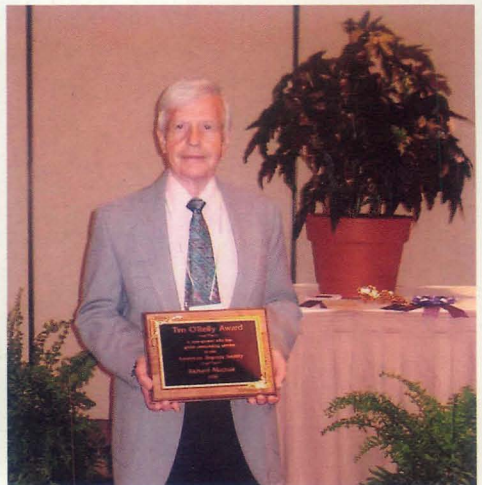
Marge Lee Award

The last, but not least is the Marge Lee Awards. This award is given to a person who contributes something of a spiritual value toward cementing goodwill and harmony among members. This year's winner is a member of good standing and has not been a member for many years, but when she joined, she became a go-getter, took over the membership for the society and worked wonders. She also has edited the SWR newsletter. I can never remember this person saying I can't, since becoming a member of ABS. She has brought many people together, smoothed out troubled waters and brought good will and harmony to any situation with a smile and soft spoken work. It is with great pleasure to present the Marge Lee Award to:

Donna Marsheck



Receiving their awards, we see clockwise from top left, **Mary Bucholtz**, **Bill Claybaugh**, **Richard Macnair**, and **Joyce and Doug Pridgen**. Other recipients were unable to attend. At the bottom of the photo of Doug and Joyce we see an ewer donated by **Anton Hofnagels** from the Netherlands. This ewer was later auctioned off for a healthy sum for the convention. It is more than 100 years old, covered with begonias, very lovely, and wanted by everyone!



***Begonia pengii* (sect. *Coelocentrum*,
Begoniaceae), a new species from limestone
areas in Guangxi, China**

**Shin-Ming KU¹, Yoshiko KONO¹, and Van LIU², *J Herbarium
(HAST), Research Center for Biodiversity, Academia Sinica,
Nangang, Taipei 115, Taiwan***

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Region and the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Gui/in 541006,
China**

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ABSTRACT. *Begonia pengii*, a new species from Guangxi Zhuangzu Autonomous Region, China, is here described and illustrated. Its somatic chromosome number ($2n = 30$) and karyotype are reported. *Begonia pengii* belongs to sect. *Coelocentrum* and somewhat resembles *B. variifolia* Y. M. Shui & W. H. Chen, from which it differs by its much larger size, leaves (11-)15-27 x (6-)8-15 cm, narrowly ovate, peduncle 17-37 cm; anther sacs red margined; and capsules 1.8-2.5 cm long. Like most members of sect. *Coelocentrum*, *B. pengii* is an attractive species and is rare, known only from one steep limestone hill in western Guangxi.

Keywords: *Begonia uochengensis*; *Begonia pengii*; *Begonia picturata*; *Begonia* sect. *Coelocentrum*; *Begonia variifolia*; Begoniaceae; China; Chromosome number; Guangxi; Karyotype; Limestone flora; New species; Rare species.

Note by Jack Golding

The naming of *Begonia pengii* by his colleagues is a well deserved honor for all his past and continuing work with *Begonia*.

I first encountered his name in a notice in the Missouri Botanical Garden Bulletin, March-April 1989, advising that a new *Begonia* species from Taiwan had been named for Dr. Peter H. Raven by his former doctoral student Dr. Ching-I Peng. When I visited the Garden on November 4, 1989, I was shown that new *Begonia ravenii* Ching-I Peng & Yung-Kuan Chen and its citation in Bot. Bull. Academia Sinica 29:217-222, pls 1-4, 1988.

This was the first of his 23 publications by Ching-I Peng and his associates from 1988 to 2008. In these, 30 new *Begonia* were described and named. He was also a coauthor with Cuizhi Gu & Nicholas J. Turland, of The Flora of China 13, *Begoniaceae*: 1-207. 2007.

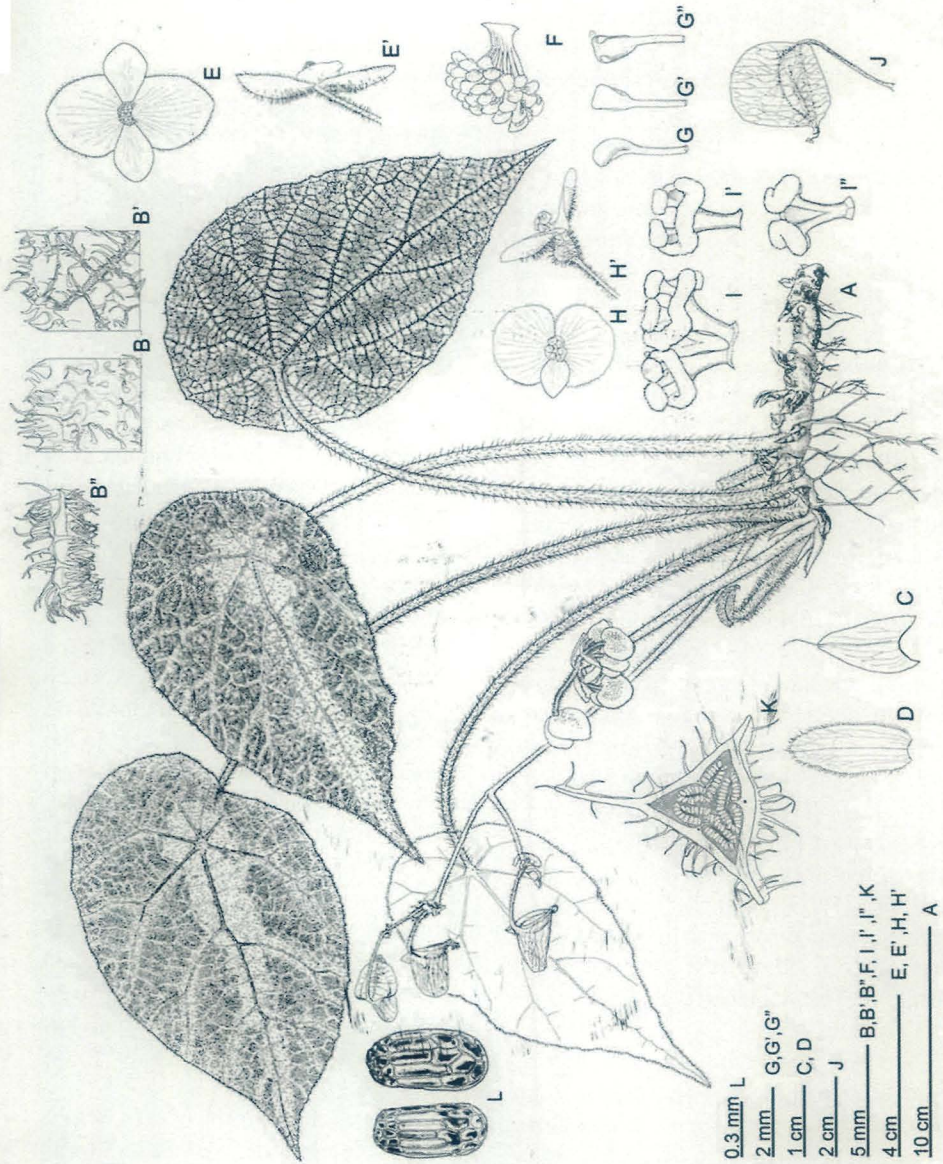


Figure 1. *Begonia pengii* S. M. Ku & Yan Liu. A, Habit; B, Portion of leaf, adaxial surface, showing margin and indumentum, B', abaxial surface, B'', cross section; C, Stipule; D, Bract; E, Staminate flower, face view, E', side view; F, Androecium; G, G', G'', Stamens; H, Carpellate flower, face view, H', side view; I, I', I'', Style and stigma; J, Dry capsule; K, Capsule, cross section; L, Seeds. All but A, J from Peng et al. 20724 (HAST); A, J from Peng et al. 21070 (HAST).

Proceedings Of Board Meeting

American Begonia Society

May 17, 2008, Houston, Texas

President **Mary Sakamoto** opened the meeting with a quorum of 28 board member votes present. **R. L. Holley** read the Aims and Purposes of the Society.

The proceedings of the meeting on September 8, 2007, were approved as distributed and published in the *Begonian* and are now classified as minutes.

Treasurer **Carol Notaras** presented the financial statement for the period August 1, 2007 to April 30, 2008. The general fund had a beginning balance of \$12,702.28, income of \$56,155.35, disbursement of \$50,438.93 leaving an ending balance of \$18,418.70. The combined *Begonian* mailing, seed fund and general fund checking accounts had a beginning balance of \$13,458.87 and ending balance of \$18,656.58. Henceforth, the *Begonian* mailing account will be closed because foreign mailing that it covered will be handled differently.^o The combined savings accounts had a beginning balance of \$60,972.21 and ending balance of \$63,900.53. Combined checking and savings totals were \$74,431.08 beginning and \$82,559.11 ending.^o The increase in ending balance was due in part to Convention 2007. Profit from that was about \$20,000. The statement was accepted for audit review.

Officer and Chairman Reports

President Sakamoto announced that the Society now has directors and officers insurance to protect officers and committee chairs from possible lawsuits.

Past President **Janet Brown** announced that DVD #2 containing Bego-

nians from 1958 to 1978 is now available from the bookstore or the website for \$50.^o She urged members to buy them.^o If you buy both DVD #1 and #2 together there is a price reduction.

Convention Chair **Cheryl Lenert** thanked everyone for coming to Houston.

The 2008 Convention Show had about 230 entries by 36 exhibitors.

Treasurer **Carol Notaras** commented that the late Ben Franklin whose bequest to ABS was received last year would have been pleased that a portion of his bequest was used for the very successful website. She also stated the hope that other members would consider ABS in their wills.

Secretary **Richard Macnair** read the executive board recommendation for ABS to make an effort to simplify the registration form for new *Begonia* introductions. The board voted unanimously to do this.

Charles Jaros invited all interested to come to the 2009 Convention, April 28 to May 3, in West Palm Beach, Florida. A new procedure is planned for entry to the plant sale. Your place in line will depend on how soon you send in your registration. Details will be on the website.

A motion to assign responsibility for horticultural classification of new *Begonia* introductions to the Entries and Classification Chair carried.

Awards Chair **Ann Salisbury** thanked everyone who nominated a candidate for an award. Winners are to be announced at the banquet.

Branch Relations Chair **Mary Bucholtz** reported that ABS has 35 local branches and one regional branch. She is continuing to work with the Rhode Island group to form a new branch there. She has sent information on branch formation to contacts in Kansas (Saint Louis area), Michigan and Tennessee and has had a

favorable response from Kansas but none yet from the others. She is trying to help the Doug Frost Branch increase their membership by providing information.

Nomenclature Director **Gene Salisbury** reported four new Begonia registrations in 2007, three by **Freda Holley** and one by **Kingsley Langenberg**.

Past President Janet Brown reported that the newly designed website is very successful. The number of visits to the site is in the multiple thousands from all over the world. She thanked **Jesse James** for the design work and **Julie Vanderwilt** for extensive work on the content. She advised all branches to contact Julie to place their current officers, meeting schedules and other activities on the website. She also urged everyone to take a look at it because there are many things there including pictures, a question and answer forum, stuff to buy and many others. The effort Julie has put into the website prompted Janet to move that we establish a stipend for the Internet Editor/Webmaster. This motion was tabled for study and a vote at the September meeting.

Membership now stands at about 872 according to an unofficial report by Ann Salisbury. A detailed report on the membership situation is attached to these proceedings. The report explains how complicated the chairman's job has become. Freda Holley made a motion to consider simplifying the membership chairman's job by going back to the old method of collecting dues on a staggered basis throughout the year and to appoint a committee to study the problem to determine the best simplified method to bring to a vote at the September meeting. The motion carried with 23 in favor and 5 opposed.

Unidentified Numbers Project Co-Director Mary Bucholtz presented a written report stating that new numbers have recently been assigned to Rekha Morris

and Mary Sizemore. The complete report is attached to these proceedings because it contains much detail and instruction for contributors.

Grant Committee Chair **Johanna Zinn** reported two requests for grants, one from **Rekha Morris** to collect Begonia in Mexico and India and one from **Hieu Nguyen** to collect in Viet Nam. The committee recommended that \$2000 be granted to Rekha for Mexico and India and \$1000 be granted to Hieu for Viet Nam. A motion to that effect carried.

An auction of plants grown and provided by Rekha Morris was held after the seminars. The auction brought in a total of \$882. Rekha requested that this money go to the conservation fund.

Howard Berg reported that numerous boxes of files including loose papers and slides were obtained from **Millie Thompson's** family after her death. These files are being sorted into folders and the slides digitized for recording on CD's. Also, plans are being considered to have the copyright for Begonias, The Complete Reference Guide transferred to the ABS so that we might be able to publish a second edition.

President Sakamoto announced that a privacy policy statement was included in the last Begonian as a beginning and is subject to revision as necessary. If there are no changes forthcoming the statement will stand approved by general consensus.^o

Carol Notaras invited all members to the Annual Business Meeting in San Francisco, September 4-6, 2008. The meeting will be at 3 pm on Friday, September 4. She announced enticing and exciting details of possible side trips and a Greek dinner at her house. Details will be on the website.

Holiday Greetings Chair **Wanda Macnair** announced the 2008 donation program for the Begonian. A letter kick-

ing off the program is attached to these proceedings and all branches and individuals are urged to respond by September 1, 2008. The sum of \$479 was contributed at the convention in Houston.

Branch Relations Director **Mary Bucholtz** proposed that the *Branch Rela-*

tions Newsletter be revived and published as in the past. A motion to that effect carried.

Respectfully Submitted,
Richard Macnair, Secretary

Formalization of Begonia Seed Exchange Between ABS and Bali Botanical Garden

by W. Scott Hoover, Founding Director/Director of Research, New England Tropical Conservatory; Jim Hunter; and Gene Salisbury

For nearly 10 years, Bali Botanical Garden (BG) has been developing its begonia collection, both of species and hybrids. The circumstances leading to Bali BG becoming a world collection of begonia is attributed to a number of factors: 1. **Dr. Harry Wiriadinata, Deden Girmansyah**, Bogor Herbarium, and **Jim Hunter** and myself of NETC have been undertaking botanical exploration for *Begonia* since 1995. 2. **Dr. Irawati**, Director, Bogor Botanical Garden, of which Bali BG is a part, determined Bali would be the garden most suitable for developing a collection of begonias for Indonesia. 3. **Dr. Hartutiningsih Siregar** (Tuti), wife of Bali BG Director **Dr. Mustaid Siregar**, took a special interest in developing the begonia collection. 4. Dr. Wiriadinata had been developing his own personal garden at his home in Bogor, where his wife has now become an excellent growing, developing propagation techniques on cane begonias from leaves, and sharing cuttings and seed with Tuti, thus helping build the Bali BG collection numbering about 180 different begonias with about 75 being species.

An objective of the Bali BG is to house the world's largest collection of begonia, and it is well on its way. Only a handful of other botanic gardens rival

Bali's collection in terms of the number of species and hybrids. To name a few of which I am aware: Montreal Botanic Garden, Canada; Edinburgh Botanic Garden, Scotland; and Taiwan Botanic Garden, Taiwan. Each has collections that are larger or about the same size as Bali BG. (Clarification of the actual size of these collections and any others with which I may not be familiar will be appreciated.) As we ABS members are all to well aware, our fine American collections are mere skeletons of their former grandness including the Thompson Collection and subsequent New York Botanic Garden, Barkley Collection, San Antonio BG, and the Ziesenhenné collection. Let's hope the future will bring some American public garden into the forefront of a fine begonia collection perhaps with funding through private philanthropy. Nonetheless, it is only appropriate that Indonesia's Bali BG become the world's largest collection since this country has the second largest biodiversity in the world, exceeded only by Brazil, and Indonesia may, with greater exploration of West New Guinea, Kalimantan, Sumatra, and Sulawesi, ultimately may have more species of begonia than Brazil, due to the vast elevational variation found among these large islands, with

endemism wide spread in the genus along elevational gradients.

For the last several years, **Gene** and **Ann Salisbury** have been generously donating seed of different species of begonia to Bali BG which I would transport to the garden while in Indonesia. A wonderful article by Tuti in the *Begonian* reported on the germination of the first batch of seed. A recent new hybrid crossed by Tuti should soon appear in the *Begonian* named B. 'Tuti Siregar', and not to steal any thunder, it is a cross between *B. listada* and *B. acetosa*. I've never seen this hybrid before; it is quite exquisite and should make a good plant in member's collections. Since her first batch of seed was germinated, 2 more batches, donated by Gene and Ann, have been delivered to Bali BG, the second in November 2007 and the third in March 2008. With delivery of the March collection I have now received the first collection of begonia seed from Bali BG for the ABS which will be sent to Gene and Ann upon my return to the US in early May, along with CD's portraying Bali BG. This established the formal "Begonia seed exchange between Bali BG and the ABS.

This first batch of seed for the ABS contains 5 different common species to cultivation which is likely of importance to the ABS Seed Fund since these represent easy to grow species for new members and include *B. heracleifolia*, *B. metallica*, *B. acetosa*, *B. 'Argento Guttata'*, and *B. cucullata*. Two packages are of special interest. They are from wild species recently introduced to cultivation at Bali BG Conservation Center for *Begonia*, and include the following: *B. sychnantha* from Jambi Province, Sumatra and another begonia species.

ABS members are to be reminded that such native species are only to be used for research, education and exhibition purposes in order to protect the Intellectual

Property Rights of the country of origin, in this case Indonesia and as the ABS board and NETC agreed several years ago, commercialization of native species of *Begonia* from Indonesia is a violation of NETC's contract agreement with the Government of Indonesia.

The "Conservation Collection" at Bali BG is where the native Indonesian species are growing and thus, for the first time, Tuti has been able to collect seed and share it with ABS. This "Conservation Collection" is estimated to include about 20 native species and judging from Bali BG horticultural capability, it won't be long before this collection becomes large. She has expressed to me the difficulty in getting these newly cultivated species to produce viable seed, if any at all; the plants themselves growing vigorously, but often not flowering or just producing male or just female flowers. I suggested it is because the plants are adapting to cultivation and will need time to adjust. A further recommendation is she begin a mass propagation of these native species that are now large enough to take cuttings, either stem or leaf, depending on the species. Any advise from ABS members will be helpful. Once Tuti propagates her new wild species from the "Conservation Collection," she will be able to entirely fill a 4 x 4 m. greenhouse with natives, thus expanding the collection for a second time.

NETC's sponsored Indonesian Botanical Exploration and Taxonomy Project: Capacity Building with Bogor Herbarium (IBETP) is set to collect in SE Sulawesi. The expedition will be lead by Dr. Wiriadinata and Deden Girmansyah, who expect to collect about 5-6 species of begonia, all likely new to cultivation and some to science. A Bali BG staff member will be collecting live plant materials for Bali BG, including begonia seed which can eventually be shared with ABS through the

Seed Exchange Program. Other researchers like Dr. **Mark Hughes** and his students from Singapore BG and the University of Edinburgh are contributing wild begonia germplasm to Bali BG also.

In so far as the Salisbury's are the "ABS point people" for the Seed Exchange Program with Bali BG, I ask if ABS members will collect seed from their private collections and send this seed to the Salisbury's who in turn will make the packages up for me to take to Bali. Please remember, the growing conditions at Bali BG are nearly ideal, so a hard to grow species in an ABS collection in the U.S. could end up being easy to grow at Bali, thus resulting in much more seed for the ABS in the long run for some difficult to grow species.

I most appreciate help from ABS member with contributing species seed to Bali BG in order to help them become the "World Center for *Begonia*." So we can all rest more peacefully, Dr. Irawati has assured me, to the best of her ability, that the begonias are here to stay at Bali BG and that whoever may in the future take over directorship of the garden after Siregar, will be informed that the begonias one of the priority collections. It should be mentioned that the former President of Indonesia, **Megawati SukarnoPutri**, is an avid fan of begonias. In February 2008 she hosted a gathering of 26 Ambassadors to Indonesia at Bali BG for the ceremonial planting of the new "Ambassadors Garden." This distinguished group was introduced, of course, to the vast begonia collection at her garden.

I take this opportunity to thank the ABS, its many branches and members, and private individuals who, over the last 35 years, have financially supported my work. I also appreciate the patience of the ABS over the last few years, when many members likely wondered if anything

would ever come from this work that seemed so "long ago and far away." This Seed Exchange Program I hope puts your mind at rest, and may we continue our efforts together to see what promise the future will bring. Thank you.

IN THE MAILBOX

by Greg Sytch, Horticultural Correspondent

This insert of "In The Mailbox" will be a little different. It is about how we can help expand A.B.S. After reading several newsletters regarding business meetings, I believe we all need to make a push for membership.

Recent years has seen some of our pioneers pass on, while others have taken on a reduced capacity. There are many more begoniacs out there as evidenced by eBay, shows and attendance. I sell every summer at the University of South Florida's Tropical Plant Festival in Tampa, having a booth of begonias I have raised in my "spare" time. I always sell more than 75% of the begonias I bring, and I load a UHaul! So, why does membership struggle?

First, there is competition. With the internet advancing communication, plant fanatics now have connections to all kinds of resources never seen before. How do you spread the wealth when time is so limited? Having been Horticultural Correspondent for A.B.S. for about a decade now, I receive questions, emails and calls from all over - so the interest is there.

Second, it is that time limited thing again. So many of us struggle to find the time, and now pay the cost of gas, that getting there is an issue. The internet is a wonderful resource, and **Julie Vanderwilt**

has done a superb job on our website. Check it out at www.begonias.org.

Some suggestions (and I do these myself) include:

- 1) Include on flyers the address of the internet webpage. Direct people to that site for information rather than tell them.
- 2) Continue to support growers. Getting begonias out there is important.
- 3) Support the Yahoo group on begonias. It is a world of its own, and there are excellent photos to boot.
- 4) If you attend other plant group meetings, make a few copies of a flyer that includes the website and give them out. Many of

my customers at the plant sales grow other types of plants, so encourage them to get involved through the website.

- 5) Bring old issues of *The Begonian*, and distribute them if you are done with them.

These are but a few ways to spread the word of begonias, A.B.S., and its resources. As always, feel free to send me any questions! Good Growing - Greg 727-841-9618 gstyth@cs.com (etc etc)

Good ideas from Greg and remember you can duplicate the "Seven Reasons" flyer for distribution. Another great resource that I often duplicate to give to those to whom I give plants or to groups when I speak is Dorothy Patrick's little booklet Tips for Begonia Beginners.



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Begonias are Forever

by Freda Holley

Sure, petunias, zinnas, even roses, are unquestionably beautiful, but alas I find all to be transitory, here for a season or two and then gone. I like plants that can be my friends, that grow old along with me. I have to admit that longevity is one of their greatest attractions for me and I gravitate to those that persist year after year. I delight in hearing tales about someone's begonia that was passed along to them from their grandmother and is growing still, and I love to see begonias growing on front porches in the backwoods that I know were never bought, but surely passed along.

First favorites are those where I can maintain my original plant, and I also admit that those where I have to do the least pruning, pinching, maintaining are easily at the top of my list. I have a lugged a *B. 'Sophie Cecile'* with me across all those state lines until it is now so large and with so many stems that it rivals bamboo. You know from reading **Bill Claybaugh's** article here that it rarely blooms for us in the South, but since it gives me all this with practically no care and with countless new ones passed along, it will stay with me. My own *B. 'Taylor Anne'*, 'Faint Heart', and 'Triplet' (hearty triplets born of a fling between *B. aconitifolia* and *B. maculata* var. *maculata* [*B. U076*, a gift from **Mary Bucholtz**] one cold winter in the Ozarks) now rival 'Sophie' in size and are also carefree. They too are sparse of bloom. Friends always have a history, you know. I love those big canes and their kindred thick stems, in part, because they do seem to live forever and grow and grow.

I haven't found many rhizomatous that I can count on in this way, but there are a few that are beginning to join my

roster of long time friends. *B. 'Selph's Mahogany'* and *B. sericoneura*, perhaps because of their thick upright stems and deeper roots are prime among these. There is also *B. U331* from seed given to me by **Thelma O'Reilly**. It is said to be another form of the oh so variable *B. sericoneura* and always a bright and healthy green thriving in the heat. And at least others such as *B. 'Erythrophylla'*, *B. 'Ricinifolia'* and *B. mazaе* have been around so long and propagate so easily that I feel safe in developing affection for them without the fear of losing their friendship.

Anyway, when I pass along a begonia, I invariably tell the recipient that this begonia can be around for a very long while (with some pride in the begonia family, I admit), citing the age of those such as *B. 'Lucerne'* (116 years, 1892) and *B. 'Erythrophylla'* (163 years, 1845). They are always impressed.

When I go out to the garden in the early morning it's good to have some solid old friends with whom to share my coffee hour. They invariably cheer me up with their beautiful leaves and occasional blooms, and rarely do they complain except about the lack of rain and I can certainly empathize with that!

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Talk about color? Everyone was taken with Charles and Leora Henthorne's B. 'Millie Thompson' and equally beautiful was a companion, E. 'Cleopatra'. Both photos were by Charles Henthorne who also won ribbons in the photography division.



PREPARING FOR AN ABS CONVENTION

By Charles Henthorne

We are frequently asked how we prepare for a Convention as we always have many terrariums that we enter in the competitive section of the show.

We always look forward to entering some of our more beautiful and unusual plants, and it is a great joy when others have a chance to see what can be grown in a terrarium. For years we have hoped that more exhibitors would take the plunge and start showing what they are growing. This past show featured several others, who decided to show some of their prized plants.

In preparation for the show this past May, we started in Jan. to select which plants to consider for the show. We did this by looking closely at each plant, for growth, color, fullness of shape and maturity of the plant. At the same time we looked at the growing medium to make sure that it was fresh and clean of any dropped leaves or old blooms. Once we made the initial selections we started to fertilize, and evaluate lighting conditions, and temperature of the probable show plants. As the months progress toward the show date, we watched carefully and those plants which needed repotting, we tried to repot at least 4-6 weeks before the actual show. We also looked again at all of our initial selections to verify that we would indeed be able to show the plants.

At about 3-4 weeks we started to do final preparations for the show. Those plants which needed some leaves taken away from the sides of the terrarium, for judging reasons, were trimmed if possible. At this point I must say that it is nearly impossible to take leaves away from

some plants which are in terrariums, for it would ruin the symmetry of the plant or the basic growth pattern of the plant. Even in these instances we try to have as few leaves as possible touching the sides of the terrarium. With this in mind I might also mention that leaves should not be touching the top of the terrarium. If they do and they cannot be removed before the show, then it is necessary to replant into a larger container. It is also necessary to know the general growth patterns of the plant, so as not to show a plant that is either suffering from too much light or not enough light. Also it is important to watch the watering of the plant, so as not to overwater or underwater and stress a plant that has been nurtured for showing.

The last job we have before loading up our treasured plants is to check the containers for cleanliness, size, damage, and overall appearance for the show. This is a very important part of grooming and showing in a competitive show. Many times we have had to remove a plant from our list of show plants because of either a damaged or inappropriate container. It is important to consider the container and how it adds to, or takes away from the appearance of a plant. Once we have made the final decision as to which plants are going to a show, we get them all into one area 1-2 days before the show so that we can make sure we have all of them together, to cut down on the chance that one of our prized plants will be left at home.

The day we leave for a show we start the loading process into our van. We try to load the plants and leave for the show in the early morning hours, so that the sun and heat will not cause damage to the

plants in transit. As we load we make a final inspection of the plants to make sure that everything is ok with the plant. Very rarely do we have to remove one from travel at this point, but it does happen. One of the very important things to do is to remove excessive moisture that has collected on the container before loading for travel. Sometimes, if condensed moisture drops on the leaves, the added heat will cause damage to the leaf where the dropped water has landed. So we always wipe this condensed moisture away from the containers as we load.

We load the first layer into the van and then place cardboard down and put another layer of containers on top then another layer of cardboard and a final layer of plants. Try as we might to reduce or keep our show numbers down we always have many more plants than we expect to show. It is almost impossible for Leora and I to cull out plants that we have grown. Many of them are rare, difficult to grow, or just plain beautiful. We want others to see them and be able to enjoy them also. The only regrets we have are that we cannot find large large containers for use as terrariums for some of our very large plants.

We are presently using large terrarium bubbles that are well over 40 years old that a past member, **Ruth Wills**, used

for years. These are no longer available at the retail level and we consider it a very poor loss for the terrarium grower, as we have found nothing to replace them. They are getting older many are cracked and the material has yellowed on some of them. For this reason we have decided to limit our showing of the larger plants in the future. Such a shame!

Each year we are able to participate in a convention is always an exciting time for us. We look forward to seeing old friends and making new. We also look forward to seeing what begonias everyone else from around the nation is growing. The companionship of fellow begoniacs is always something that we feel adds to our own growth and our own knowledge of begonias. We look forward to the competition, and we were excited to see a few new exhibitors in the terrarium class this year. We look forward to the banquet where people are recognized for their achievements. We look forward to getting new plants for our ever growing collection. We look forward to sharing our terrarium plants in the form of cuttings or small plants that we always try to donate to the plant sale.

Regarding the plant sale this past year: It was terrific, with many new plants, as well as old favorites available to be added to the collectors repertoire of



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plants. Maybe next year we will see more terrarium entries. I know, with the addition of new plants, that there will be many, many entries next year, of plants that have never been shown before. I can only say that the convention of 2008 will go down in our memory as one of the great ones. The food was excellent.

The competition was great. The ABS and SWR meetings were informative. The tours were absolutely wonderful, with many great comments heard concerning

how great they were planned. But the very best thing of all was seeing everyone and renewing old acquaintances and making new. All in all a wonderful experience. It is one that everyone should experience as many times as possible. If you were not able to make this year's convention in Houston, hopefully you will be able to attend in the year 2009. I can guarantee it will be an experience of a lifetime, as each year seems to get better. See you there?

Houston Convention 2008

Anyone who has ever put on a convention knows that it "takes a village" and we sincerely want to thank everyone who did their part to make this convention a success!

Those in the trenches on the local level were fantastic in their spirit of hard work and cooperation. We can't say enough about the team spirit that exists here in Houston.

To all of you in the American Begonia Society who sponsored and supported us with your donations, your time and your good wishes--we thank you.

Our organization is made up of amazing people who have so much to teach and share and it is always gratifying to have the opportunity to experience the excitement. Thank you to each and every one of you who took part in the Houston experience.

Cheryl Lenert and Tom Keepin

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We are no longer shipping plants, but our plants are now available from Portland Nursery (Division Street store) in Portland, Oregon.

Begonia Books:

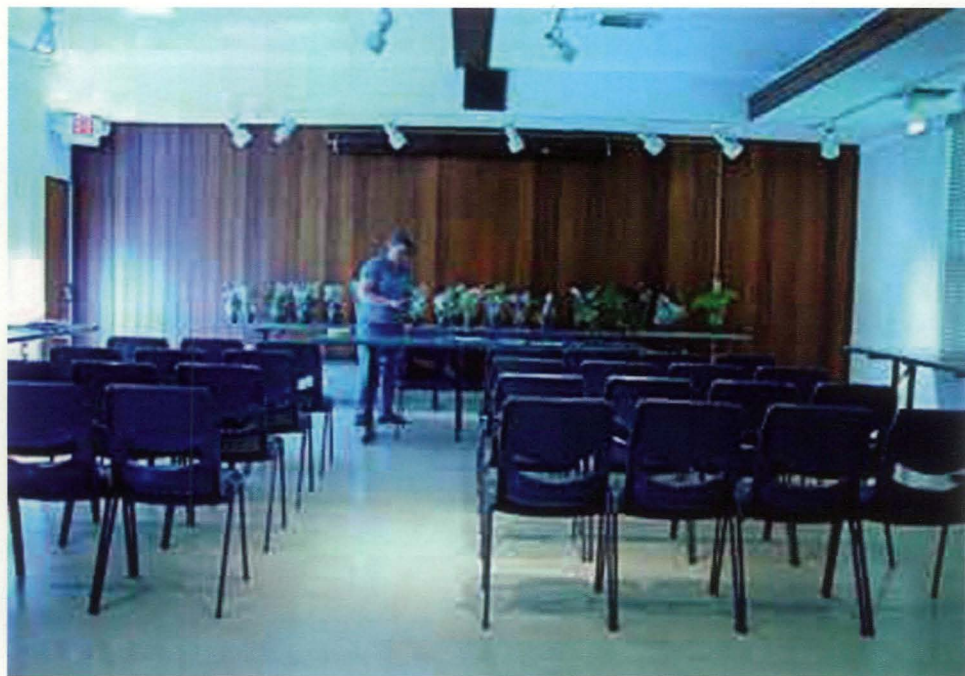
**Know Your Begonias* by Jack Krempin --\$47.

**Growing Begonias* by Peter Sharp -- \$29.50
(book prices include U.S. shipping. International ship is extra.)

*Begonias *Gesneriads *Tropicals



Here's the beautiful *B. 'Bertha'*, a **Tim Anderson** hybrid, photographed by **Doris Happell**, see another beautiful sample of the begonias we may be seeing in Florida in 2009 on page 194. Below, we see **Linda Tamblin** arranging auction plants for the meeting of begonia lovers in Kansas City. Photo by **Gene Salisbury**.



Patio Begonias

by *Doris Happel*

My friend, **Suellen Solodar**, says it's all my fault. She has an addiction, and I was the one who got her hooked. We first met when Suellen stopped by my begonia booth at the Mounts Botanical Garden plant sale in November 2006. My sales pitch was so persuasive that she went home with some plants and a little brochure for our local branch.

I told her if she joined, she could attend our holiday party and play Begonia Bingo. Oh, yeah, I know all the enticements. Suellen came, she joined, and she went home with more plants. Then comes January, our annual auction. She really helped our local bank account, bidding on the gorgeous plants brought by **Charles Jaros** from Harmony Foliage. In February there was a garden tour to see how others grow begonias. March and April are the months when we have propagation parties. Suellen attended and went home with trays of cuttings. She brought a leaf cutting to the next meeting, impatiently asking *when* was it going to *do* something? A little tug told me it was well rooted. I counseled patience; soon there would be little leaves. Before you know it, she was cossetting her baby begonias.

The pictures show how suc-

cessful a beginner can be. Suellen grows many of her plants inside her screened pool enclosure. This is ideal because the plants can be moved around to the appropriate light levels in each season. Most of them thrive all winter in the sun, which is slightly reduced by the screen. She travels with her husband for part of the summer, and the potted begonias live under the shrubs then, where a sprinkler system reaches them. Suellen is gradually adding plants to the landscape in her relatively small garden. Suddenly every plant is looked at with this test: "Can I replace that plant with a begonia?" Nothing is safe.

You too can have some of the same beautiful plants like Suellen's if you attend the ABS Convention in May 2009.

Continued from page 193.

membership flyers in the information kiosk in the lobby.

Another recruiting meeting is in the planning stage for late summer or early fall. Anyone in the Society in the Kansas or Missouri area who is interested in helping write the charter, plan meetings or would like to be informed of upcoming events should contact Linda Tamblyn at info@recyclededen.com or 913/ 231-1020.

CLAYTON M. KELLY SEED FUND LISTING

The Margaret Lee Branch, San Diego County, CA

The seed fund is a service to members only. It is a privilege of your membership.

Contributions of seed from the membership make the Seed Fund more diverse. Please self pollinate your species begonias, collect the seeds and send them to the seed fund. We depend on your contributions. The Seed Fund would like to thank: **Beatrice Huckriede, Rekha Morris, Jacky Duruisseau, Barry and Dot Mann** for their seed contributions. Seed featured this issue:

B. boliviensis
B. cinnabarina
B. gehrtii
B. kenworthyae
B. manicata
B. mariti
B. nelumbiifolia
B. polygonata

Remember you can always request seed for past listings. The Jan/Feb issue lists all species we have available at the beginning of the year. If you have seed not listed, please send us some to share with others.

192

Packets of seeds of species and U numbers are \$1.50. All packets of cultivars (including open pollinated) seeds are 50¢ per packet. Very rare seeds and newly collected seeds will be \$2.00 or more per packet. California residents please add 7.75 % sales tax. All orders must be accompanied by check or money order, payable in US funds ONLY, to The Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund.

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Canada only: 1-12 packets, \$1.10; 13-24, \$1.46; 25-36, \$1.82; 37-48 (2 cans) \$2.35; 49-60, \$2.71.

The Begonian

Mexico only: 1-12 packets, \$1.15; 13-24, \$1.51; 25-36, \$1.87; 37-48 (2 cans), \$2.50; 49-60, \$2.81.

All other international mail: 1-12 packets, \$1.85; 13-24, \$2.68; 25-36, \$3.68; 37-48, \$4.68; 49-60, \$5.68.

DISCLAIMER: The seeds distributed by the seed fund are identified as received from the donors. The species

names (in italics) reported here are correct based on the latest information from **BEGONIACEAE**, Ed. 2; Golding, and Wasshausen. Hybrid names are made consistent with the "ABS Check List of Begonia Hybrids" edited by Howard Berg dated 9/13/2005.

Looking for Begoniacs in Kansas City

by Linda Tamblin

"I joined a couple of other garden clubs in Kansas City but it was really begonias I wanted to study." – **Al Schneider**, new member of ABS

That was a common sentiment expressed at the June 14 meeting held at Loose Park Garden Center, KCMO for those interested in forming a Begonia club here. The meeting was informal with a short presentation by **Gene Salisbury** followed by lots of questions for him about growing begonias. Gene also provided many gorgeous plants that were raffled off to cover the cost of the room. The Johnson County Community College Horticultural greenhouse donated some lovely cuttings that **Susan Grose** brought to the meeting. Other participants came with plants and

cuttings they wanted identified or wished to share. Everyone went home with new plants to encourage their interest. Of course, it's always a good time when we walk out the door with new plants.

While it was a busy weekend in Kansas City 15 people were able to attend. Four of them signed up for the ABS up on the spot – **Susan Grose**, **Al Schneider**, **Nancy Moerer** and **Marion C. Courtney**. A big welcome to all of them. Several people, who were unable to attend but expressed interest, will be informed of our progress as well as encouraged to join the ABS. Since the Loose Park Garden Center is a premier meeting spot for most of the garden clubs in KC we left ABS

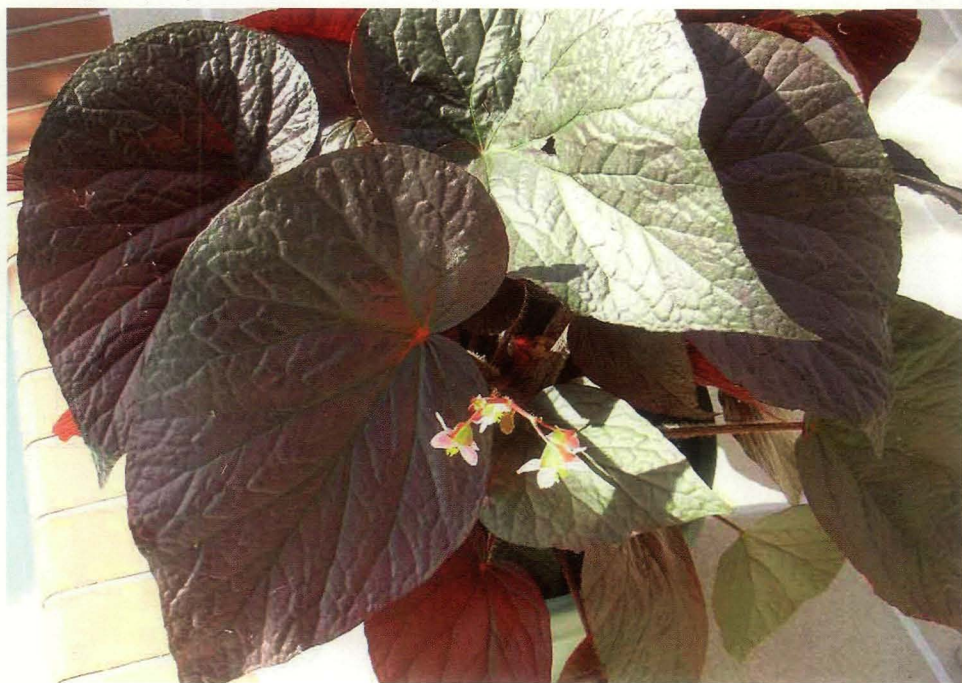
Continued on page 191.



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Above is **Bill Claybaugh's** photo of an elusive bloom on B. 'Sophie Cecle.' Below is **Doris Happell's** photo of B. U508, typical of the new species we are likely to see in Florida in 2009. **Charles Jaros** says this is becoming one of his favorites [and th editor's too].



Conservation Comments by Bill Claybaugh Conservation Chairman, ABS

Sophie Cecile - in bloom

I have been growing the cultivar *B. 'Sophie Cecile'* for over six years and this summer, for the first time, it bloomed. Needless to say, I was excited. The plant has always been a favorite of mine because it is a vigorous grower and has very attractive dark-green, silver-splashed, deeply lobed leaves. The plant stands out in any collection for its beauty. The one frustration has been its lack of blooms.

After seeing the blooms, I e-mailed several members to check on their experience with this plant. Most said they had seen the plant bloom, but not often. Next I checked the *Begonian* to see what could be found and located two good articles. The first was comments from the *Begonian* editor, **Freda Holley**, Vol. 69, March/April 2002 page 60, where she notes the parentage as a cross of *B. 'Lenore Olivier'* x *B. aconitifolia* (syn. *B. sceptrum*) by **Belva Kusler** in 1959. In a parallel article, **Mildred Swyka** noted that a "sister" plant, *B. 'Nora Hansen'*, blooms easily whereas "I cannot get (*Sophie Cecile*) to bloom even in strong light." She did however acknowledge that she had heard of some growers who had got *B. 'Sophie Cecile'* to bloom when in the ground.

Going back farther into the literature I found an article by **B. N. Kusler** herself written specifically about *B. 'Sophie Cecile'*, Vol. 59, Nov/Dec 1992, page 230. Here she recounts her early growing experiences and how this plant had emerged as a premier survivor, quickly adapting to any growing condition for many growers, all around the world. Her comments on blooming were as follows: "...the reports

are diverse, ranging from sporadic to year-round, winter, or fall, or spring or summer or all four seasons. Blossoms are profuse, bright rose-pink, and with the dark green (red beneath) shiny cut leaves it is a beautiful sight."

Despite Belva's comments, I believe this is a difficult plant to bring into bloom and feel lucky to have it happen, finally. I am including a picture of the inflorescence with this article so that you, the reader, can enjoy it too.

Note: I wrote the above article in the summer of 2007. I didn't publish because I wanted more experience with this cultivar to see if I could duplicate the blooming. In the fall of 2007 I purchased three additional plants of *B. 'Sophie Cecile'* and have grown them to fairly large plants. All three of the plants, along with about 15 other large canes of various backgrounds were exposed to over four hours of direct midday sunlight each day throughout the winter, spring, and now summer. All were fed a balanced fertilizer and watered daily as needed. All of the plants bloomed profusely, putting on great clusters of white, pink, or red blooms. All, that is, except for the three *B. 'Sophie Cecile'* plants. Not a single inflorescent. Not a single bloom. Even the one plant that bloomed in the summer of 2007 is without blooms this year. This additional experience confirms my earlier conclusion; "I believe this is a difficult plant to bring into bloom".

**Florida
in
2009!**

Delaware Valley Branch visits Peace Tree Farm

by Stephen Ripper

As plant enthusiasts we are constantly searching for sources of new varieties of well-grown plant material to expand our collections or grow into a specimen for display in a show. Many of us who grow from seed and cuttings experience first hand the challenges of providing and maintaining the proper light, heat and moisture requirements needed to ensure good germination and successful growth. Our propagating and growing areas may vary from those who are fortunate to have greenhouses, to those who adapt an area in the basement or even a closet, where we arrange lights, trays, heat mats and all the paraphernalia assembled to achieve our goal of raising that special begonia.

Yet there are many others who purchase their plants from garden centers and specialist greenhouse growers. These professionals face the same challenges of plant culture but in a far greater scale and intensity. Members of the Delaware Valley Branch got a wonderful opportunity to visit one of our areas most modern and technically advanced professional propagating and growing facilities, Peace Tree Farm.

Peace Tree Farm, located in rural-Bucks County, PA is owned and operated by **Lloyd and Candy Traven**. On arriving we were cordially greeted by Lloyd who then began his tour of their facility with a brief history of their horticultural education and extensive experience. First stop was the fully automated computer controlled potting line, which measures and mixes the plant growing media to exact specifications, then transfers the started plugs into the appropriate growing flat at a speed which can be mesmerizing. Oh yes, and once potted, it is watered all

at the control of one operator. Overhead, no space is wasted. There you will find at various locations continuous carousels of potted hanging baskets, where again they are watered automatically as they revolve through a cycle.

Continuing on we marvel at bench after bench of plants in various stages of growth, lush and full. Lloyd loves efficiency almost as much as begonias!! Each bench can be watered individually or automatically, totally computer controlled, with options of overhead misting or filling from the bottom by flooding the whole bench.

Also impressive is the biological program used to combat pests and disease. Throughout the growing areas you'll find host plants used for maintaining the various beneficial insects, which feed on the pests, keeping them in control. Lloyd is proud that they are also in the forefront of ecology and conservation in that most of his pots are either clay or made from rice hulls both of which can be recycled. Every effort is made to work with the cycle of Nature to maintain a natural ecological balance.

As intense as Lloyd is on his business, he is more intent on making beautifully grown Begonias available to the public and a larger presence in the horticultural arena. He maintains his own collection as stock plants for tissue culture and is always searching for more popular and better species. Begonia enthusiasts couldn't have a better professional as a resource and friend. I can say that all who attended were very impressed and especially satisfied with the begonias purchased on our visit to Peace Tree Farm.

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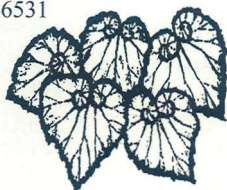
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COMING EVENTS

September 4-7, 2008, ABS Annual Meeting, Rate: \$95.50 for a double. Ask for back rooms at Best Western El Rancho Motel, 1100 El Camino Real. Millbrae, CA 650-742-5597. ABS meeting will be on Friday with a bus trip to Sacramento or Napa/Sonoma on Saturday. Contact: Carol Notaras: cnotaras@sbcglobal.net, 415-931-4912. Mary Sakamoto adds a new number to call for hotel reservations: 1-800-826-5500 and *asks that you email Carol to let her know if you are coming.*

Ocotber 4-5, 2008, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego. The San Diego County branches of The American Begonia Society will hold a Plant Show and Sale on Saturday and Sunday. The show will be in Room 101 of Casa del Prado in Balboa Park. Spectacular foliage and blossoms of the begonias will be on display. There will be many beautiful begonia plants for sale. Begonia experts will be available to answer questions. For more information call Marla Keith 760-753-3977 or email nandmkeith@atatt.net.

April 29-May 3, 2009, Palm Beach, Florida, 2009 ABS Convention. More exciting info to come!

Australia 2011

New Editor Needed!

Next issue closing date: September 1, 2008

The Begonian

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