

Blooming Begonias Newsletter
February, 2022 – March, 2022

President: Rebecca Stallard
Vice-President: Marcia Bedasse
Treasurer: Frances Drescher
Secretary: Beverly Lichtenstein
National Representative: Sandra Arlund

**Next Meeting: April Meeting is Cancelled. Next meeting is Monday, May 9, 2022 @ 7 p.m.
- Stay Tuned! Program to be announced.**

Upcoming Events:

Saturday, April 23 and Sunday, April 24, 2022 – Spring Sale “Plant-A-Palooza” at Mounts Botanical Garden

President’s Message

Greeting to my fellow Begonia Society Members!

In addition to the above listed upcoming events, I’d like to share that our District X Judges Council is having a flower show at the District X Spring Meeting to be held April 26th at the Little Club in Gulf Stream. We are desperate for horticulture entries. Since all of you have beautiful plant specimens, I’d like to encourage all to please consider entering. If you are so inclined to enter the show, I will furnish the necessary information, details, instructions, etc. to you!

Our website is coming along nicely thanks to Linda Lichtenstein! We are grateful to Linda who has done a lot of work on the website and continues to work to update it. Please everyone - check it out if you haven't already.

I look forward to being with you soon.

Rebecca Stallard, President

Minutes - Begonia Society of the Palm Beaches

March 14, 2022 Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the Begonia Society of the Palm Beaches was held on Monday, March 14, 2022, at 7:00 P.M, in the Mounts Auditorium, the President being in the chair and the Secretary being present.

REPORTS

President

Rebecca opened the meeting at 7:15 P.M. She thanked Nancy Cavnar and herself for serving as door openers. She thanked Frances Drescher for bringing the badge plant, B. Nightfall, which was delivered with our December Harmony order.

Vice President

Marcia Bedasse reported that there will be a program at the April 11, 2022 meeting. The auction will be at a later date since the plants were not large enough to sell at auction.

Treasurer

Frances reported the balance as of March 14, 2022.

National Representative

Sandy Arlund had nothing to report.

Membership

Sandy Sklar reported that several members have not paid their dues for this year. She welcomed a guest, Sharon Gluck.

Refreshments

Nancy thanked everyone who contributed to the refreshments.
Members signed up for April and May refreshment responsibilities.

Newsletter

Leslie Fee would like members to send pictures the first week of the month for the website.
Rebecca thanked Leslie for the informative newsletters.

Webmaster

Linda Lichtenstein reported that the backup files from Michael Evans have been received and are complete.

Motion

It was moved to donate \$250.00 to the Charles Jaros Memorial Grant, ABS Conservation and Research Fund. The motion was adopted.

It was moved by Donnie to donate \$150.00 to the Ft. Worth Botanic Garden. The motion was adopted.

It was moved by Frances to support the Mounts Botanical Garden this year with a \$200.00 donation. The motion was adopted.

Program

Rebecca introduced Lois Petzold, who showed pictures from the Australian Begonia Society Convention. The pictures were taken in early March, 2020 and featured displays of begonias, each with a designated location identified by signage. A highlight hybrid was B. Top Hat, "big, amazing plants". Lois showed a panorama of lush begonia gardens, the envy of begoniacs.

Financial Review

The Financial Review Committee Chair, Bev Lichtenstein, reported that the Begonia Society of the Palm Beaches bookkeeping records kept by Treasurer, Frances Drescher, are accurate and meet regulatory requirements. The review was conducted by Beverly Lichtenstein, Chair; Pauline Ma, and Linda Lichtenstein, committee members.

BADGE PLANT

The badge plant was won by Marcia.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 P.M.

*Respectfully submitted,
Beverly Lichtenstein, Secretary*

We have been spoiled these last two months with wonderful garden tours! Thanks to Petra Russell and Kit Pannill, we were provided the opportunity to tour their gardens and learn of their individual gardening wisdom.

On February 26th, we met at Petra's home in western Lake Worth to tour her garden. She has several acres of rare and beautiful plants, ornamental trees and fruit trees. Petra is a member of numerous of our local plant societies and delights in collecting unusual plants. One of the first of many interesting sights are two very large Norfolk Pines. Most folks here in Florida are not big fans of these particular trees because of their large growth habit and propensity to topple in high winds. Petra sees the beauty of the tree and has been keeping her Norfolks trimmed very short, allowing them to grow outward which creates a whole new, almost "bonsai-like" take on this particular tree. She has created meandering paths shaded by Japanese Fern trees, palms and various other ornamental trees which provide the cover for plantings of bromeliads, ferns, alocasias, gingers, and of course, begonias (many of which were blooming beautifully for our visit)! There was a magnificent blooming vanilla orchid vine growing high up a tree. Speaking of orchids, Petra has a stunning collection in a covered porch off her sunroom. Winding through the front of her garden to the back lead us to Petra's fruit grove. She has many fruit trees – mango, citrus, banana, avocado and other unusual fruit varieties. We capped off our tour of this delightful tropical paradise with a delicious lunch provided by Petra and served in her bright and cheerful sunroom. She even treated us to delectable homemade banana bread from her banana tree. Yummy!



Petra welcoming us to her garden



Vanilla Orchid



Blooming begonias in Petra's landscape 1



Blooming begonias in Petra's landscape 2

Kit Pannill invited us to her award-winning garden in Palm Beach for a tour on March 12. Her garden is designed with meticulous attention to detail. Everywhere one looks is a delight to the eye. From the moment you walk through the gate, you start on a meandering path are met along the way with stunning hanging orchids, unusual ferns and succulents arranged perfectly in a human head planter. The backyard is replete with more tropicals – unusual and colorful gingers, landscape begonias, crotons, Medinilla, alocasia, philodendron, beds of dwarf chenille, Acalypha, bird of paradise and many other species. A good number of Kit's stunning shade trees were decorated with hanging orchids and underplanted with dwarf mondo grasses, begonias and bromeliads. Several different varieties of colorful shrubbery such as Tecoma stans (yellow bells), jatropha and the beautiful waxy leaved viburnum awabuki separate sections of the garden and provide backdrop for layered plantings. Kit told us the story of how one of the banyans in her yard was terribly damaged during a hurricane many years ago. At the time, she thought it best to remove the tree but she was convinced by a landscaper to keep it in place, shear it up with stakes, and baby it along with hopes it would survive. And, survive it did! Today, the tree is the focal point of the north section of her garden, with an almost otherworldly look. The landscaper selected some of the downward growing roots and placed them inside pvc pipes/stakes, and within a year those roots had sunk into the ground and burst from the PVC. Today the tree's branches are huge in diameter and have grown outward perfectly supported by the selectively grown root system. The piece de resistance is the expansive glass-ceiling greenhouse which houses perfectly grown enormous potted begonias and orchids and a few other special plant varieties.



Front Garden Path



Succulent Container Garden



Greenhouse filled with Begonias, Orchids and More!



Kit sharing cuttings of a beautiful Queen's Wreath vine with Marcia Bedasse

We have been fortunate over these last two months to have the opportunity to visit Petra and Kit's beautiful gardens. To top it off, we had a fantastic in-person meeting in March, which featured our newest member, Lois Petzold, who shared her great experience at the Australian Begonia Society Convention held in 2020 in Melbourne. Lois and her husband traveled to Melbourne for the convention and had a chance to enjoy a

vacation prior to the convention. The convention included several side trips to various botanical gardens and homes of local begonia society members. The Australian begonia members may be a little more enthusiastic than ours – one of the members sported a tailored shirt he had specially made with a begonia patterned fabric. This particular member has an awesome collection of what seemed like hundreds of begonias. Lois provided a wonderful slide show presentation of photographs documenting her trip and the convention.

Remember to check out Mounts Botanical Garden for various additional activities. Any dog lovers out there? The Garden hosts “Dog Days” every 2nd Sunday where you can bring your dog. Those of you who have small children/grandchildren may like to bring the little ones to the Garden to enjoy the current LEGO “Nature POP!” exhibition by Sean Kenney. On display are fascinating, giant nature-themed LEGO sculptures that all ages would enjoy seeing.

Looking forward to seeing everyone at the May 9th meeting.

Stay well, friends!

Leslie Fee, Newsletter Editor