

August 1978

The BEGONIAN



ISSN 1260-0883

Monthly Publication
of the American
Begonia Society

The BEGONIAN

Founded by
Herbert P. Dyckman
January, 1932

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GENERAL OFFICES:

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8302 Kittyhawk Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90045

Subscription: \$6.00 per year. Foreign (Mexico and Canada) \$6.50. U.S. (Mexico and Canada) 1st Class \$9.00. Overseas Air Mail \$18.00. Pay in U.S. currency only.
Single back issues 75¢.

Third Class Postage Paid at Culver City, California

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DEADLINES

Deadline for advertising and copy is the first day of the month preceding the date of issue.

Views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the editors, the society, or its officers.

Printing by Kandid Litho Co., San Gabriel, CA

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THE BEGONIAN ADVERTISING RATES

	One Time
Full Page	\$80.00
Half Page	40.00
Quarter Page	25.00
Per Inch	10.00

5% Discount for 4 or more consecutive runs.

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AIMS AND PURPOSES OF THE AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY

The purpose of this Society shall be:

- TO stimulate and promote interest in *Begonia* and other shade-loving plants;
- TO encourage the introduction and development of new types of these plants;
- TO standardize the nomenclature of *Begonia*;

TO gather and publish information in regard to kinds, propagation and culture of *Begonia* and companion plants;

TO issue a bulletin which will be mailed to all members of the Society; and

TO bring into friendly contact all who love and grow *Begonia*.

THE OMATI BEGONIA CULTIVATED

By J. Doorenbos, Dept. of Horticulture
Wageningen, the Netherlands



Begonia sharpeana F. von Mueller

In the *Begonian* of April 1976 John S. Womersley describes how he collected the "Omati Begonia", a beautiful plant growing in Papua along the Omati River and further east along the Kikori River, which runs roughly parallel to it. Dr. Womersley appeals to the taxonomic botanist to join with the skilled horticulturist to bring this and other beautiful species of Papua New Guinea into cultivation. Last fall I received seed of the Omati Begonia, giving me the opportunity to make a modest contribution towards this goal.

This seed had been collected on the borders of the Kikori River by Mr. J. F. U. Zieck, who made the following notes about the plant and

its natural habitat: "On steep slopes of a limestone ridge bordering the river, about 10 meters above sea level. Pink flowers, big roundish leaves, red brown stripes radiating from the centre. The plants are 'climbing', i.e. they grow flat on almost perpendicular limestone rocks in a thin mulch of old leaves etc. in the dark forest shade, coming down to the river water level. Very high rainfall (5000-6000 mm/year)."

The seed was sown and germinated rapidly, but the low light intensity prevailing in Holland during the winter threatened to be fatal to the seedlings. Those remaining in the greenhouse all died, but those put under lights grew very well and are

now coming into flower. At the moment the stems are rhizomatous, not yet creeping as in Womersley's spectacular pictures. Another difference is that in our plants the striking brown rays are visible only in the young leaves but disappear when these get older. The flower buds are bright red, but when the flower opens the inside is pale pink.

The next question is of course: which species have we got here? I had noticed already from the picture

on the April 1976 cover that the plant has creeping stems and four tepals in the male flowers. This is rather unusual for a *Begonia* from New Guinea. Of the 64 species described, only 11 have 4 tepals. Most species from this island belong to the section *Petermannia* which is characterized by erect stems and 2 tepals in the male and 5 (occasionally 3) in the female flower. The species with 4 tepals can be separated by the following key.

Key to New Guinean Begonias with 4 male tepals

- 1. Plants stemless or prostrate 2
Plants ascendent or erect 9
- 2. Plants stemless, tuberous 3
Plants creeping, rooting at the nodes 6
- 3. Stamens united to a column, ovary two-celled 4
Stamens free, ovary three-celled 5
- 4. Leaves pale green, flowers pale pink *B. physandra* Merr. & Perry
Leaves variegated green and brown, flowers white
B. archboldiana Merr. & Perry
- 5. Plants with only one leaf, broadly ovate and symmetrical, wings of fruit about equal *B. minjemensis* Irmsch.
Plants with several leaves, orbicular to ovate, asymmetrical, flowers bright pink, one wing of fruit much larger than the other two
B. acaulis Merr. & Perry
- 6. Leaves 4-7 cm long and 3-6 cm broad *B. bartlettiana* Merr. & Perry
Leaves larger 7
- 7. Leaves symmetrical, ovate, doubly dentate *B. kaniensis* Irmsch.
Leaves asymmetrical, \pm orbicular, \pm entire 8
- 8. Petioles glabrous, leaves 11-16 cm long and 11-12 cm broad, anthers 60-70 (NE New Guinea) *B. subcyclophylla* Irmsch.
Petioles densely pilose, leaves large (up to 25 cm long and 20 cm broad), anthers 25-40 (Papua) *B. sharpeana* F. von Muell.
- 9. Leaves lanceolate-elliptic, doubly serrate, 4-9 cm long and 1-3 cm broad (W. Irian) *B. brassii* Merr. & Perry
Leaves palmately divided, the lobes pinnatifid ('fern leaf') 10
- 10. Wings of fruit about equal (New Guinea)
B. warburgii Lauterb. & K. Schum.
One wing of fruit much larger than the other two (W. Irian)
B. oligandra Merr. & Perry

With the help of this table, identification of our plants is not difficult, even if one has only the April 1976 cover to go by. Via 1 — 2 — 6 — 7 — 8 one reaches *Begonia sharpeana*. This species was described by Baron F. von Mueller in the *Journal of the Linnean Society of New South Wales* of 1887. (Actually, it was the second New Guinean *Begonia* to be named, the first being *B. pilotophylla*, described in 1976, also by Von Mueller). The description, which is accompanied by a very clear drawing, leaves little doubt that our identification is correct. The plant was originally discovered by Theodore Bevan "in the vicinity of the Aird-river." By comparing old and modern maps I found that this is the same as the Kikori River. Von Mueller adds: "This handsome plant, which should readily enter into horticulture, has been chosen to perpetuate in the vegetation of the great Papuan Island also the memory of the Rev. Mr. Sharpe, who recently succumbed as a martyr of Christianity, while carrying the gospel to the wild regions of New Guinea."

We now have to try to perpetuate the name of this noble missionary in horticulture. So far, the plant named after the Rev. Sharpe has not proven to be very difficult. We grow it in peat mold, to which chalk and fertilizer have been added. It requires plenty of light (but no full sunshine) and a high air humidity. The latter is probably essential.

A few notes about the other plants in our key. *Begonia acaulis* (cover of the *Begonian* of August, 1973) is one of the prettiest begonias I know but very hard to grow. A few times



B. sharpeana, the Omati Begonia growing in Papua New Guinea

I have been able to distribute seed produced by plants in our greenhouse, which originated from seed sent by Mr. Zieck. He also sent me *Begonia physandra* which is even more tender and which I have now lost, after having grown it for a number of years.

Ten or twelve years ago I received a sample of New Guinea seed from the Seed Fund. This yielded a 'fern leaf' Begonia, possibly *B. oligandra*. If we had known as much about begonias as we do now, we might have saved it, but at the time we lacked the experience and lost the plants before they flowered. They looked so peculiar with their spreading fleshy stems and finely dissected leaves that it was not until much later that I realised that it had been a *Begonia*.

12th EASTERN REGIONAL SHOW

By Gene Moglia

From Begonia Gems, Long Island Branch Newsletter

The Show was a beautiful one, completely filling the show room. The Miami begonias were at their best in April, with many of the rhizomatous in full bloom. Alma Crawford's judging crew had a hard time deciding best-in-show, which was finally won by Helene Jaros for *B. macdougallii* var. *brazil*. Many of the Miami members grow in baskets and there were about ten racks full. *B. masoniana* grown by Luis Velez was beautiful with over 100 leaves. *B. 'Argenteo-guttata'* grown by Charles Jaros also looked very good and I've always considered this a dog of a begonia. One interesting thing about the Miami begonias was the vibrant green of all the *B. bowerae* hybrids. A large plant of *B. bowerae* var. *major* fairly glowed across the room.

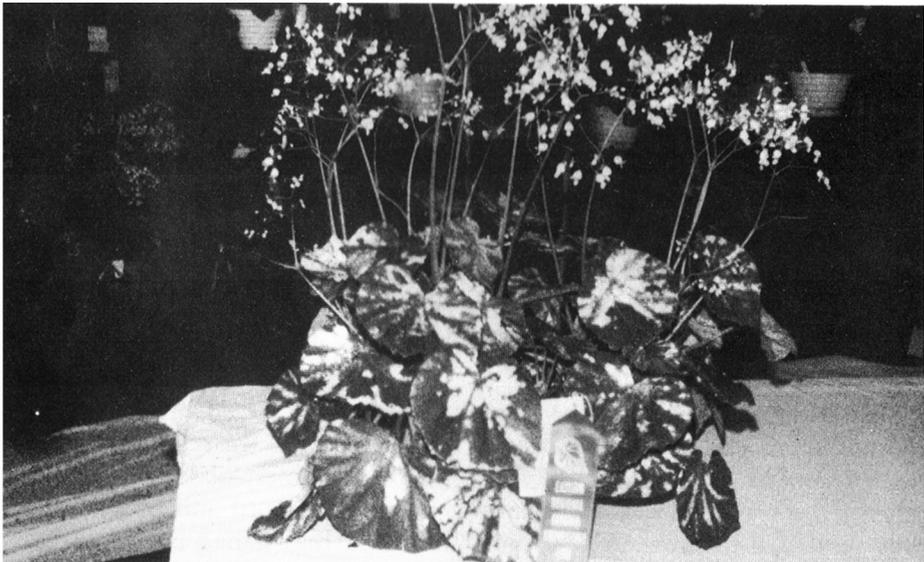
There were some interesting new plants (at least to me) at the Show.

Francis Michelson of Miami had *B. 'Acicon'*, a cross of *B. acida* X *B. convolvulacea*, and both parents could be seen in the hybrid. Another beautiful one was his *B. 'Fernan Vell'* a cross of *B. fernando-costae* X *B. olsoniae*, which had the pattern of the leaf of the second plant on a very hairy, compact plant.

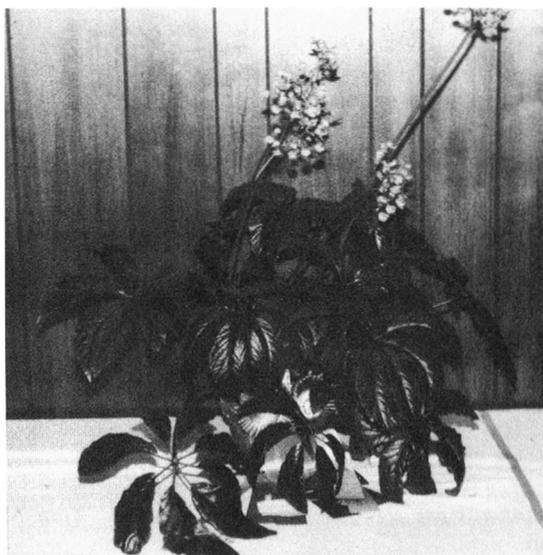
Dora Lee Dorsey of the Tampa Bay branch had a very nice hybrid of *B. wollnyi*. It had the characteristic silvery-splashed leaf but the veins are a ruby red, and are raised on both the top and bottom of the leaf.

Finally, a special mention has to go to Charlene Guyer, who drove with her husband from Rochester, NY with *B. exotica* on her lap. It arrived in excellent condition and won as best contained atmosphere and the begonia travelling the greatest distance.

Below: *B. manicata aureo-maculata*



MIAMI SHOW WINNERS



Best in Show Trophy Winner
Begonia macdougallii var. *brazil*

ABS PERPETUAL TROPHY FOR SWEEPSTAKES

Helene Jaros — 13 Blue Ribbons

ABS PERPETUAL TROPHY FOR BEST IN SHOW

Helene Jaros — *B. macdougallii*
var. *brazil*

ABS PERPETUAL TROPHY FOR BEST NOVICE ENTRY

Roberta Gay — *B. 'Green Jewel'*

THEODOSIA BURR SHEPHERD PERPETUAL TROPHY FOR BEST SEMP

Charles J. Jaros — *B. 'Red Wonder'*

MIDGE GRASHEIM PERPETUAL TROPHY FOR BEST MINIATURE

Bob Chisari — *B. conchifolia*
var. *rubrimacula*

MURRAY MORRISON PERPETUAL TROPHY FOR BEST KUSLER HYBRID

Helene Jaros — *B. 'Gwen Lowell'*

SHOWING IS SHARING PERPETUAL TROPHY

Helene Jaros — 38 Entries

BEST ENTRY BY A MIAMI BRANCH MEMBER

Helene Jaros — *B. macdougallii*
var. *brazil*

BEST RHIZOMATOUS DISTINCTIVE FOLIAGE

Marco Arida — *B. masoniana*

BEST RHIZOMATOUS NOVICE GROWER

Roberta Gay — *B. 'Green Jewel'*

BEST BEGONIA TRAVELING THE FARTHEST DISTANCE

Charlene Guyer, Rochester Branch —
B. exotica

AL BAKER MEMORIAL AWARD

Marco Arida — *B. masoniana*

BEST BOWERAE OR HYBRID

Charles J. Jaros — *B. 'Cleopatra'*

**BEST BEGONIA ENTERED
BY A NON-MEMBER**

Audrey Goodall — *B. paleata*

JUNIOR SWEEPSTAKES

Cindy Smith

**BEST NOVEL METHODS
OF GROWING, JUNIORS**

Cindy Smith — *B. 'Concord'*

DIVISION TROPHIES

- A. Cane-Like — *B. 'Esther Albertine'*
Alma Crawford
- B. Shrub-Like — *B. 'Medora'*
Helene Jaros
- D. Semperflorens —
Unnamed Semperflorens
Shelbie Cochran
- E. Rhizomatous — *B. macdougallii* var.
brazil
Helene Jaros
- F. Rex Cultorum — *B. 'Sunburst'*
Helene Jaros
- G. Tuberous — *B. suffruticosa*
Shelbie Cochran
- I. Contained Atmosphere (single
variety) — *B. exotica*
Charlene Guyer
- J. Hanging Containers — *B. foliosa*
Art Clinton
- K. Seedlings — *B. suffruticosa*
Erich Steiniger
- O. Professional Growers — *B. paleata*
Audrey Goodall
- P. Experienced Amateur Grower —
B. 'Cleopatra'
Charles J. Jaros

- Q. Novice Grower — *B. 'Green Jewel'*
Roberta Gay
- S. Artistic Arrangements — Centerpiece
B. bowerae
Helene Jaros
- T. Novel Methods of Growing —
Rock Planting — *B. versicolor*
Bob Chisari
- U. Junior Division — *B. 'Richmondensis'*
Cindy Smith
- V. Educational — Begonia Culture
Miami Branch
- W. Arts & Crafts — Needlepoint —
B. 'Merry Christmas'
Arline Waynick
- X. Photography — Rex Leaf, Print
Glenn Maynard

No awards were made in Divisions
C, H, L, M, N and Y.

A. B. S. CULTURAL AWARDS

- Cane-Like: *B. 'Esther Albertine'*
Alma Crawford 95 Points
- Cane-Like: *B. 'Tom Ment'*
Helene Jaros 95 Points
- Shrub-Like: *B. 'Medora'*
Helene Jaros 99 Points
- Shrub-Like: *B. cubensis*
Charles J. Jaros 95 Points
- Semperflorens: *B. 'Red Wonder'*
Charles J. Jaros 94 Points
- Rhizomatous: *B. macdougallii* var. *brazil*
Helene Jaros 98 Points
- Rhizomatous: *B. 'Silver Jewel'*
Ann Holton 95 Points
- Tuberous: *B. suffruticosa*
Shelbie Cochran 96 Points



Begonia art winner — Tea set with *B. 'Sachsen'* as theme, plate with *B. 'Erythrophylla'*
by Lis Schaefer.



Joy Logee Martin with *B. 'Lucy Lockett'*, a dark red leafed semperflorens cultivar which she hybridized.

At right is an excerpt from the Santa Barbara Branch newsletter giving impressions of the show by Keith Mautino, who attended with the delegation from Santa Barbara.

. . . At first we were amazed by the hot humid climate. I thought, "How can anyone grow begonias in this weather!" As soon as I looked in the showroom and saw the gorgeous begonias and enthusiastic growers I knew the answer. No matter what adverse conditions a begonia grower encounters, he will do his best to cope with them, whether hot or cold, humid or dry. Too, we found many differences in the plants grown under these conditions. We were amazed by *Begonia bowerae* in Florida. The leaves were five and six inches and colored very bright green. There were large hanging baskets of *B. 'Norah Bedson'*, *B. 'Argenteo-guttata'* and *B. 'Lucy Lockett'*, the double semperflorens hybridized by Joy Logee Martin of Connecticut, and a gorgeous basket of *B. 'Tom Ment'* . . . One of Barbara Philip's rex hybrids, *B. 'Odyssey'*, brought the highest offer, \$28, at the auction . . . It was named by Mrs. Martin who donated all the plants for the auction.

TROPHY FUND DONORS

The Miami Branch wishes to thank all for the donations for the 12th Eastern Regional Begonia Convention and Show. All were appreciated.

Buxton Branch
 Hampton Branch
 Long Island Branch
 Edna Stewart Branch
 Knickerbocker Branch
 Connecticut Branch
 Greater Rochester Branch
 Greater Cincinnati Branch
 Ed & Millie Thompson
 Frank Kerin
 Helene & Charles J. Jaros
 Tropic Gardens Nursery
 Alma L. Crawford

Maybelle Green
 Shelbie Cochran
 Marilyn Turner
 Ray Weakley
 Mr. & Mrs. Luis Perez
 Betty Stockman
 Helen Steele
 Olive Milliman
 John Sousa
 Bonnie Baker
 Jacksonville Branch
 Tampa Bay Branch

12th EASTERN REGIONAL CONVENTION & SHOW REPORT

By Helene Jaros, Convention Chairman

The convention and show which took place in Miami, Fla was both beautiful and a smashing success. Three banquet rooms, total size 30 x 90 feet, were opened up and artistically designed by member Ray Weakley. Large hanging baskets and many rare and beautiful begonias began arriving early on Thursday morning. We were lucky to have Gene Moglia, who is very knowledgeable, from the Long Island Branch as Classification Chairman. As large supplies of begonias kept arriving, Frank Kerin, Sue Colaizzi from the Edna Stewart Branch and Shelbie Cochran from the Miami Branch worked well into the night entering and arranging plants for Friday morning judging.

There were 350 entries in the show, 20 branches were represented and also numerous members-at-large. We were very happy to see so many California Branch members attending. It was one of the largest groups from the West Coast to attend an Eastern Convention. Young begonia grower Keith Mautino from the Santa Barbara Branch was a delightful guest.

We had a lovely luncheon on Friday with Frances Hunter, Mistress of Ceremonies, presiding. At the luncheon we honored the National Board of Directors. We were very pleased to have so many present. Dade County Commissioner Barry Schreiber welcomed all the Branch members and guests to Miami. After judging was finished Paul Lowe in-

roduced Rudolf Ziesenhenné who honored us by cutting the ribbon for our grand opening of the show. The begonia show was then officially opened to the public to view.

Dr. John Poponoe, Director of Fairchild Tropical Gardens, gave an interesting seminar on "The Begonia Collection of Fairchild Garden & Plant Introduction Program." Then we had a delightful seminar by Joy Logee Martin from Logee's Greenhouse on "Begonia Introductions of New Hybrids". She brought quite a few beautiful new begonias with her, which she donated and which were auctioned after the closing Saturday Banquet.

At the Awards Banquet, all of the Branch Presidents that were present and the different branches were welcomed with the Roll Call by Frances Hunter. Arline Peck, who is president of the Connecticut Branch, is the only person to have attended all 12 Eastern Conventions. Keith Tynes and accompanist Allen Comyns entertained us with beautiful music and songs.

Early Saturday morning we had seminars by Laura Smith, "Hanging Baskets from Sphagnum & Cypress Bark", Ann Helton from the Jacksonville Branch on "Re-acclimating Your Begonias", Dr. J. A. McArthur from Florida International University on "Lighting Systems & Begonias for Indoor Growing". Then off on the tours, first to Fairchild Tropical Gardens which has 83 acres of tropi-

cal beauty with 500 different varieties of palms and a large cycad collection, also a Rare Plant House and a Tropical Rain Forest. Then to Parrot Jungle which is truly a beautiful jungle of birds, rare plants, orchids, ferns, begonias, and bromeliads. The Jungle occupies 20 acres of hammock land. A cactus ravine is planted in one area and a flower bedecked terrace looks out over a lake, that is the home of a large flock of flamingos. The tour was directed by Nat DeLeon who is Chief Horticulturist of Parrot Jungle. Mr. DeLeon is a famous Bromeliad hybridizer, and has also collected begonias from South America.

We enjoyed a cocktail hour in the show room and our Saturday Banquet was in honor of Begonia Hybridizers: Joy Logee Martin, Michael Kartuz, Paul Lowe, Rudolf Ziesenhenné, Dora Lee Dorsey, from the Tampa Branch, Francis Michelson, James Wyrzten, and Patrick Worley. After the banquet Rudolf Ziesenhenné gave a seminar on "Hybridizing Begonias" while everyone sat spellbound. Luis Perez was our Master of Ceremonies for the day. We all enjoyed many door prizes and an auction, and so came to a close, with regret, the beautiful 12th Eastern Regional Begonia Convention and Show.

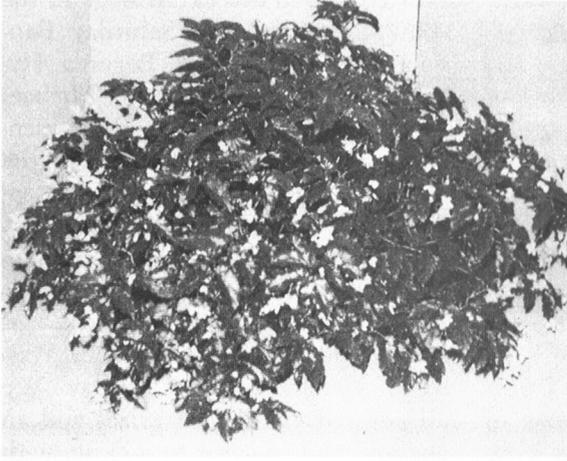
EASTERN REGIONAL SHOW COMMITTEE

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 Helene Jaros
 Co-Chairmen
 Alma L. Crawford
 Charles J. Jaros
 Show Designer
 Ray Weakley
 Schedules & Program
 Alma L. Crawford
 Clerks
 Eloise Sniffen
 Judges
 Alma L. Crawford
 Registration
 Elizabeth Davis
 Hospitality
 Rosemond Meriweather

Classification
 Gene Moglia
 Plant Sales
 Mr. & Mrs. Francis Michelson
 Publicity
 Helene Jaros
 Tours
 Art Clinton
 Awards
 Charles J. Jaros
 Laura Smith
 Funds
 Laura Smith
 Hosts & Hostesses
 Maybelle Green

Photo credits this issue: Jansen, p. 199; Charles Jaros, pp. 202, 204, 205, 208, 209; Gene Moglia, pp. 203, 210, 211 top; M. Mundell, pp. 213, 214, cover. Bates, p. 211, bottom; J. Womersley, p. 207.

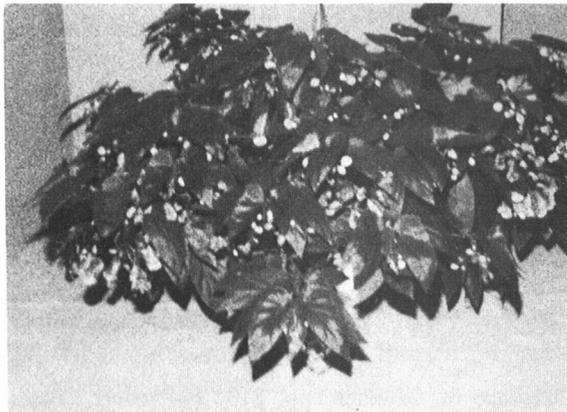
SHOW



Murray Morrison
Perpetual Trophy
for Best Kusler Hybrid
B. 'Gwen Lowell'
Helene Jaros, exhibitor



Division Trophy
Hanging Container
B. foliosa
Art Clinton, exhibitor



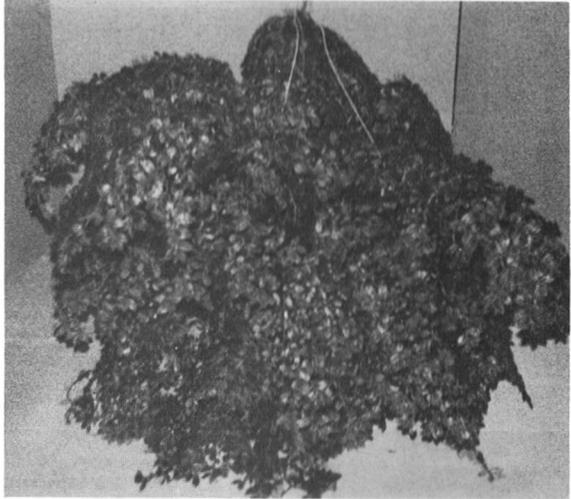
Blue ribbon
B. 'Arcola'
Ann Helton, exhibitor

SCENES

Cultural Award
B. cubensis
Charles J. Jaros,
exhibitor



Best Begonia entered
by non-member,
Best Begonia by
professional grower
B. paleata
Audrey Goodall,
exhibitor



Blue ribbon
B. 'Sachsen'
Helene Jaros





Knickerbocker Branch (left to right) Norma Chenkin, Don Lathrom, Pres. Marjorie Mack, Helen Simmons, Jim Fryer.



Helen Simmons, Knickerbocker, Charles Jaros, Co-Chairman of Convention, Miami, Barbara Jackson, Potomac Branch (left to right).



Edna Stewart, Pittsburgh Branch (left to right) Mr. & Mrs. Dale Stewart, Marie Treat, Frank Kerin, Suzanne Colaizzi, President.



Cindy Smith, Junior Sweepstakes Winner, with various awards.

MY BEGONIA EXOTICA

By Charlene Guyer, Henrietta, New York

On April 8th, we left Rochester, bound for two weeks vacation in sunny Florida with suitcases and one terrarium containing a single plant of *B. exotica*. I didn't know how it was going to react to riding 1700 miles on the floor of our car with our daughter Sandie, but I was determined to enter it in the 12th annual Eastern Begonia Convention and Show in Miami. I kept it out of the sun. Each and every night I took it into our motel room and sprinkled a very few drops over the soil.

My *B. exotica* grows in a terrarium and I cover the small hole on the top with a clear plastic lid similar to one found on the top of some potato chip cans. It sits on a shelf in my plant room under fluorescent lights. The lights are four foot, double tube setups with one regular cool white and one wide spectrum bulb. The lights are on a maximum of 15 hours in the dead of winter and 10 hours in summer. I first put either aquarium gravel or stones in the bottom of the terrarium, then about two inches of potting mix (I use two parts potting soil, one part vermiculite and 1 part Jiffy mix) over that. *B. exotica* grew about 14 months in the same terrarium with watering about every two weeks and every other time a slight drop of fertilizer. The aquarium gravel used in the bottom had been used previously in an aquarium with fish so that it still contained some nutrients from the fish droppings.

One thing I found was that I had to be careful about the temperature of the automobile getting too high since any plant in a terrarium can't

tolerate high temperatures. I almost lost *B. exotica* after the show when we left our car for one hour with the windows rolled up. The temperature in the car climbed rapidly and must have been over 100 degrees. Fortunately, by placing the plant in a cool room and sprinkling with water, it revived by late night and I knew I had to be watchful after that.

Note: This excellent specimen won a blue ribbon, a rosette ribbon for best in division, and the Jaros award for the begonia traveling the longest distance to be entered in the show.

Charlene Guyer sent a photo of the prizewinner in a high dome, egg-shaped terrarium. Unfortunately, the camera flash reflected off the surface in such a way that the photo could not be printed to show the beauty and size of the plant. The climatic conditions during the trip were a challenge to the maintenance of this prize winner.

The Indoor Light Gardening Society of America, Inc., Dept. B, 128 West 58th St., New York, New York 10019. Dues \$5.00. Bi-monthly magazine LIGHT GARDEN; cultural guides; seed exchange; round robins; chapters; slide library.



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SCENES FROM SACRAMENTO

Cover Photo of the garden of Clarence and Tish Hall by Monroe Mundell
By Pam Mundell, Sacramento, Calif.



The Hall's Greenhouses

The garden of Clarence and Tish Hall and its two greenhouses will be a part of the garden tour at the national ABS convention this year. The Halls have been active members of the Sacramento Branch since their relocation to the Sacramento Valley in 1965. The shade garden behind the greenhouses is constructed of redwood and fluorescent tubes as are the shade structures over the walkway which runs in front of the two greenhouses. Clarence and Tish put in both front and back gardens, planted all existing trees and shrubs, and Clarence himself put in both greenhouses. Each year, their garden is a splash with color. All annuals are started from seeds. Clarence has been instrumental in spreading the love, joy, and beauty of begonias within

the Sacramento community. Everybody is enthralled when he talks about begonias and companion shade plants. Clarence served as President of the Sacramento Branch in 1967 and since then has served in various chairmanships on the Board. He has been national ABS President twice.



Capital Park, as seen from the Sixteenth Street entrance. The park is two city blocks wide and four city blocks in length and contains a vast array of evergreens and thousands of flowers. As a part of the 1976 Bicentennial effort, the State capital is undergoing a restoration. There was scaffolding behind the golden dome at the time this picture was taken.

The Iva Gard Shepard Garden and Arts Center is the meeting place of the Sacramento Branch. It is maintained by the City Parks and Recrea-



Shepard Garden and Arts Center

tion Department and was made possible by years of hard work and donations from the more than 40 groups, chiefly art and floral societies, which meet here monthly. All monies used for improvement and maintenance are the results of an annual white elephant sale held at the Cal-Expo each October. Only the salaries of the custodians are from the city budget. The next project is the addition of a wing with expanded kitchen facilities, which has been proposed to the City Council for several years and is not yet underway, but we do not give up easily when it comes to expanding this building so all can enjoy it.

A PRE-CONVENTION MESSAGE

By Charles Richardson, ABS President

We hope that many of you are planning to attend the National Convention and Show in Sacramento this September. This year the Annual meeting will be Friday afternoon, and after adjournment, will continue on Saturday afternoon in an effort to hear written reports from all ABS National Directors and members-at-large, as well as elected and appointed national officers. The reports must be concise and brief. We hope to get input from the national officers on how they have operated the past two years. This material will be turned over to a committee to outline the duties and procedures of carrying on these offices. From the national directors and the members-at-large, we hope to get input that will benefit the Society. Suggestions are most welcome. Action will be taken on them.

Any appointed or elected national officer or national branch director who will not be submitting his written report at the annual meeting in Sacramento should mail his report to me by September 1. My address is
696 Barsby Street
Vista, CA 92083

At the Wichita Falls Get Together I had an opportunity to talk to most of the 54 members present. Most were members-at-large. Being able to talk to other begonia enthusiasts was a new experience to them. From this group came the concept of having a Regional group so that they would be aware of the activities in their area and get the newsletters. It is hoped that this thought will spread to other areas so that the members-at-large will be a part of the mainstream — not isolated individuals. From this group came the

question of what it takes to host a National Show and Convention. I gave my point of view of the requirements to them, and the Bylaws committee have reviewed their suggestions and have proposed for your consideration putting them into our Bylaws. You, as a member-at-large or a National Director not able to attend the Board meetings, have the same opportunity by mailing your thoughts to either me or the incoming President. We shall turn them over to the right committee for action.

When the Bylaws committee has completed its work, another committee is going to work on defining the duties and procedures of all elected and appointed officers so that they can more efficiently carry out their duties.

Starting this fall, we are going to have a computerized mailing system. This will give us an up-to-date membership roster every quarter, and will eliminate the problems that we have had recently in sending out partial membership lists to members wishing to start new branches.

Starting this fall, we are going to have a Corresponding Secretary, who will assist the President. Correspondence is very time-consuming since it involves not only answering letters but the writing of many other types of letters. This will give the President more time to devote to originating new ideas and better planning.

Three committees have recently been formed around improving our National Shows and Conventions. One is preparing a pamphlet of instructions and suggestions on the duties of each one on the show committee, and a procedure to follow. They will be going through old *Begonians*, and material from earlier shows. Another committee is going to review the problems of the present Classification Guide and another committee will review Classification and Entries.

All of these programs that I have briefly outlined to you originated either from a committee or from a member such as yourself. Please make your report and suggestions brief so that we can hear from everyone at the Annual Meeting. See you in Sacramento.

Southwest Begonia Growers Bus Tour to National Convention

As an outgrowth of the Southwest Begonia Growers Get Together, the S.W. Begonia Growers Association will be running a bus tour to the National Convention in Sacramento, California.

The trip will originate from Wichita Falls, Texas and will have pick up points in Dallas, Abilene and El Paso, Texas; Tucson and Phoenix Arizona. The trip will be an adventure for all, and since we will have

our own bus to use, we are planning several side trips to go plant hunting.

The bus leaves Wichita Falls, Tx on Sept. 12th, and returns Sept. 20th. For a full schedule of times, prices etc., contact S.W. Begonia Growers, Robert Hamm — Coordinator
2951 Elliott
Wichita Falls, TX 76308
Phone (817) 691-1295.

WATERING BEGONIAS

From an instruction sheet distributed at the Eastern Regional Show.

An old saying goes: If you water a Begonia too much you will soon have a Be-gone-ia.

It is probable that more begonias die from overwatering than from any other cause. They cannot be watered by the calendar since different plants require more or less frequent waterings. Too much water can be as harmful as too little. Overwatering can cause root rot, especially with the rhizomatous types, and too little can cause wilting and distorted leaves. A simple rule to follow is to water when the surface of the soil is dry to touch.

With a plastic pot a good clue is to heft the pot. If it is very light it will probably need water, whereas if it is heavy when lifted it probably will not need to be watered.

If your begonia is extremely dry and wilted, give it just a little water. Let it stand a couple of hours, give it a little more, and repeat until your begonia is back to normal again. The best time to water begonias is in the morning.

When a plant goes into a dormant period, it should be given only a small amount of water periodically until it is in the active growing season again.

When one observes the condition of the plant and the soil, he will be able to judge when water is needed by just looking, but if in doubt, one can touch the soil with a finger. All one needs is an interest and general knowledge. Begonias are really easy to grow.

GARDEN GROVE BRANCH SHOW

The Garden Grove Branch Show will be held September 9 and 10, 1978. It will be open to the public from noon to 5 p.m. both days. This will be a judged show.

There will be a "super-duper" plant sale including many rare or hard to find begonias. The show will be held at the Huntington Center, San Diego Freeway at Beach Blvd., on the enclosed mall near Penneys. Admission is free.

ROBERT B. HAMM

Begonias / Gesneriads / Unusual Plants

2951 ELLIOTT, WICHITA FALLS, TX 76308

For a price list plus a year's worth of special offers and additions send \$1.00.

Open 10 AM - 5 PM Tues-Sat.

B. 'Daisy' Available

Mrs. Lythea Gatounis, an ABS member and a collector of begonias, wrote that she purchased many small plants from Paul Lowe when he moved to Florida from South Carolina last year. She believes she may be one of the few people who has *Begonia* 'Daisy' which was featured in the May issue of the *Begonian*. Her address is 132 Folly Road, Charleston, SC 29407.

You may write for further information about obtaining plants.

ABS LIBRARY NOTICE

There have been difficulties with the mail for the ABS library and bookstore. If you have not had an answer to your recent request, please contact Treasurer Gil Estrada about your problem.

ROUND ROBIN NOTES

If you are a member of the American Begonia Society and you are not taking part in the Round Robins, you are not getting the full value from your membership. We have many very interesting flights going around now. If you would like information about the robins, write to me. I'll be happy to answer your questions.

Propagation boxes

Carolyn Collman, California, made these suggestions: She likes to tape two bottoms of sweater boxes together on one side, one on top of the other. This works like a hinge. This gives enough height to grow tall cuttings if they need to be covered while rooting. She uses plastic glasses for mini-terrariums, putting one on top of the other and taping together. Holes can be made in the top and the bottom with a hot ice pick. Carolyn often uses solo cups — both the 3½ oz. and the 5 oz. size and the 9 oz. size plastic glasses for pots. She has used styrofoam cups with good results, but finds these tip over easily because they are so light.

Carolyn sometimes uses a styrofoam egg carton for propagating. She cuts the top off and this becomes a tray for the bottom. She cuts off the side sections, punches holes in the bottom and fills with her favorite rooting medium. This works great for leaves and small cuttings. It is also good for planting seeds. Two of these will fit in a sweater box with space for some small pots.

Root Rot Solution

Carolyn says that over-potting is a very bad practice. After potting she uses a meat baster and waters around

the root ball and not around the edges where there are no roots. This prevents overwatering small plants.

Tube recommendation

Wilbur Graves, Washington, wrote: The best fluorescent tubes to date are the Power Twist by Duro Lite. They are available in lengths from 12 to 96 inches. The twist adds 20% more light, and though initially expensive they are guaranteed for 30,000 hours. The supplier says to be sure the bracket ends of the fixtures are tight so the pins of the tubes are held snugly, otherwise the tubes don't last as long as they should.

Plant records

Alta Soule, California, made this good suggestion: Keeping a record of your plants is fun and educational. Mine are just little cards from the variety store used for writing cooking recipes. I put the name of the plant, the cross, where I can find and study anything about it. On the back of the card, I put a picture of the plant and the name of any book or publication with the page, year, etc. if I have this information.

Cuttings

Dorcas Resleff, Washington, received an order of begonia cuttings. She planted them in plastic six-packs filled with perlite and vermiculite. She set this in a pyrex pan and placed on a heating cable. She found she has to watch the bottom moisture closely. A few special cuttings she placed in her 'California Fruit Ripening Bowl' in good light. The bowl contains potting mix, so for each leaf she made a hole and filled it with

damp perlite. This plastic bowl has a lid with a circle of quarter inch holes in the top. She had very good luck using it for cuttings last summer.

In the May issue we wrote about using a styrofoam lug box for propagating. Ann Shore, California, reports that she keeps several of these going all the time. She takes one with her to club meetings, especially if they are having a cutting workshop. Others have reported carrying one along when they travel by car. When they visit robin friends and receive cuttings they can plant immediately and sometimes they are rooted by the time they arrive home. Ann suggests if you are in the market and see the clerk placing grapes on display from such a box, he will probably give it to you if you ask.

Fern note

Thelma Adair, Minnestoa, had a hard time keeping her ferns over the winter. She moved them to the kitchen and placed over a humidifier and they were much happier.

Potting mix

Betty Davenport, Washington, learned that perlite should be kept at a minimum in the potting mix if you live in an area where fluoride is present in the water because it retains fluoride. As a result she uses very little in her potting mix. She prefers a mix of 3 parts peatmoss, 2 parts vermiculite, and 1 part perlite. To each quart of this mix she adds 5 level tablespoons dolomite lime.

Mildew control

Art Sackenruther, California, likes Lysol spray for mildew and uses Spoonit fertilizer because it contains

an ingredient that inhibits mildew. Growers in his area feed their tuberhybrida begonias exclusively with Spoonit and never have mildew on them.

Watering

Jack Anderson, Illinois, says if you have an aquarium, use the water, especially when cleaning it, on your plants. The dirtier the water, the better. Plants thrive on this.

Growing from seeds

Shirley Johnson, Florida, reports: I have excellent luck with all seeds, even fern spores, when I dampen my sterile mix evenly, scatter the seeds on the surface of the mix, then enclose in a Ziploc bag. I leave it completely undisturbed for however long it takes to produce two leaves. Then I open the top, but leave the pot in the bag as the intermediate step in gradually hardening off. Then I remove the bag entirely, leaving undisturbed for awhile before gradually pricking out the seedlings and putting in community pots or individual pots. Although the Ziploc bags are slightly more expensive I use them in all my work since the plastic is heavy enough to stand alone and doesn't collapse upon seedlings or cuttings.

Clay pots

Debi Miller, California, was using plastic pots in her greenhouse. When automatic drip watering was installed her plants stayed too wet, so she re-potted everything into clay pots. Everything looks much better now.

I am looking forward to seeing you at the convention in Sacramento.

Mabel Corwin

1119 Loma Vista Way
Vista, CA 92083

THE RUSH IS ON

I hear there has been begonias discovered in Sacramento!

People as far away as Texas, Florida, and Illinois are on their way west across the Plains to the "Begonia Bonanza" country.

In recognition of the find and the wonderful people who are coming, we are "fixin'" to make a large begonia quilt that will be auctioned off for gold pieces!

We in the West hear that the French call their stores "bow-teeks" — so not wanten to be put under, we will have a speshul plant boutique, plus a large display of begonia "nuggets" for sale to everyone.

With the rush of people into the begonia valley, we will need all the able-bodied hands to help. If you want to assist, just let it be known.

The snowie peaks of the Sierra Nevadas to the east, the delightful ocean fog to the west — the beautiful Sacramento Valley and the "Begonia Bonanza" await you September 15, 16, and 17.

By Gerry & Shirley Wilson

Pacific Horticulture

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Mini-Ads

The rate for advertising in this column is \$1 per line (about 36 characters) with a minimum charge of \$4. Payment for the ad must accompany order. Send order to Advertising Manager.

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THE THOMPSON BEGONIA GUIDE, second edition. Three volumes; 975 pages; over 750 black and white photos; and many line drawings. Volumes may be purchased separately but subscription to entire three volumes is required. To order and for further information write E. & M. Thompson, P.O. Drawer PP, Southampton, N.Y. 11968.

The Good, The Rare and The Beautiful in begonias. Rex, rhizomatous, cane and shrubs. 25¢ for list. Visitors welcome. Lera's Greenhouse, P. O. Box 551, Waller, Texas 77484 (713) 372-2800.

Begonias — Blue Ribbon Winners. Many varieties. Retail only. Price list 35¢ or stamps. John Sousa, Begonia Paradise Nursery, 9471 Dana Road, Cutler Ridge, FL 33157.

BEGONIAS. All types. Limited mail order at present. List 35¢. MILLIE THOMPSON, 310-A Hill St., P. O. Drawer PP, Southampton, NY 11968. (516) 283-3237.

Exhibition Manual. An optional supplement of The Thompson Begonia Guide for both subscribers and non-subscribers, approximately 100 pages. Price \$4.75, optional binder \$3.50, including packaging and shipping. N.Y. residents add state tax. Now in distribution. E. & M. Thompson, P.O. Drawer PP, Southampton, NY 11968.

BEGONIAS, Popular varieties, new hybrids, 300 kinds. 20¢ cash or stamp for list. Rainbow Begonia Gardens, Box 991, Westminster, CA 92683

CLAYTON M. KELLY SEED FUND

Linda Miller, Director

I have moved! So please be sure to note my new address below. Also, don't forget to send your self-addressed stamped envelope with your order. This speeds up processing your order and helps keep Seed Fund costs down. Thank you!

Seeds that have been tested have been noted. Others have been checked under a hand lens.

BEGONIA SPECIES:

- Ag 1 — *B. acetosa*: Brazil. Lovely compact rhizomatous species. Leaves are heart-shaped and velvety, olive-bronze with wine-red underside. Flowers white. Germination time: 15 days.per pkt 1.00
- Ag 2 — Brazil species: unidentified. Leaves are dark green and velvety, about 1½ inches long, in rows on prostrate stems. Should not be grown in a pot but left to creep freely over the ground. A most interesting plant. Germination time: 18 days.per pkt 1.00
- Ag 3 — Brazil species: unidentified. From Organ Mountains, this cane-like plant to 3 ft., has white, fragrant flowers in pendent inflorescences. Germination time: 15 days.per pkt 1.00
- Ag 4 — *B. circumlobata*: China. Rhizomatous plant with upright and bushy habit. Leaves are palm-like, a deep green. Showy pink flowers. Germination time: 15 days.per pkt 1.00
- Ag 5 — *B. costello*. Rhizomatous, similar to *B. acetosa*, but leaves are larger and light green on both sides. A sturdy grower with white flowers. Germination time: 12 days.per pkt 1.00
- Ag 6 — *B. piresiana*. Grows up to 1 ft., compact; leaves glossy dark green above, the undersides and the stems covered with a thick brown felt, flowers white. Germination time: 14 days.per pkt 1.00
- Ag 7 — *B. tomentosa*: Brazil. Shrub-like with somewhat cupped leaves, covered with white felt. Flowers white. Germination time: 12 days.
per pkt 1.00

BEGONIA HYBRIDS:

- Ag 8 — Mixed Australian hybrids. This mixture of begonia seed has given good germination results to members and they have reported that the plants are fast growers and very lovely. Germination time: various.per pkt .50
- Ag 9 — *B. 'Delores'*. A lovely scandent variety. Almost everblooming with white blooms.per pkt .50
- Ag 10 — *B. 'Delores' x dietrichiana*. A cross that should prove interesting. The above trailer and a small shrub-type. Let me know what you get out of this one!per pkt .50
- Ag 11 — *B. 'Delores' x 'Orange Rubra'*. A cross between a trailer and a very popular low growing cane with orange flowers will probably give some very different plants. Try this one!per pkt .50

GESNERIAD:

- Ag 12 — Mixed gesneriads: includes *Sinningia*, *Streptocarpus* and lots of "surprises".per pkt .50
- Ag 13 — *Sinningia speciosa* tigrina mixture.per pkt .75
- Ag 14 — *Sinningia leucotricha*. Really different. Has "furry" white leaves and bright red tubular flowers.per pkt .75

Calif. residents please add 6% sales tax on all orders. All customers please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope with all seed orders. Make all checks or money orders payable to: Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund. (Foreign orders please make out in U.S. funds only.) Mail to: Mrs. Linda Miller, 4613 Cochran St., Simi Valley, Ca. 93063.

NEW BRANCHES OF THE ABS

By Evelyn Cronin, Branch Relations Director

Many people have come forward and asked for information about forming a branch of the American Begonia Society. Your help and enthusiasm will make the job of organizing a branch easier. There are several things which you can do to help start a branch: Get in touch with me and let me know that you are willing to participate. Interest new friends in begonias and suggest that they attend meetings with you. Contact a person who has had organizational experience to assist in the actual formation of a group in your area. Offer to work with another begonia grower who is willing to form a branch but who needs a helping hand.

The following organizers would enjoy hearing from persons in their areas:

Edward S. Dougherty
Rt. 4, Box 639
Citra, Fla. 32627

Dr. Joseph Hoppin
408 Royal Palm Blvd.
Charlestown, S.C. 29407

Paul P. Lowe
3321-C Meridan, S.
Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. 33410

Mrs. Diana E. Steiner
Bullet Hole Road
Mahopac, N.Y. 10541

Mrs. Albert Thomas
2706 Oakwood Drive
Ft. Wayne, Ind. 46816

A kick-off meeting is being planned by Paul Lowe to be held at a local bank in Lake Worth on Monday, October 16, 1978. Paul, a dedicated begonia enthusiast, already has 14 members who are interested in forming a branch in that area. Write to him at the above address or phone (306) 622-4505 for further details.

If you will drop a card requesting information on forming a branch, I will be most happy to mail it to you.

Write to:

Evelyn D. Cronin
Branch Relations Director
88 Ledgeways
Wellesley Hills, Ma. 02181

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
DIRECTORS OF THE
AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY
June 26, 1978**

The meeting of the Board of Directors was called to order in the auditorium of South Gate at 7:50 P.M. by President Richardson. Mabel Corwin led the pledge of allegiance, and Nathan Randall gave the Aims and Purposes. The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

The secretary read the membership report. There were 203 memberships processed, 3,576 members in good standing, and \$1,363.04 receipts deposited.

The Seed Fund had \$609.05 in sales, \$61.97 in expenses, leaving a balance of \$547.08.

Gilbert Estrada, Treasurer, reported \$2,037.43 balance from May, \$2,095.52 in receipts, disbursements of \$2,425.11, leaving a balance of \$1,707.84.

The officers presented by the Nominating Committee are: President — Nathan Randall, President Elect — Gilbert Estrada, 1st Vice Pres. — Ralph Corwin and Dan Millis, 2nd Vice Pres. — Frank Kerin and Doug Frost, Secretary, Virginia Barnett and Dorothy Porter, Treasurer, W. E. Walton and Eleanore Calkins. Norma Taylor was nominated for President Elect by petition.

Bill Walton read a letter from the IRS regarding filing of reports.

The Editors reported that due to postal regulations, the ballots will be printed in the **Begonian** so they can be cut out and mailed. The first set of prints will appear as soon as the articles to go with them are received. One hundred copies will be made to sell for \$5.00 (a set of four pictures). The fund received from the sale will be used in the publication fund. The translation of the Japanese book is at the typesetters. A motion was passed that the first Registration Book contain five hundred plant registrations and that remaining registrations be held for a second volume.

\$570.50 was received for advertising, leaving \$391.35 in accounts receivable according to the report from Lorraine Frinchaboy.

Mabel Corwin reported the Round Robins were busy.

Marge Lee reported \$30.48 in sales and \$3.86 for postage for judges courses and other materials. Wanda Elin, Norma Taylor, Jim Elin, and Pat Morrison are new sophomore judges.

President Richardson announced that Lydia Austin resigned. Gilbert Estrada has all the books of the library. A motion was made to have a new account opened with two signatures to take care of the library funds for the remainder of the year.

Katharine Alberti has been busy getting the old **Begonians** in order. There are many

old copies available.

Ralph Corwin asked to have the secretary send out a rough copy of the changes in the Bylaws. Any suggested changes can be accepted this month, before the final draft is completed.

A motion was passed requesting that all new branches end their fiscal year as of July 31st. This is for tax purposes.

A motion was passed to proceed with the printing of the English version of the Japanese book.

After some branch announcements, the meeting adjourned at 10:15.

Virginia J. Barnett, secretary

Office Equipment

The American Begonia Society wishes to dispose of the following equipment which it can no longer use: 1500-E Elliot Addressograph, Smith stencil typewriter, Allen typewriter. Non-profit organization given preference. The new owner will be responsible for transporting the equipment to his premises. Contact ABS Treasurer Gil Estrada, 7914 Springer Street, Downey, CA 90242.

PLANT SALE

Don't miss the preview at the National Convention and Show Friday night, September 15th! As in the past, this is open to members only and all plants on the plant table are 10% off. We are truly grateful to have had such a good response to our request for plant donations, and have heard there are more coming. We will be accepting plants for the plant table all day Thursday and Friday. If it's impossible for you to get them to the Red Lion Motor Inn Thursday, please try to get them there early Friday so we will have time to price them before the preview. **SEE YOU AT THE CONVENTION.**

Lou Thompson
Plant Sales Chairman

APPOINTED OFFICERS

Awards Chairman Thelma O'Reilly
 10942 Sunray Place, La Mesa, CA 92041

Bookstore Manager

Branch Relations Director Evelyn Cronin
 88 Ledgeways, Wellesley Hills, MA 02181

Business Manager Bill Walton
 P.O. Box 4048, Torrance, CA 90510

Historian Frances Estrada
 7914 Springer St., Downey, CA 90242

Judging Course Director Margaret Lee
 1852 31st St., San Diego, CA 92102

Librarian Katherine Alberti
 3322 Troy Dr., Hollywood, CA 90068

Membership Secretary Jacqueline Garinger
 8302 Kittyhawk Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90045

Nomenclature Director Rudolf Ziesenhenn
 1130 N. Milpas St., Santa Barbara, CA 93103

Parliamentarian Margaret Taylor
 111 Evelyn Drive, Anaheim, CA 92805

Past Presidents Group Chairman Walter Pease
 8101 Vicksburg Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90045

Research Director M. Carleton L'Hommedieu
 370 Locust Ave., Oakdale, NY 11769

Public Relations Director

Round Robin Director Mabel Corwin
 1119 Loma Vista Way, Vista, CA 92083

Seed Fund Director Linda Miller
 4613 Cochran St., Simi Valley, CA 93063

Show Chairman Joan Coulat
 4111 DePaul Court, Sacramento, CA 95821

Slide Librarian Nathan Randall
 8200 Irondale Ave., Canoga Park, CA 91308

Speakers Bureau Nathan Randall
 8200 Irondale Ave., Canoga Park, CA 91308

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If your branch director is not listed, it means that the ABS Secretary does not have the name and address on file. Please send additions and changes to Virginia Barnett, 1213 S. Mullender Ave., West Covina, CA 91790.

The next branch directory will appear in the October issue.

The Board of Directors will meet August 28 at South Gate Auditorium.

DO IT NOW VOTE

The ballot on page 177 of the July issue must be mailed by September 2, 1978 to be counted.

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