Austin Area Begonia Society Branch
of the American Begonia Society

VOLUME 11, NUMBER 10 NEWSLETTER October 2017

NEXT MEETING:
OCTOBER 22
2 P.M.
7620 South Hwy 183
Lockhart, TX 78644
Please bring a food dish to share with others.

EVENTS:
ZILKER BOTANICAL GARDEN CONSERVANCY

October 21 1–5 P.M.
October 22 1–4 P.M.
VIOLET CROWN CLUB FLOWER SHOW
"Butterflies: My, How They Fly"

October 28
10:30 A.M.–4:30 P.M.
SHOW AND SALE IN GREENE ROOM AND AUDITORIUM
Porcelain Arts, Iris, Daylily, Bonsai, Herb, African Violets
No Begonias

November 4
10 A.M. UNTIL Noon
Garden Decorating 101

November 11 and 12
Auditorium
PLEIN ART SHOW AND SALE

AUSTIN AREA BEGONIA SOCIETY BRANCH TO MEET OCTOBER 22 IN JIM AND JOAN'S HOME IN LOCKHART

Jim and Joan Estes have kindly invited the Austin Branch, the Alamo Branch, and the Houston Branch to meet Sunday, October 22 in their ranch home located at 7620 South Highway 183 in Lockhart for a delightful lunch and meeting. Although Jim has semi-retired from growing begonias, he will have some special ones that will delight the visitors to his unique garden near the back door.

Please bring a dish of vegetables, a dessert, or salad to go with a meat prepared by Jim and Joan. The dinner will begin at 2 p.m.

Remember that their home is out of Lockhart past the Walmart on the left, and then drive until you reach the water storage tank that is a cylinder tower where you need to slow down and watch for traffic in both directions before you turn to the left. A huge red sign will indicate that their driveway is the 3rd one. Travel down the road until you see the barn, the greenhouse, and the beautiful country home.

AUSTIN AREA BEGONIA SOCIETY BRANCH
OF THE AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY
MEETING MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 24, 2017

The Austin Area Begonia Society Branch met at 2 P.M. in the Greene Room of the Austin Area Garden Center, 2220 Barton Springs Road, on September 24, 2017.

Doug Byrom, president, presided. The following members were present: **Charlotte Boyle, Vickey Cole, Mary Drake, Ken Fuchs, Jackie Johnson, Jim Landers, Arlene Lantz, Nelda Moore, Valerie Morris, Julie Savasky, who became a new member, Verlene Schoen, and Geneva Townsend**.

Council Report

Vickey Cole encouraged members to e-mail the survey for Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy even if you do not answer all questions. Cat Newlands needs this by October. If you belong to several clubs, please complete the survey only once. surveymonkey.com/r/2tqjzl Vickey also mentioned the update on kitchen use by clubs.

Cindy Klemmer announced that Merridith Jiles is the new Garden Center Coordinator. Garden changes and clean up will proceed; the Garden Center floors will be waxed October 12; and Monarch Appreciation Day will be observed October 21 with activities for children.

The AAGC-ZBGC Agreement with the city will be accepted when Vickey Cole attends the council meeting October 10. The Austin Area Begonia Society has voted on its acceptance. Also on October 10 at 11:30 A.M. Edie Musgrove's name will be added to the Rose Garden Memorial Arch. Edie has worked in many areas, has held several offices, and served as secretary for the Austin Area Garden Council when she died.

Weeding Wednesdays will be the second Wednesday of the month for club members to volunteer with Parks and Recreation staff to weed, plant, clean, or whatever needs to be done in the garden that day from 7:30 A.M. until 10:30 A.M. While the garden opens at 9 A.M., someone will open the gate for anyone interested in volunteer work to enhance the areas.

Motions and actions

Nelda Moore made a motion to send $100 to the American Begonia Conservation Fund in memory of Charles Jaros.

Nelda made the motion to send Debbie Garrett a check for $50 as a memorial gift in memory of Dianna Lee Wilkerson since Diana and her husband reported on the Species Bank at Fort Worth Botanic Garden.

Doug Byrom will receive a check for $100 for an award that will be presented to the Rekha Morris Best Species shown during the Southwest Region/ ABS Plant Show.

All motions passed.

(*Continued on next page*)

Program (*continued*)

Jackie Johnson presented a list of heat/shade tolerant Begonia Species and Hybrids. Members will study the begonias that were recommended and add or comment about those begonias that did not grow successfully in the summer heat.

After the meeting was adjourned, each person received a ticket to be used to select a beautiful begonia donated by Doug. Then Valerie used the ticket for those who wanted to grow the B. 'Violet. Terrarium Plant'. Other plants were sold for $5 each.

Then most of the members hurried to the Begonia Garden, where Michael was watering the plants. Nelda had fertilized and watered on Wednesday, but will return to the gardens after she feels well enough to be able to work again after eye surgery. Valerie will have the same surgery, and Verlene Schoen had a pacemaker inserted on Monday after the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Nelda Moore, Secretary

PLANTS ARE TALKATIVE, SMART AND RESILIENT

When Doug Byrom mentioned that he did not use pesticides on his garden begonias after spraying just one time and discovering that all beneficial insects did not come around, this editor remembered an article that was published in *Tall Talk* Fall 2017 about "Chemical Conservations of Plants and Bugs" by Eric R. Eaton of Colorado Springs, Colorado. He is the principal author of the *Kaufman Field Guide to Insects of North America* and writes the blog "Bug Eric."

Plants — flowers, vegetables, trees, and shrubs — need to receive credit for being alert, smart, talkative, and resilient when insects attack them. They can defend themselves by calling good bugs to the rescue, or by alerting nearby plants through the language of chemicals. Eric uses the word "semiochemicals," the Greek word for "signal."

For example, with pheromones "insects attract the opposite sex, create scent trails to a food source, send an alarm, attract others to congregate in a localized area, or otherwise influence the behavior of individuals of the same species." In addition to pheromones there are 3 other classes of semiochemicals known as allelochemicals: allomones, kairomones, and synomones.

"Allelochemicals play no part in growth, development, or reproduction. They are created by plants to have advantage over other plant species to defend against herbivores. They influence the behavior of another species to the benefit of the organism producing the allomones, to resist insect attacks such as recruiting beneficial predatory and parasitic insects and mites to feast on herbivorous bugs plaguing the plant."

Kairomones are mediators that benefit the receiver of the chemical cue, but not the originating organism that emits the kairomone.

Synomones also involve two different species, but benefit the sender and receiver.

Since insects are chemotactile animals that perceive the world through smell and touch, they are tuned in to the allelochemicals produced by plants. Insects that feed on roses recognize the plant by the airborne fragrance that attracts welcome pollinators and plant surface chemicals. The leaf, stem, and root draws unwanted herbivores. Butterflies have taste receptors on their feet so the female scratches the leaf surface to release volatile chemicals or kairomones that will tell her if her eggs will be safe and the caterpillars will not starve or be poisoned.

Another example displaying plant communication is a species that emits a distress signal to another plant that can send predatory mites to attack spider mites on it. With the alert by distress allomones, the nearby kin can produce more chemical defenses.

Sometimes a plant becomes infested by aphids and sacrifices a part of it by shedding some of the leaves, exposing the clumping of insects to predators such as birds, lacewings, ladybugs. The plant has used its chemical arsenal to the reminder of the plant, leaving only a part of it to be chemical free.

Mr. Eaton cautions about invasive plants and noxious weeds that use allelochemicals to suppress competition from native plants and crops. “The

your garden approaches the native ecosystem in which it lies, or at least mimics the natural landscape, the more likely your plants will be to flourish."

NEW MEMBERSHIP REGISTRAR FOR ABS

Linda Kammerer is taking Paul Rothstein's role as membership registrar for the American Begonia Society. To renew membership and make payments please use the address below:

Linda Kammerer
P.O. Box 6261
Providence RI (Rhode Island) 02940

SOME PLANTS TO GROW TO HELP GARDENERS

French marigolds fight whiteflies, tomato hornworms, bean beetles, cucumber beetles, nematodes, asparagus beetles.

Nasturtuim repel squash bugs and whiteflies while chrysanthemums can be used against roaches, ants, Japanese beetles, ticks, silverfish, lice, fleas, bedbugs, and root knot nematodes.

Castor beans and narcissus can discourage moles.

Four o' clock is good for poisoning Japanese beetles. Every part of the plant is poisonous. Lavender repels moths, scorpions, fleas, flies, and mosquitoes.

Geraniums prevent leafhoppers and com earworms while oregano keeps many pests away.

Petunias can rid your garden of aphids, tomato hornworm, leafhoppers, squash bugs.

Rosemary repels slugs, snails, and carrot fly.

Garlic prevents root maggots, peach tree borer, and rabbits.

Then there are pitcher plants and Venus fly traps that attract and devour insects.

New AABS member Julie Savasky