

**Blooming Begonias Newsletter**  
**December, 2022 – January, 2023**

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

**Next Meeting: February 13, 2023 @ 7:00 p.m. – ABS Program on the International Begonia Database and Mini Auction**

**Upcoming events:**

**Groom the Garden – Begonia Garden at Mounts Botanical on Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup> @ 10 a.m.**

**Garden Tours of Member Pauline Ma and Member Frances Drescher on Saturday, March 18<sup>th</sup> (Time TBD).**

***President's Message***

It's not too late to wish all members a Happy New Year! We have a lot to look forward to in 2023 with our new slate of officers. I am immensely grateful to the members who have agreed to serve in their various capacities on the Board. It's their commitment and hard work that will usher our society into a year of exciting events to include garden tours, interesting speakers, plant auctions and of course, delightful fellowship with each other. Our mild south Florida weather has been wonderful! I have been especially enjoying the resultant lovely begonia blooms springing up in the landscape.

***Rebecca Stallard, President***

***Minutes - Begonia Society of the Palm Beaches***  
December 12, 2022 Meeting

**BEGONIA SOCIETY OF THE PALM BEACHES, INC.**

The regular monthly meeting of the Begonia Society of the Palm Beaches was held on Monday, December 12, 2022, at 6:30 P.M, in the Mounts Auditorium, the President being in the chair and the Secretary being present.

**REPORTS**

**President**

Rebecca thanked members who met earlier to set-up and decorate the tables for a pot-luck dinner. Donnie served as door opener.

Dinner was ready at 6:40. Rebecca read a poem offered by a member of the Boca Raton Garden Club for grace before the meal. She thanked the members who brought a dish for the dinner. Rebecca called the meeting to order at 7:30.

**Vice President**

Marcia is in England fulfilling a teaching assignment.

**Treasurer**

Frances reported the balance as of November 2022.

She encouraged members to pay ABS dues on line before January 1, 2023 as they will be increased. BSPB dues will not increase. They may be paid at meetings or by mail.

**Membership**

Sandy Sklar reported 10 members present. There are 29 BSPB paid members.

**Refreshments**

Sandy and Beverly will provide refreshments for the January 2023 meeting.

**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 website is up to date.

**Unfinished Business**

**INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS**

Denise Friedlander did the honor of installing the officers for 2023.

President	Rebecca Stallard
Vice President	Lois Petzold
Secretary	Marcia Bedasse
Treasurer	Frances Drescher
National Representative	Beverly Lichtenstein

All committee chairs and Donnie, (door opener), selected a begonia as appreciation for their service.

**New Business**

A discussion concerning the possibility of changing the date and time to tend the Begonia Garden at Mounts was tabled to be addressed at the January, 2023 meeting.

Lois announced that the program for the January 9<sup>th</sup> meeting will an auction of begonias and a picture of a begonia.

Sandy Arlund is in a rehabilitation center after a fall. Her address will be forwarded to members who wish to send a card.

**BEGONIA BINGO**

Pat Dempsey called the numbers and everybody went home with at least two beautiful begonia plants.

An auction of a begonia picture was held at 8:15

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:35P.M.

Beverly Lichtenstein, Secretary

*Minutes - Begonia Society of the Palm Beaches  
January 9, 2023 Meeting*

**BEGONIA SOCIETY OF THE PALM BEACHES, INC.**

The regular monthly meeting of the Begonia Society of the Palm Beaches was held Monday, January 9, 2023 at 7:00 P.M. in the Mounts Auditorium.

The meeting was called to order by president Rebecca Stallard at 7:15 P.M. with 15 members & guests present.

President Stallard opened the meeting and thanked the following people:

- Donnie and Frances for the keeping door open
- Bev, Linda, Donnie, Sandy for providing the snacks.

**Reports**

**Vice President**

Lois reported that a garden tour is planned for March 18 at Pauline Ma’s & Frances Drescher’s homes. Currently hybridizing is planned for future program. Additionally, Palmer Crippen, the new horticulturalist from Mounts is willing to do a program. Lois also reported that (1) Palmer Crippen is willing to assist the society in refreshing the begonia garden at Mounts, and (2) Rick Schoellhorn’s program on hybridizing begonias is planned for a future program.

**Treasurer**

Frances reported the balance as of today’s date. Currently the society has approximately \$3,600 in the working account.

## **Membership**

Guests at the meeting were:

- Dan and Marel, (Donnie)
- Candace (Ann C)
- Christina Van Wyk, president of the Delaware Valley branch and Virtual Committee chair of ABS (Lois)

## **National Rep**

No report

## **Newsletter**

Leslie Fee requests that members continually send information for the newsletter. Leslie reiterated that members should send photos, articles and other information whenever available. Information sent in will be used in the newsletter as needed.

## **Webmaster**

No report

## **Old Business**

It was agreed that work in the garden at Mounts will be the Saturday following the scheduled monthly meeting at 10 AM. February's workday is Saturday, Feb. 18.

## **New Business**

None

## **Announcements**

None

## **New Business**

Frances Drescher made a motion to donate \$150 to the ABS Virtual Education Committee

Donnie seconded the motion which was then unanimously approved by members present.

Visiting president of the Delaware Valley Branch, Christina Van Wyk, shared ideas that proved successful for the Delaware Valley branch in:

- Attracting members
- Conducting successful meetings

Christina noted an Influx of younger members due to branch posts on Instagram and Facebook. The branch has a designated social media member who monitors social media following and responds with an email from the branch. Christina also noted that a key strategy in attracting new, as well as younger members is to provide opportunities for members to acquire new and rare plants as well as opportunities to showcase their plants.

Regarding successful meetings, the branch:

- Seeks invitations from organizations to conduct a judging school.
- Invites other organizations to participate in their meetings.

## **Program**

VP Lois Petzold facilitated the Begonia Auction. She provided a brief overview of the plants which was followed by lively bidding. Many of the members present were able to take home at least one plant.

Refreshments for the February 13 meeting will be provided by Lois Petzold and Rebecca Stallard.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55

Marcia Bedasse, Secretary

“Oh what fun it is to...” enjoy a Holiday Potluck and Begonia Bingo gathering! December’s traditional gathering was, as always, a fun time for all. Several members arrived early and created beautiful tablescapes for our potluck dinner which consisted of many delicious dishes. Linda Lichtenstein baked a whimsical and very real looking “Grinch” cake. Patrick Dempsey, once again, was our lively and humorous bingo caller. We all brought home at least two beautiful begonias.

The meeting also saw the installation of our 2023 slate of officers. Rebecca Stallard will be guiding us for a second year as President, keeping track of all of our chapter activities and running our great meetings. Lois Petzold is our new Vice President and already hard at work securing meeting speakers and planning fun events. Marcia Bedasse is our new Secretary with the important task of recording our meeting minutes. Frances Drescher is continuing her meticulously organized bookkeeping duties as Treasurer. Last, but not least, is our National Representative, Beverly Lichtenstein, who will be the liaison between our local chapter and the national American Begonia Society. We are thankful to these members who have stepped up to volunteer their time and efforts to keep our society vibrant and moving forward.



*Holiday tablescape*



*Linda’s “Grinch” cake*



*Bingo Caller, Pat Dempsey*



*Bingo Plant – B 309*



*2023 Officers – Rebecca Stallard, President; Lois Petzold, Vice President; Marcia Bedasse, Secretary (Emily Dempsey standing in for Marcia); Lois Petzold, Treasurer; Beverly Lichtenstein, National Representative*



A mini auction was held as part of our January meeting. Lois Petzold graciously traveled to Harmony Gardens in north Florida to obtain the plants for the auction. Harmony grows begonias beautifully and has recently been stepping up their “cane” game. We have all become familiar with their rhizomatous and other plants but up until recently our group was not able to bring in canes for either sale or auction. Thanks to Harmony’s increased propagation of canes we were able to auction off several of these beauties. Cane begonias thrive in our southern climate so it’s nice to have the opportunity to add more to our gardens. Lois provided the below photos of a couple of the amazing canes that Harmony has in “the works.” Harmony’s Tinkerbelle, pictured below, has interesting leaf features. This is a popular plant that is always sold out. Harmony’s Obsidian Monarch promises to be an amazing plant. A closeup of one of the leaves is pictured below – it’s almost a foot long! This is not yet in production.

Lois also brought a guest, Christina Van Wyk, to join us in January. Christina hails from Pennsylvania and is the president of the Delaware Valley Branch Begonia Society. It was quite refreshing to hear how their society is keeping up with the times and attracting new and especially younger members. Their presence on social media provides a major boost in spreading interest in begonias.

Christina shared that her love of plants began when she worked for a wholesale nursery while in school and started small with some houseplants. Her love for plants grew from there and her begonia fever hit about 20 years ago when she purchased her first begonia. She joined ABS and has been an avid collector since. She participates in flower judging and will be a judge at the prestigious Philadelphia Flower show coming up in March. Fortunately, for all of us, Christina had the foresight to get the ABS Virtual Education up and running. I was curious how that all started and she explained that she was in Australia for the Begonia Convention which coincided with the beginning of the dreaded pandemic. Once she returned home the reality set in that meetings would no longer be able to be held in person. She arranged for their society meetings to be held via ZOOM. They reached out to nearby branches to determine if there was an interest in joining their branch for the ZOOM meetings. News of the interest growing in their ZOOM programs got back to the ABS and from there the programs were opened up to all ABS members. Christina chairs the ABS 5-person Virtual Education committee which is tireless in their efforts to seek out interesting speakers and programs to bring to the national ABS membership.

If you haven’t yet explored the ABS website, be encouraged to do so. The virtual education programs can be found under the Membership tab. Members should be receiving notification of upcoming virtual education programs. Members can join the program and participate in a question and answer session. Once the program is complete, it is saved on the website so that members can view it later. The next virtual program planned will be put on by Ross Bolwell and Bernard York who will speak on Australian hybrids and hybridizers. Look for that program to be presented live in March.

We enjoyed visiting with Christina. She plans to be back in Florida in August and if her trip coincides with our meeting date we hope to welcome her back for another visit.

Don't miss our next meeting, where another mini auction will be held. There will be some very special plants brought in for this meeting. A sneak preview photo of some of the plants is below.

Looking forward to seeing everyone on Monday, February 13th for next our meeting – ABS Program by Ross Bolwell – International Begonia Database and Mini Auction.



*Collage of Begonias to be bid on at February mini auction*



*Harmony's Tinkerbelle*





*Harmony's Obsidian Monarch*



*Harmony's Obsidian Monarch – leaf closeup*

**Mark your calendars for upcoming events:**

Groom the Garden on Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup> @ 10:00 a.m. Bring your gloves and garden tools and help to spruce up our society's Begonia Garden at Mounts Botanical.

Garden Tours at the homes of Pauline Ma and Frances Drescher on Saturday, March 18<sup>th</sup>. Pauline and Frances live in the same neighborhood so we can enjoy both of their lovely gardens in one morning.

Happy New Year to All,  
***Leslie Fee, Newsletter Editor***