

GloxNews

The publication of the Greater New York Gesneriad Society

Volume 52, Number 10 – June 2017

<http://www.nygesneriad.org>

<http://www.gesneriadsociety.org>

Saturday, June 17, 2017

11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

at the **LGBT Community Center**
208 West 13th Street (between 7th & 8th Avenues),
New York, NY (check at reception to confirm
room) Subways: A, C, E, 1, 2, 3, 9 to 14th Street;
L to 8th Avenue

Primulinas

with Joe Palagonia

Our speaker this month will be Joe Palagonia from the Long Island Gesneriad Society, and he will give a presentation on growing *Primulina*, the genus from southwest China and beyond, that combines great leaf texture and patterns with beautiful flowers. Joe is an excellent grower of both African Violets and other gesneriads, who regularly wins the blue ribbon sweepstakes at the Long Island show in the spring. We can expect a wide-ranging discussion of the variety of species present in the genus and how to grow the plants well.

We'll also have our usual judged Little Show, a fantastic plant sale, a raffle, show and tell, coffee & pastries, socializing and more. Hope to see you then. Gary



Gesneriads and their beautiful foliage. From top: Joe Palagonia's *Primulina* 'Destiny', blue ribbon-winner at the Long Island show last month, photo by Paul Susi. Gary Vellenzer's *Primulina* 'Loki', blue ribbon at the Little Show in May (photo by Lily Huie). Also from Gary, *Rhytidophyllum tomentosum*, also a blue ribbon winner at the Little Show (photo by Lily Huie). See report on p. 3.

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GLOX NEWS is the official publication of the Greater New York Gesneriad Society, a chapter of The Gesneriad Society (formerly AGGS). It is published monthly, except July and August. GNYC annual dues are \$20 for individuals, \$15 for seniors/youth, platinum memberships are \$30. Send dues and address changes to the Membership Chair. Article submissions should be posted or emailed to the Editor.

International dues for TGS are separate from the chapter dues and are \$25 for one year and \$70 for three years; family membership is \$26 for one year and \$73 for three years. Membership to the Gesneriad Society includes subscription to GESNERIADS, the society's journal. Dues may be mailed to Bob Clark, Gesneriad Society Membership Chair, 1122 East Pike Street, PMB 637, Seattle, WA 98122-3916.

NOTE TO EDITORS

Usage of material from the GLOX NEWS is permitted with the provision that credit is given to the publication and the original author and that no editing is done without permission from the original author.

PRINTING SCHEDULE AND DEADLINE INFORMATION

The deadline for submissions to the GLOX NEWS is the Saturday two weeks before the chapter meeting. Electronic submissions are encouraged and can be emailed to piabinha@yahoo.com.

President's Message – June 2017

Well, it's June already and this year is flying by! It's a wonderful time of year; everything has either bloomed and/or is in bloom as I write this. Makes one want to grow something doesn't it? Well everyone who attended our annual prop meeting should be seeing results by now. I hope everyone had good luck with their cuttings, rhizomes, and seeds. We'll look forward to seeing the results in September. Remember this month's meeting is important since we will be electing a slate of officers for next year. I urge everyone to think about joining a committee or becoming involved in some way when we start our new season of meetings this September. Your help and skills are needed.

The big event in the gesneriad calendar, as everyone knows, is the annual convention that is always held during the July 4th weekend. If your personal and vacation plans enable you to attend the convention, do yourself a favor and make the trip. You'll love it. The lectures, meetings, conferences, side trips, not to mention the plant sale are totally enjoyable, and you get to meet some wonderful people with which you have a common interest. Seeing old friends isn't a terrible thing either. Great plants, great people, great experience.

Unfortunately I was unable to attend our May meeting, but I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at this month's meeting.

Al

Membership Notice

Annual membership fees are due for the coming membership year. Our new membership secretary, Lily Huie, will be accepting your dues at the June meeting. The membership year runs from September through August and everyone's membership is up for renewal now, with three exceptions (George Axiotakis, Judith Maye and Michael Riley/Francisco Correa).

Dues are: \$20 individual/household,
\$30 individual/ household platinum,
\$15 Senior and \$20 senior platinum.

A platinum membership gives you priority access to the plant sales table.

May Little Show Report by Michael Riley (see photos on page 1 and on Facebook)

What a nice show we had at our GNYGS meeting in May! Carolyn Ripps brought to show a nice new hybrid that she created, *Sinningia* 'Flair' x 'Platinum Plus', which the judges thought that it was well grown, just starting to flower, but not terribly distinctive relative to existing similar hybrids. Distinction is probably the most important element in judging a new hybrid and some hybrids better represent a "good next step" in the objective of the hybridizer than a "final step." It received 86 points and a red ribbon to match its lovely flowers!

Gary Vellenzer had just entered plants in the Long Island Gesneriad Society show and won several nice ribbons – so this is a week later and there is no rule that says one can't enter the same plant in another show, providing it is in good condition. Well ... Gary's *Sinningia* 'Li'l Georgie' was not only still in peak flower but the judges scored it a very high 97 points and a blue ribbon because it was beautifully grown and still "peaking." The nice thing is that it also received a score of 97 the previous week with a different set of judges at the Long Island Show – this is the kind of consistency and objectivity that we strive for in the judging program of The Gesneriad Society. Gary also entered a nice plant of *Primulina* 'Loki' for foliage and it received 96 points. Oh, did I forget to say that Gary also entered a plant of *Rhytidophyllum tomentosum* for foliage, which also received 96 points. It seems that Gary is attempting to set a new standard for excellence in our Little Shows – and we heartily applaud his efforts!

Francisco Correa entered a plant from the Romanian hybridizer, Serge Saliba, named *Sinningia* 'SRG's Daydreamer', a very nice small plant with huge pink and white flowers. It was not quite centered in the pot and perhaps a bit young for "prime time" so it was scored 89 points and a red ribbon.

Judges were Paul Susi, Bruce Boyd and Francisco Correa, with Lily Huie clerking. Thanks to all.



Photo above left, blooming at home for Paul Susi is this *Primulina maciejewskii*, a new discovery from southwest China, which has a faint tobacco scent in the leaves. At right, blooming at home for Tshuh Yang Chen is this new hybrid by Jay Sespico, *Sinningia* 'Rock Loves the Poet'.

The Saturday Observer: Growing Problems and Solutions, a report on the May meeting by Paul Susi

In my experience there is nothing that engages chapter members more than discussing growing challenges and their solutions. We have had panels on our favorite plants in the past but the May meeting was the first time that all the members at the meeting constituted the panel and almost everyone had a growing problem or a success to report.

Gary opened the discussion with his problem with African violets. Some of those he is growing are putting out small leaves in the center of the plant. Ludmilla reported a similar problem with brown patches on some of her strep leaves. There were several possible suggestions regarding the cause of this, including thrips and spider mites, but mites were suspected in both cases. It was suggested by several members that spider mites can be controlled with Safer soap spray or a miticide. Spraying should be done until new growth looks healthy. Another suggestion from Zabel was to use diluted witch hazel and water. Since mites inhabit the undersides of leaves, you need to get under the leaves and you need to get all the stages of mite growth; repeated treatments are necessary. Infected plants must be isolated. As insurance against the plants not surviving either the infestation or the treatment, some un-infested outer leaves should be removed, washed and propagated. The grower could also just ditch the sick plants after making leaf cuttings to propagate. Carolyn reported controlling her greenhouse mealy bug infestation with Safer insecticidal soap. She recommends this method since the soap doesn't damage new growth. It works by smothering the mealy bugs and doesn't damage new growth and works best on the younger stages of mealy bug growth. An old remedy mentioned by Gussie involves preparing a solution of nicotine water from tobacco and spraying this on the plants.

There were a few success stories from those at the meeting too. Bruce discussed his success with *Sinningia* 'Bewitched,' which has bloomed for the first time in six years. He grows it in a western exposure with blocked afternoon sun. It's on a pebble tray and he feeds it with dilute African violet fertilizer. George told us of his solution to sinningias putting out numerous growths crowded in one part of the tuber. He removes some of the growths to give the others more room. He is also of the opinion that putting plants outside earlier rather than later strengthens the plant, even though there may be some minor leaf loss. Regardless when the plants are put

outside, it is important to acclimatize them to the sun slowly. Gary discussed his success with LED lights. When he switched to LEDs he reduced the amount of time his lights are on. His winning entries in the Long Island Gesneriad Society show early in May are definitely evidence of the change.

Gussie mentioned that she often forgets to water. This happens even now that she is wicking - she often forgets to fill the reservoirs! There didn't seem to be any recommendations on how she could overcome this problem. She has found, however, that she can leave plants for two weeks with a filled reservoir (if she has remembered to fill the reservoirs). As an alternative to wicking reservoirs for each plant, Michael discussed how some growers fill deep trays with water and place egg crate on the top of the tray. Individual plants are wicked and they are placed on the egg-crate. This provides a large reservoir for many wicked plants and increases humidity, similar to using capillary matting. Gary has recently switched to capillary matting as a watering method and has been pleasantly surprised at the very positive results. Although he doesn't generally wick, when he does, Michael places the synthetic material thread up through one hole, over the top of the root ball and down the pot and out the other hole, basically created a reversed "U" shaped wick. Several members also recommended segregating plants when you buy them for about a month. Paul noted that he has never segregated his plants - no space, no time and no patience to do so - with no adverse effects. Luck or ???

Zabel had a question specific to her plant of *Sinningia* 'Gone Salmon Fishing,' which she purchased at a meeting. The plant is grown under T5 tubes and the leaves are yellowing. The recommendation was to move the plant farther away from the tubes or to have the lights on for a shorter period of time. Carol grows hers in a north window and it blooms for her.

There was a general discussion about potting mixes. The feeling was that most commercial mixes aren't what they used to be. Most are developed for commercial growers and are heavy. The gesneriad grower needs to add amendments like perlite and vermiculate to lighten these mixes. Gussie mentioned that the mixes she purchases seem to be full of twigs and other extraneous material. Paul purchases Farford (or whatever is available at the local plant nursery) and has not had the same problem.

Glox News

Greater New York Gesneriad Society

36 Crooke Avenue #F7
Brooklyn, NY 11226-1149

Attention: Next Meeting

June 17, 11 am-2 pm

Bulletin Board

Mark your calendars Our remaining meetings for this year are June 17, September 16, October 21, November 18 and December 16.

Board of Directors The following are the nominees for the slate of officers for the 2017-2018 season.

President - Al Romano, *Vice-President* - Gary Vellenzer, *Treasurer* - Bruce Boyd,
Membership Secretary - Lily Huie, *Recording Secretary* - Ed Hittig, *Historian* - Bob Jurgens,
Corresponding Secretary - Brigitte Lifschitz, *Director* - Megan Nelson

Plant Sales Thank you to all donors to the plant sales table in May: George Axiotakis, Gussie Farrice, Ed Hittig, Brigitte Lifschitz, Carolyn Ripps, Carol Smith and Gary Vellenzer. A special thanks to the Morris County African Violet Society for their donation of the African Violets.

Hospitality Well, I know it's our last meeting for a couple of months but that doesn't mean that we don't want a nice little treat to get us through the meeting.....Please remember to bring in a treat to share with your friends this month. . Thanks to everyone who donated last month! (*Al Romano*)

Gleanings *Gleanings* is a free monthly e-newsletter from The Gesneriad Society and includes articles and photos selected from chapter newsletters, the journal *Gesneriads*, and original sources. You can subscribe via email or download them from this page: <http://www.gesneriadsociety.org/current-gleanings>.

Reminder Please check our society's FB page with more regular updates (including recent photos of members' plants and of our meetings) at: <https://www.facebook.com/NYGesneriad>. Please remember to send photos of your plants to your editor at piabinha@yahoo.com to be posted there. (You don't have to join FB to view our photos or posts.)

Please remember to bring your donations to the *plant sales* table or *raffle* (plants, cuttings, rhizomes/tubers, all pest-free and properly labeled), as well as your beautiful specimens for the *Little Show* and items of interest for *Show and Tell*.

Please contribute to *GloxNews* Send articles, photos, questions, requests and other submissions to your editor at piabinha@yahoo.com. Deadline is always two weeks before meeting date. Got suggestions, cultural questions or any requests for plants or supplies? Send them along as well. We also need photographers to take pictures at the meetings. Please see your editor at the meeting to volunteer.