



THE DIXIE NEWS

Publication of Dixie African Violet Society (www.DAVS.org)
Affiliate of African Violet Society of America, Inc. (www.avsa.org)
Mary Lou Harden, Editor (mlhard@verizon.net)

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President's Message

Lynne Wilson

tpalynne@tampabay.rr.com

Dear Dixie Friends,

How are your New Year's resolutions working out? Did you resolve to try your hand at design? Try making a few designs for your own pleasure. The more you attempt, the more comfortable you will become as a designer.

One resolution I usually make is to keep track of my repotting schedule. Another is to grow a variety of plants that can be entered in different classes. Now is the time you can decide what classes your plants belong in. First, read the show schedule in order to determine which classes your plants should be entered in.

When you're looking over your collection of plants, perhaps you'll see that you have a great many variegated blue varieties. When you come to the show and enter the sales room, you'll know to avoid the variegated blues for something you do not grow. However, it's understood that no matter what your plan is there is always that special plant you have been seeking. Go ahead and purchase it but when you return home, sell or give away any blue variegated variety that has not met your expectations.

Our sales room in Atlanta will include:

Jo's Violets, Joanne Schrimsher, Victoria, TX
Pat's Patch/Buckeye Violets, Pat Hancock,
Middleton, OH
MrsStrepStreps, Kathy Spissman, Tucker, GA
Starz N Streps, Steve & Donna Turner, Southgate, MI
Travis Violets, Travis & Darlene Davis,
Ochlocknee, GA
The African Violet Club of Greater Atlanta, Atlanta, GA



Be sure to make your reservations for our **"Postcards from Dixie"** Convention and Show. We have a great group from Atlanta serving as our host club. Kathy Spissman, our Convention Director, has put together a wonderful team. Johnnie Berry, our Treasurer, is serving as our Show Chairman. Laura Walker is again serving as Registration Chairman. Betty Ferguson has scheduled the following workshops:

1. Michael Wenzel "Gesneriads of the Atlanta Botanical Garden and Their Horticulture"
2. Kurt Jablonski "Growing and Grooming Standard African Violets for Show".
3. Mary Lou Harden "Design Tips, Tricks, and Mechanics".
4. Pat Hancock and Mel Grice, "Judging African Violets and Other Gesneriads."

The Saturday dinner is always exciting. The raffle is something we all enjoy. I am putting aside lots of items for the raffle and I hope others will join me in making the raffle fun.

I look forward to seeing all my Dixie friends and meeting new ones!

Lynne Wilson

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DUES FOR ALL CLASSES OF MEMBERSHIP ARE DUE FEBRUARY 1 EACH YEAR!

Just Around the Corner

by Kathy Spissman
Dixie's Convention Director and
Local Convention Chair
770-939-5289 or
mrsstrepstrels@comcast.net

March 16 is just around the corner! Hope everyone has booked the hotel, sent in your reservation and is ready to enjoy the next Dixie Convention & Sale.

With AVSA so far away in New Mexico this year and in Florida in 2017, why not come to Atlanta in 2016? Check out the Convention Packet which is available on our website at WWW.DAVS.org.

Enjoy four wonderful presentations, our FREE Welcome Reception on Thursday night, 2 delicious dinners, presentation of Awards on Friday night and Raffle giveaways on Saturday night, There's FREE parking and two FREE buffet breakfasts for each day you are registered at the hotel.

Is this the year you've decided to do a Dish Garden or a Terrarium? I know you are grooming those lovely plants to enter in the show. Dixie always has a beautiful show and plant sale! This year we have five commercials selling plants and supplies, as well as the African Violet Club of Greater Atlanta, our host club. New African violet varieties will be available for you to take home to grow. . .and get a few for club members who could not come.

Also, there are many places in Atlanta to check out. The Georgia Aquarium, World of Coke Museum, Atlanta Botanical Garden, Stone Mountain, etc. Want to come early?? Stay a full week in Atlanta. The hotel may be able to honor a Sunday to Sunday stay at our convention rate, based on availability, (ask me for the person you need to talk to if you want to take advantage of this). So come early to enjoy the sites and attractions Atlanta has to offer.

CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS TO SHOW PACKET INFORMATION

Listed below are some corrections to the information you received in the Show Packet. Please note these changes in your copy:

- Entries Chair is Robbie McMeel, rmcmeel@bellsouth.net, 985-868-0439
- Hospitality Chair and Show Plant Sales Chair, Eunice Carmichael — Eunice's email is corrected to Ufc515@aol.com.
- **Dixie Convention Reservation Form. The deadline is extended to February 15, 2016. After that a late fee will be charged. The Cancellation deadline is February 29, 2016.**
- Dixie Presentations. The title of Pat Hancock and Mel Grice's talk is 'Judging African Violets and the other Gesneriads'.
- **Hotel Cut Off date is March 2, 2016.** Remember: Cancellations must be received 24 hours prior to arrival or 1 night room and tax will be assessed.
- Don't forget to sign up to Judge or Clerk! The deadline is February 8, 2016.
- Be sure to get your Design Reservations into Kathy Spissman by **(NEW DATE) March 7, 2016**. Cancellations must be made by March 10, 2016.
- **Parking at the hotel.** When you first come into the parking lot that is in a fenced area, take a ticket to get in the gated area. When you check in, your hotel key card will be the card to use when you exit and return at any time and it is always complimentary.
- **ALL AFFILIATE PRESIDENTS:** Please be sure all your members have a copy of this February Newsletter and they can look on the WWW.DAVS.org website for the Convention packet information. It isn't too late for your club to donate to the Goodie Bags, Raffle items or Hospitality goodies. Contact Kathy Spissman.
- **Be sure to use the Convention Packet information you received from Mary Lou Harden or the DAVS.org website.**

Any questions, just ask. See you in March!



AVSA 2016 Convention and Show Albuquerque, NM May 29 – June 5, 2016

AVSA's 70th consecutive convention and show will be held May 29 – June 5, 2016, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Hosts will be the Albuquerque African Violet Club.



Come join us to see our African violet show consisting of many different varieties and colors. There will be an AVSA commercial vendor salesroom with vendors from different parts of the country. During the convention, there will be seminars covering all aspects of growing and showing African violets. . .and there will also be a variety of scheduled tours.



Little Pro



Humako
Tineke

AVA of
Australia
photos

CONGRATULATIONS. . .to Johnnie Berry, Dixie's Treasurer, on being nominated as a Director for AVSA. If elected—and we're confident she will be--she will be sworn in at this year's AVSA convention in Albuquerque, NM.

JOIN THE AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF AMERICA

An AVSA membership offers the following benefits:

- Six full-color issues annually (64 pages each) of the African Violet Magazine filled with great growing information
- Regular columns include
 - For Beginners
 - Question Box
 - In Search of New Violets
 - Gesneriad Advice
 - Thinking Small
 - Coming Events



The AVM gives members continuous information on the latest developments in the African violet world. Commercial members advertise and sell the latest and most popular violets and products. The September issue contains an insert which lists all commercial members so you can find one near you or write for their latest catalog or list. *(Some information formerly published in the AVM, such as the Commercial List, can now be found on the website, on the Magazine page, and is available for members only.)*

- Discounted prices on all products sold in the AVSA Store.
- AVSA holds annual conventions in various regions of the country. All members may participate in these exciting events which feature judged shows open to all registered AVSA members.
- Informative presentations are made by experts in African violet culture.
- AVSA maintains an extensive library of slide and video programs which are available to members at a nominal service charge. Individual Membership is \$30. Send check with contact information to:
AVSA
2375 North Street
Beaumont, TX 77702
- Or register online at www.AVSA.org
- Commercial members also display their newest introductions and have booths where plants and plant-related products are sold.

NEWS FROM LOUISIANA STATE DIRECTOR BECKY MCMEEL



Finding new members and promoting a love of African violets are two of the reasons Sundowner's African Violet Society exists. We will be actively

pursuing both during our annual show and plant sale on April 9-10, 2016 at the Baton Rouge Garden Center on Independence Blvd. in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The theme of this year's event is "Violets Tour America".

We have our guests sign in as they enter the show and provide us with contact information. The following year, reminders are sent informing them of the upcoming show. The "repeat offenders" know to immediately hit the plant sales area because plants literally fly off the tables as our club is blessed to have many excellent growers always willing to share their violets and violet knowledge with our visitors.

A "sharing knowledge" session is held on the Sunday



afternoon for our visitors and violet basics are covered and questions answered. Besides being profitable for members and the club, a new member or two can also be had from the show.



Our club is also frequently invited to speak about violets at numerous garden clubs and organizations. Our former President Laura Moser recently spoke with the Gonzales Garden Club. As a result we had 2 ladies attend our meeting as guests and they wound up joining the club. Our membership now stands at 20, with 4 new members joining in the last 3 months.

Two joined as a result of the Hilltop Arboretum plant sale in October and 2 as a result of the garden club talk. So you see-if you get out and promote your club, good things happen.

At our last meeting held January 9th, we did an intro of ourselves to the guests and eventual new members. One of the comments new members shared was the fact that our club is quite "social" and more importantly-willing to share our wealth of plants and plant knowledge. Why keep it to ourselves when the purpose of the club is to promote. Am I right? One lady mentioned how she attended a violet meeting when she was a young mother and looking for a hobby. She recalled how the women in the group were stand-offish and not very welcoming to her. She did not go back. She expressed her happiness at being so warmly welcomed and made to feel like she belonged. As Sheldon from Big Bang Theory would say -- Bazinga! Goal met. Mission accomplished.

NEWS FROM FLORIDA STATE DIRECTOR, PHYLLIS KING. . .



Florida clubs are busy making preparations for their Spring shows.

Please check the list published under "Coming Events" on page 12 of this newsletter. It's always fun to visit local shows to see new varieties of violets and enjoy the creativity of those who enter designs.

Our State organization, The African Violet Council of Florida, will hold its Spring meeting at the Wyndham Hotel on International Drive in Orlando, FL, on Saturday, April 23. The Council is hosting the 2017 AVSA Convention at the Wyndham and this will be one of our planning meetings. We're counting on Dixie members to come to Orlando for the 2017 AVSA convention.

FROM THE DAVS AWARDS DESK

Marian & Greg Zoller
marigregz@gmail.com

It's Awards Time

Hello Dixie Members,

The DAVS Awards committee wants to thank the African Violet Club of Greater Atlanta (GA), the Upper Pinellas African Violet Club (FL) and the Lone Star

African Violet Council (TX) for their generous donations since the last Dixie News issue.

If you have been intending to send a donation for awards, now is the time. The convention is VERY soon. March is just around the corner. We have been busy placing orders for the rosettes, but we would like to have plenty of award money to give away.

Thanks!

Marian and Greg Zoller
4815 Oak Lane Cove
Arlington, TN 38002

BECOME A MEMBER!
(Membership Application on p. 15)
Please send check payable to DAVS to
Johnnie Berry, Membership Secretary
287 Fennel Way, SW, Atlanta, GA 30331
johnniepearl@comcast.net

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!

Johnnie Berry, Membership Chair & Treasurer
287 Fennel Way, SW
Atlanta, GA 30331-4107
johnniepearl@comcast.net

Gerard O'Keefe, Longwood, FL

Bobbi Johannsen, Jacksonville, FL,
new Life Member




by Sue Hoffmann



from the **AVSA Judges
Handbook for Growers,
Exhibitors and Judges**

- 1) The show schedule is the Law of the Show. Pg. 42 *Show Schedule*
- 2) All AVSA Scales of Points were developed to assure uniformity in judging. They are the standard for judges at all AVSA shows and should be understood and used by growers and judges. Pg. 49

- 3) The decision of the judges is always final (unless it conflicts with AVSA rules or the rules in the show schedule). Judges should respect the decisions of their fellow judges. Any questions must be presented to the judges by the Show Chairman prior to the completion of the judging. Pg. 50
- 4) POTS - Any shape of pot is permitted for specimen entries in AVSA shows. (Pg. 21) Specimen entries include African violets. Recently someone told me their club only allows round pots in their show. This is in conflict with AVSA rules.
- 5) A single-crown plant with a definite sucker will be eliminated from judging. (Pg. 49) For the purpose of judging, growths must have **FOUR** leaves to be considered a sucker. Pg. 52-53
- 6) Judges may ELIMINATE an exhibit from consideration if it does not conform to the schedule (Pg. 49), but an exhibit may only be DISQUALIFIED by the Classification committee. Page 39
- 7) There MUST BE three AVSA Judges on each judging panel.  Page 40
- 8) Judges should look at the Species as native or wild plants. A Species trailing variety with 2 crowns is completely acceptable and no points should be deducted for the deviation. Pg.59
- 9) If evidence of pests (thrips) or diseases is found on a plant during judging, it is eliminated and should be removed immediately from the showroom. Pg. 49
- 10) If a plant is registered as variegated and shows no variegation, the judges should deduct 10 points and continue to judge as usual. Pg. 52
- 11) When a variety is marked variable, it may qualify for entry in more than one class. Classification will designate placement by looking at the characteristics of the specific blossoms. Page 39
- 12) Chimera is defined as two or more genetically distinct segments or layers of tissue growing next to each other in the same blossom or leaf. Pg. 20

All information is from the African Violet Society of America Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges, 2011 edition.

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE AT

www.DAVS.ORG

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Nominating Committee proposes the following to serve as officers for the next two years:

Lynne Wilson, President
 Betty Ferguson, Vice President
 Johnnie Berry, Treasurer
 Laura Walker, Recording Secretary
 Robbie McMeel, Corresponding Secretary

Sue Hoffmann, Chair
 Becky McMeel
 Phillis Hinkle
 Therese Lynam
 Marian Zoller



**Know Your
 Dixie
 Commercial
 Vendors:**

Steve & Donna Turner of
 Starz n Streps, Southgate, MI
www.starznstreps.com

by Betty Ferguson

Like a lot of Dixie members' African violet stories, what started as a small hobby for Steve and Donna Turner has now gotten out of control. However, their hobby got out of control to the point it became a business. Their Starz n Streps website states:

"From one small light rack in a bedroom, our growing area has expanded considerably to where it is now — ten racks in our basement, and plants sitting anywhere a ray of light will shine. We have evolved our collection over the years from what were once just violets to include

Streptocarpus, Aeschynanthus, Columnea, and a few other Gesneriads.”

If you've been able to attend Dixie conventions over the last few years, you've met Steve and Donna and their unbelievably gorgeous Streptocarpus and African violet sale plants. But since Dixie Conventions move so fast and we keep the Turners so busy bagging up our purchases and making change, you may not have had a chance to actually get to know the Turners, who travel from Southgate, Michigan, to our Southern conventions.

When asked to comment on their “out of control hobby,” Steve said the couple started out selling plants at their Michigan state club sale. “The money was nice. That led to us growing more plants and then having to find places to sell them.” The electric bill for these hobbyists was insane, but they continued to grow and show, always looking for places to sell more plants. Pat Hancock asked them to supply chimeras for her table at the AVSA Convention in Austin. After that, the Turners decided to become commercial sellers.

The problem, Steve said, was that since they don't hybridize their own varieties, they would only be offering the same plants that all the other commercials were selling. The only way to compete with the other vendors was to offer the buyer a little bit more. That's why their plants are in 3" pots and, as a rule, in bloom. Strops are in 2 ½" and 3 ½" pots. This formula worked well for them, but they still always wound up taking plants home. Two years ago they decided to sell mainly Russian violets and Strops hybridized outside of the USA. This idea not only gave their business a boost, making Starz n Strops different from the other commercial vendors, it also gave Dixie members the opportunity to buy exotic violets and Strops that literally make our mouths water.



Streptocarpus Indi

Starz n Strops beauties seem to have the same effect even on the Turners. Donna said, “I love seeing plants bloom that I've never seen bloom before. All of these new, never before seen Russian African violets and European Strops sure make it exciting in our plant room. Some days I'm racing Steve to the basement just to see if any new flowers opened while we were sleeping.”

Steve and Donna each have their own talents so they focus on what each does best. Donna's job includes making sure that they stay on schedule for propagation, repotting, and disbudding. Steve acquires most of the plants and does the majority of propagation. Donna is the queen of potting babies and moving the plants to bigger pots. She also is in charge of bloom schedule and getting the plants ready for sale. Steve lets her know when she's getting too bossy by referring to her under his breath as the “Plant Nazi.” But then, Steve works a full time job as Operations Supervisor for Marathon Petroleum in Detroit, which does leave the majority of the work right now to Donna.

Donna said, “Steve is my best friend, and I can't believe how lucky I am to have someone equally enthusiastic to share my hobby with. We met when we were middle-aged, but good things come to those who wait.”



Streptocarpus Kika

Steve was born in the small town of North Canton in Northeast Ohio. (Yes, Steve, in our Southern eyes, that does make you a Yankee.) The community was like family in that small town, he said. “No secrets, no lies. Everybody knew everything about everyone. It was, after all, the 50s.” While he has no full siblings, Steve bragged that he holds half stake in thirteen others and added, “Guess both my parents knew what to do with a Saturday night!” Steve put in his first garden when he was eight years old. He finished high school and joined the service, which seemed like the right thing to do, he said, since so many young men were sacrificing their lives in Vietnam.

Donna was born in Akron, Ohio, known during the 1950s and 1960s as the “Rubber Capital of the World.” The factories of Firestone, Goodyear, and B F Goodrich turned the skies black with smoke, and the smell of rubber filled the air. Nobody thought much about pollution back in those days. “Imagine our amazement when we caught the Cuyahoga River on fire proving that even water can burn,” she said. Homes were small, families were large, and most households had only one car.

Dirt never bothered Donna. Weather permitting, she was outside playing by early morning and stayed out until dusk, only coming in to eat. She loved crafts. As her bedroom was filled with house plants, she would decorate her flower pots and make macramé hangers for her plants.

Steve has been President of Michigan State African Violet Society for ten or so years and is currently a Director for AVSA. He has also been in charge of the AVSA Convention tours for the last four years. Both Steve and Donna are AVSA judges. Donna has held the President and Treasurer positions in three different clubs but stepped down from her last position when they started the business.

Regarding their out-of-control hobby/business, both said their families think they're nuts. Steve added, "And in truth I can't really disagree with them!"

"Two things I've learned since I started growing African violets," Donna said when asked about anything else she'd like to add. "Never start a blow dryer after the plant stand lights kick on, or you'll pop the breaker in the bathroom and the plant room. Never wash root balls without using a wire strainer." The Detroit Water Department kept dipping the sewer behind the Turner house. "I'm sure they were looking for the source of coarse perlite that was tearing up their pump," she said.



Steve, on the other hand concluded, "I do like to have a drink or two when we are out at events. In fact, I think I'm rather entertaining, but my wife tells me that is faulty thinking on my part." I haven't seen Steve after a drink or two to comment on whether his thinking at that point is faulty or not, but the Turners' thinking on selling exotic African violets and Streptocarpus plants is right on track.

The Turners don't ship their plants, but they will take pre-orders for the Dixie Convention. You can visit the Starz n Steps website at <http://starznsteps.com/index.htm>.

IT'S ALL ABOUT

Community Service

By Glenn Shelton

Since the company I work for is very generous in terms of paid time for community service, I see community service as a driving desire of our day and time. Most people want and love to help others. As I have observed through my many years of involvement with AVSA clubs, the members are extraordinary givers.

To me an AVSA-sponsored show is at the top of the list as an act of community good will and those who participate are ambassadors for good will to their

community. An AVSA show serves people of every age, giving them information, delight, happiness and hope.

Who can measure the value for an eight-year-old girl who sees a show for her first time, going from plant to plant, thrilled and more thrilled and then wanting to have violets herself. Her happiness is beyond description.

And, who can measure the value for a ninety-year-old lady who has been waiting for months to see the show. Unable to drive herself, she arrives by taxi. She stays for a couple hours, taking in the great beauty of the show and fellowship of the club members. Her needs and desires are met.

never the same Who can measure the impact of our shows on the hearts, souls, and minds of the hundreds who attend? I was one among them. I was never the same after I saw my first AVSA show. I became in love with the African violet.

So, to me an AVSA show is community good will at the highest level.

Also, the benefits to each member who participates are numerous. As previously mentioned, to be the active ambassador meets one of our own deepest needs. Then as a grower of African violets, we focus on our own plants much more carefully with caring, consistent attention so that we can show our delightful varieties of African violet minis, semiminis, trailers, standards as well as the other gesneriads to an anticipating community. With an AVSA show in mind, we have the guiding star to help us focus and do our best.

When the door to the showroom opens and we see the radiant faces, we know our efforts at growing for show are worth every moment.

(Glenn Shelton is a member of Tampa African Violet Society where he is currently serving as show-co-chair.)



Candyman

**DAVS COLLECTIONS ROSETTES
AVAILABLE FOR
SHOW AWARDS**



By Robbie McMeel
Affiliate Awards Chair

For all affiliates who order the Dixie Collections Rosettes, it is important that the Collections Score Sheets be carefully and fully completed by all responsible parties.

To avoid delay in returning the DAVS Collections Score Sheets to the Affiliate Awards Chairman, the judges of the DAVS Collections should handle the DAVS Score Sheets in the same manner as the AVSA Collections Score Sheets. The judges should seal the DAVS Collections Score Sheets inside the pre-addressed envelope included with the packet and give it to the Show Chairman for return. This will prevent any unusual delays, loss of score sheets or complications that have arisen in the past. This will also ensure that your collections results will be published in *The Dixie News*.

To request the DAVS Collections Rosettes, please send one copy of your Show Schedule, along with \$10 shipping and handling fee for both the Standard and Semiminiature/Miniature Collections Rosettes and the following information: Name of Club, Show Chair, complete address including the 9-digit zip code, to:

Robbie McMeel, Affiliate Awards Chair
201 Greenwood Street
Houma, LA 70364

OTHER ROSETTES AVAILABLE

BALTIMORE AFRICAN VIOLET CLUB BEST FANTASY ROSETTE. To order this rosette for an AVSA-judged show, send your request along with check for \$5 to:

The Baltimore African Violet Club
JoAnne Baker-Pruner (410) 315-8513
125 Dalesway Drive
Pasadena, MD 21122-4057
E-mail: jpbaker@coldwellbankermove.com

OPTIMARA BEST OF SHOW ROSETTE FOR OPTIMARA & RHAPSODIE. To order this rosette and a sample kit of Optimara products, send your request to:

Optimara
Attn: Best of Show Rosette
P.O. Box 78565
Nashville, TN 37207
sales@optimara.com

Include your name, name of the AVSA-affiliated club holding the show, dates of the show, your complete address (NO P.O. Boxes), and daytime phone number.

RENEW TODAY! . . . Dues for all classes of memberships are due February 1 each year. Please send your dues now so you won't miss any issues of *The Dixie News*. You'll find the Membership Application on page 14 of this issue.

THE OTHER GESNERIADS

by Thad Scaggs tascaggs@gmail.com

**Lesser known and grown
Rhizomatous Genera**

The previous articles have been about rhizomatous gesneriads, one of the three groups in which we divide gesneriads along with tuberous and fibrous, although the family Gesneriaceae is divided geographically and taxonomically into two major groups: (1) Gesneriads of the Old World, found in Europe, Asia, Africa, Australasia, and most of the other major islands of the Pacific, and (2) Gesneriads of the New World, found in Mexico, Central and South America, and the West Indies. There is a third minor group found in southeastern Australia, New Zealand, New Caledonia, Lord Howe Island, and the southern tip of South America, but they appear more closely related to New World Gesneriads.



Gloxinella lindeniana

These divisions are further broken into subfamilies and additional characteristics separate subfamilies into taxonomic divisions called "tribes". There are a few odd genera that don't seem to fit well into any tribe, or even subfamily. But, we do not need to get more scientific than the divisions already described. Just to be clear, the rhizomatous gesneriads I've written about

have scaly rhizomes and all genera with scaly rhizomes are native to the New World except the genus Titanotrichum. There are several Old World genera that make smooth creeping rhizomes or runners that are different from the scaly-rhizomatous genera.



Eucodonia 'Adele'

The genera highlighted in this article are not as well known or grown as widely as Achimenes, Smithiantha, or Kohleria. There are several genera we've all heard of, seen, or grown, but to a lesser extent than the three above. You will see specimens from these genera in Gesneriad shows and some of us have grown some of them most likely Diastema, Eucodonia, Gloxinia, and Seemannia. The other scaly-rhizomatous genera in cultivation and you may very well see some or most of these in the larger Gesneriad shows, Amalophyllon, Gloxinella, Gloxinopsis, Heppiella, Mandirola, Monopyle, Niphaea, Nomopyle, Pearcea, Phinaea, Sphaerorrhiza, and Titanotrichum. How many of these are you familiar with? I have to admit there are several I have never grown and a few of those I can't remember ever seeing in person. I believe that is because their cultural requirements aren't as easy to replicate in our home environments.



Pearcea specuador

The genera I am most familiar with, the former or first four I have grown on my light stands and lanai. I grow several of these genera in pots on my lanai and some on my light stand. But, whether it's the beautiful fuzzy purple red foliage, and the colorful blossoms of some Seemannia, the fragrant spearmint aroma the

blossoms of Gloxinia perennis exude, or the foliage and blossoms of Eucodonia, these are genera I will continue to make space for and recommend giving them a try too. Some of the characteristics that make these genera so easy to continue growing are, they will take cultural deviances like drying out, sitting in water (though not for too long), and potting mixes that only need to drain well, but not necessarily what we would allow our show plants to grow in. The best or easiest reason for me to keep these genera in my collection is most of these plants, at least the former group can be grown outdoors, so a medium or even large pot is easily kept on the porch or lanai through the summer until the first frost then we allow them to go dormant after blooming, cut the dried foliage away and store the pot in a cool dry spot. Keeping these plants through dormancy is as easy as keeping Achimenes or Smithianthas.



Diastema vexans

Since space is at a premium for most of us the latter group for the most part, prefer or require higher humidity so species and hybrids of those genera do much better in a terrarium. It doesn't mean they're not worth giving a space on our shelves. They can be allowed to go dormant as well.

PUBLICATION DEADLINES

February issue – January 15

May issue – April 15

August issue – July 15

November issue – October 15

Rob's
Boolaroo





OF AN ADDICTION

by Betty Ferguson

Hi, my name is Betty and I'm a violetoholic, and since you're reading the *Dixie News*, I suspect you are, too. I hope you've been attending regular meetings. Oh, not the kind that would dry you and your violets out. I mean the kind of meeting that sends you home with even more plants to water. . .the kind of meeting that fuels your addiction so you can hardly wait to get home to dig into even the most mundane of violet tasks.

The AVSA Big Book, *Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors & Judges*, provides guidelines for violetoholics to live and grow and show by. If you haven't reviewed your Big Book in years and years, the newest version (2011) is sure to offer the latest information for addicts and to ensnare new growers into addiction. Our Big Book can be purchased here: <http://avsa.org/store-books>.

Like support groups for people with other addictions, our Big Book is only one of many outstanding publications to grow with. The African Violet world's best seller is Pauline Bartholomew's book, *Growing to Show*, which can also be purchased from the AVSA website.

Other must haves include the *First Class 2* software, which is a Windows®-based computer program that allows you to quickly and accurately look up Saintpaulia species, cultivar names and descriptions. It includes over 8,000 photos, and a subscription includes quarterly updates. FC2 is now available for Android users.



FC2's older sister, paper version, AVSA Master Variety List #15, is the International Registration Authority for the genus *Saintpaulia*, and according to the AVSA website "lists over 15,000 cultivar descriptions, all recognized species, and registered cultivars from the inception of registration February 25, 1949, through Aug 15, 2015."

The *African Violet Magazine* and the Gesneriad Society's *Gesneriads* are both packed full of information by knowledgeable African violet and other

Gesneriad addicts. Both magazines list vendors' contact information meant to addict even the most innocent growers and keep fully addicted growers snared.

Of course, you are already aware of the publication of the Dixie African Violet Society's support group, *The Dixie News*, which is edited by Mary Lou Harden. Mary Lou is always looking for newsletter articles by the badly addicted and by those who are better able to control their thirst for more (or else are in denial).

There is, without question, a support group near you, whether it is a local club, an internet addicts' forum, or correspondence with your Dixie sponsors.

No article on furthering the addiction of African violet growers would be complete without a listing of the 12 Steps of the Descent into Violet Addiction. They are:

- Step One: "Oh, look at the pretty flowers!"
- Step Two: "My grandma used to grow African violets."
- Step Three: "I don't have time for flowers unless they're plastic."
- Step Four: "I'd kill it for sure."
- Step Five: "I know one thing; I can't get water on its leaves. What else do I need to know?"
- Step Six: "I already have a purple one and a pink one, but I've just got to have that fluffy red one."
- Step Seven: "What? They even have names?"
- Step Eight: "Is there an African violet club in my area?"
- Step Nine: "Where can I get a light stand?"
- Step Ten: "I've got to get another light stand."
- Step Eleven: "How in the world am I ever going to sneak this many African violets into my house?"
- Step Twelve: "We eat on TV trays in the living room now."

Carve out time from your busy schedule to diligently maintain your African violet addiction. Regularly

attend group meetings. Keep your Big Book handy. And proselytize the innocent into the state of addiction whenever you quench your own thirst at garden centers and nurseries.

COMING EVENTS

February 26-27, 2016 - Tampa African Violet Society Annual Show, "Mad Hatter's Tea Party," Farm Bureau, 100 S. Mulrennan Road, Valrico, FL 33594. Show hours: Friday Noon to 5pm, Saturday 9am to 3pm. Sales open: Friday 9am to 5pm, Saturday 9am to 3pm

March 4-5, 2016 - Central Florida African Violet Society Annual Show, Beardall Center, 800 Delaney Avenue, Orlando, FL 32801.

March 11-12, 2016 - Fantasy African Violet Club, Spring Hill, FL, 22nd Annual Show & Sale, Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Club, 3357 Susan Drive & corner of Toucan Trail, Weeki Wachee, FL. African violets and supplies will be available. Information: Thad Scaggs at 352/606-2107 or 352/345-5271, tascaggs@gmail.com. www.sceneonline.biz/group/FAVC Facebook/FantasyAfricanVioletClub

March 16-19, 2016, Dixie AVS Annual Convention & Show, Holiday Inn Atlanta Airport-North.

March 19-20, 2016, First Austin AVS Annual Show, "Games Violets Play," Austin Area Garden Center, Zilker Botanical Garden, 2220 Barton Springs Road, Austin, TX 78746.

April 1-2, 2016, Heart of Jacksonville Annual Show & Sale, "Enchanted by Violets," San Jose Church of Christ, 6233 San Jose Blvd., Jacksonville, FL.

April 8-9, 2016, African Violet Club of Ocala Annual Show, Ocala, FL.

April 8-9, 2016, Magic Knight AVS, Show & Plant Sale, San Antonio Garden Center, 3310 N New Braunfels Ave., San Antonio, TX.

April 9-10, 2016, Cincinnati AVS, Annual Show & Plant Sale, Eastgate Mall, 4601 Eastgate Blvd., Cincinnati, OH.

May 29-June 5, 2016 – AVSA Convention & Show, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Albuquerque, NM. Convention information at www.AVSA.org.

CLUB NEWS

Fantasy African Violet Club, Spring Hill, FL, meets 2nd Saturday monthly except December. 12:30 pm for refreshments and 1:00 meeting. Guests are always welcome! New location: Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Club, 3357 Susan Drive and corner of Toucan Trail, Weeki Wachee, FL. www.sceneonline.biz/group/FAVC Facebook/FantasyAfricanVioletClub For more information contact - Thad Scaggs [352-606-2107](tel:352-606-2107) or [352-345-5271](tel:352-345-5271) <tascaggs@gmail.com>

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Daydream
AVA of Australia photo

From the Editor. . .Mary Lou Harden
mlhard@verizon.net

Dear Dixie Members,

Here's your February 2016 issue of *The Dixie News* which is our last issue before convention. Please note a few changes about the convention which Kathy Spissman has noted in her article beginning on page 2. If you have questions about any aspect of the show or convention, please contact Kathy.

Please get your registration in this week - before the cut-off date for the discount - and be sure to make your hotel reservation. If you are coming by yourself and need a roommate, please let Kathy know and she'll do her best to find a roommate for you.

This is a busy time for all of us. Some of you will be having your own affiliate shows between now and time of the Dixie convention. Hopefully your plants will make both shows!

We all enjoy hearing the news from our State Directors. When we don't hear from you, we assume there's nothing going on in your state. . .and I'm confident that's not the case. So, make connections with the individual members and affiliates in your state and let us hear from you in time for the next newsletter!

See you in Atlanta!

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Live Wire
by Lyndon Lyon

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