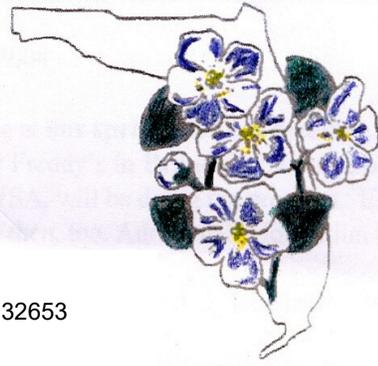


THE FLORIDA CONNECTION

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AFRICAN VIOLET COUNCIL OF FLORIDA

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

First, let me say thank you for all the work the retiring board has done for AVCF. Secondly thank you for electing me prez. I am honored & humbled (and you know how humble I am).

Next let me say thank you to all of you who attended the spring meeting last week. I think we were able to accomplish some things & to set an agenda for the next 2 years. Our primary objective will be to increase membership. To that point we have created a new position - Communications Director. Our focus here will to greatly expand our presence on social media. Linda has asked Patrick Greenstreet to hold this position & he has accepted. Thank you, Patrick (thank you, thank you....).

We have also created a "think tank" (thank you Linda & Bobbi). The 1st was held a few weeks ago and we already have some great ideas to work on (increased exposure on social media, for example).

We do have an immediate concern - our fall show. At present we don't have a venue. I need to ask all of you to put some effort

in to researching your area to find some place to hold the show.

National is coming up (5/20-5/27) in Buffalo, NY. If you are going let me know your thoughts & impressions. Summer is upon us. I guess you could that our "slow" time. BUT, it's also our "hard" time. With our heat & humidity you have to stay on top of your plants. Or, as Kurt Jablonski says, "groom, groom, groom."

King James



BEST CHIMERA
HJAVS 2018 SHOW
Won by Bobbi Johannsen



INSIDE:

Spring Luncheon Minutes	2-3
2018 Show Announcement African Violet Growing Tip	4
2018 Awards	5
HJAVS 2018 Show	6
Webmaster Corner By Linda Schwambach	7
AVCF Webmaster Standing Report By Linda Schwambach	8
Coming Events Club Officers 2018/2019	9



Our New President, Jim Boyer
and new 1st VP, Carolee Carter

African Violet Council of Florida
Spring Meeting – May 12, 2018
Ivy House, Williston FL

President Linda Price called the meeting of the African Violet Council of Florida to order at 11:00 a.m. Mary Lou Harden read a tribute to Mother's Day and shared an inspiration message. The group then said the Pledge of Allegiance.

Linda announced that a quorum was present and then asked for approval of the minutes from October 28, 2017. Mary Jane DiLorenzo moved for approval, and the motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Linda read the Treasurer's Report provided by Sharon Gartner, who was absent from the meeting. As of January 1, 2017, the Council's bank balance was \$4,883.93. Currently, the balance is \$2,123.69. The Council also has a CD that will mature in 2020 in the amount of \$9,207.90. The major reason for the decrease in the bank balance was attributed to the high expenses of the AVCF 2017 convention in St. Pete/ Clearwater. Among other things, we did not meet our meal obligations, and the hotel convention director was difficult to work with to lower the costs.

2nd Vice President Elvie Blakely passed out an abbreviated version of the AVCF yearbook, saying that the official version will be distributed at the fall meeting. She then said that the Council's membership is down. She is ready to send out reminder membership renewal notices to those whom she feels would rejoin. She noted that three affiliates had not yet renewed – River City AVS, Sarasota County AVS and Treasure Coast AVS and two other affiliates have disbanded – Caribbean Basin AV & Gesneriad Society and Gulf/Edison AVC. Linda Price said that she did get in touch with River City, and even though their group is down to five members, they said they would rejoin.

Elvie said that currently there are 26 individual members, 18 honorary members, 7 novices and 9 affiliates for a total of 60.

There was a short discussion concerning how we can help struggling affiliates regain momentum that included visiting affiliates at their meetings, moving into more digital applications to attract a younger crowd, and visit their shows to show support. Linda Price said a lot of ideas were discussed at the recent Think Tank meeting, and more details will be shared soon, especially concerning the digital direction the Council takes.

The group discussed appointing a new Standing Committee called Communications. After it was determined that there was a quorum of the Executive Board, Linda Price asked for permission to create such a committee, and it was approved. Then, Linda appointed Patrick Greenstreet as Chair of that committee. Jim Boyer said he would immediately work with Patrick to define the committee's direction.

Linda Price asked for Standing Committee reports:

Budget and Finance – Mary Lou said we need to check AVCF past minutes to determine whether this committee had been eliminated. Linda said that Sharon Gartner believes there should be an annual budget and we all agreed.

By Laws – No report

Historian – Mary Jane would like to digitalize the past historical records that are not already available through the Florida Connection and the website. She has scrapbooks from the '80s that are not easily transported to meetings, and members have little time to review them. Jim Boyer suggested we start scanning, which Mary Jane has already be-

gun to do.

Judges – Jim said that he has been in contact with three blue-ribbon novice winners who received a free AVCF membership and he hopes they will rejoin at their renewal date.

Newsletter – Peggy Madison reiterated her request to be notified of any email changes. Jim noted that the AVCF rep from each affiliate should be tasked with this responsibility. Carolee Carter and a couple of others present said that there are affiliates who do not routinely have reps who give AVSA, DAVS or AVCF reports at their meetings, which became a discussion topic of a reason why affiliates are not brought up to date on issues affecting these organizations.

Peggy also noted there are expenses for printing and mailing the newsletter to those who do not have email addresses, and Jim said it should be the AVCF rep of the affiliates who should be distributing the newsletter to those people.

Elvie suggested that we provide a gift basket auction at the fall meeting. The money raised would then be returned to AVCF for subsidizing some of the newsletter printing and mailing costs.

Novice – Jim said that communication is now just getting out, and we will be following up at renewal time.

Parliamentarian – No report

Convention – (Report was given later in the meeting.)

Webmaster – Linda Schwambach provided a written report indicating how many views the AVCF and Facebook pages have been documented. Jim began a short discussion about following up with Patrick regarding occasional virtual meetings and other ideas to keep communication flowing.

Linda Price asked Mary Jane for a report from the AVCF Nominating Committee who read the following:

- Recording Secretary – Angela Newell
- Corresponding Secretary – Debbie Wesch
- Treasurer – Sharon Gartner
- 2nd Vice President – Elvie Blakely
- 1st Vice President – Carolee Carter
- President – Jim Boyer



Chad Brinkerhuff and Elvie Blakely at the Luncheon

Linda asked if there were any nominations from the floor. Hear- provided by Chad Brinkerhuff to accept the slate. It was seconded proved.

ing none, a motion was and unanimously ap-

A discussion ensued concerning the AVCF Fall Show. Mary Lou understands that the Dixie convention site choice is Jacksonville, they changed their bylaws to allow their show to be held in the fall rather than the spring, and that September would be the best month for it. If this works out, we should combine it with the AVCF annual show. All agreed. Jim will be in contact with Sharon Gartner/Bobbi Johannsen/Kathy Spissman to see if this would work out and relay that announcement to the officers and Peggy for the Connection.

There were no announcements.

The group broke for lunch, and then Mary Jane Installed the 2018 AVCF officers.

The raffle was held with most items provided by Martha Spyridon. The meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Carolee Carter
Acting Corresponding Secretary

YAHOOOOO!!!!

Folks it is getting more and more difficult finding a venue for our Fall Show. It's taken more time than usual, but we HAVE A VENUE. Before I go on, though, let me thank Mary DiLorenzo for her efforts finding the venue. Thank you, Thank you.

The show will be held from 10/4 to 10/6 at the Hilton Garden Inn at 3839 Don Emerson Dr in Lakeland.

We normally have all the info & registration forms in this issue of the newsletter. But again, because of the time we don't have those put together. We will be getting those out as soon as we can so stay tuned.

King James



TIP FOR SHOWING PLANTS

By Linda Schwambach

When entering an African violet in a show you need to “slip pot” the show plant. This means a pot of the same size should be placed over the pot the African violet is planted in. Another requirement is to have the owner’s identifying information neatly placed on the inside or planted pot. An easy way to do this is to use one of your return name and address labels and attach it to the pot. It is best to add your phone number to the label as well.



Rewarding the Winners is Up to You!

It's been a scramble to get all our ducks in line for this fall's show, but we've done it with the help of our AVCF friends! Part of the scramble is to get all of the information into this issue of the Connection. As always, the Council's Awards program is important, as we want to reward those who go through the effort of growing varieties for show to ensure they will continue to enter future events.

Our 2018 AVCF Convention and Show is in Lakeland, and plans are well under way with the committees working hard on their assignments. It's going to be an awesome show because so many of us were inspired by the national convention last year. Thad Scaggs has again stepped up to the plate as Show Chair, and he and his team will definitely make this a memorable event.

My role as Awards Chair is to ensure that we have all the awards in place for the lucky show winners. **And that's where you come in because Rewarding the Winners for all their efforts is up to YOU!** I am asking each **Affiliate** to please support the awards program by contributing a cash award to any category of the show schedule (like Best Variegated, Best Unusual Container, etc.), or you could designate a particular hybrid (like Best Pow Wow or Best Irish Flirt, etc.).

Of course, you do not need to designate a special plant or category. The alternative is to request that your award be used "As Needed" so that we can ensure that all winners receive not only a rosette but also a cash award for their winning plant. Then, they can buy more plants or a few gallons of gas to get home!

Individuals are also encouraged to make a donation towards an award category or "as needed." Any amount is happily accepted! And, if you would prefer to give a gift, please let me know what it is and then bring it to the event.

Here's what you need to do: Fill out the Awards Form below and send it with your check payable to the African Violet Council of Florida to Carolee Carter, 10947 SW 71st Circle, Ocala FL 34476. If you have any questions, please e-mail me at caroleeviolets@gmail.com.

Let's all work together to help make this a stellar awards show!

2018 AVCF Awards Form

Name or Affiliate _____

Address _____

I am enclosing a check for \$_____ to be used for:

Best _____ Award, OR, As Needed

I am donating a gift that I will bring to the show (describe) _____
to be used for:

Best _____ Award OR, As Needed

**Please make your check payable to AVCF and send it by September 15th to
Carolee Carter, 10947 S.W. 71st Circle, Ocala FL 34476.**

Cheers for 25 Years!



Heart of Jacksonville African Violet Society
20th Annual African Violet Show and Sale
March 23rd-24th 2018, Jacksonville, FL



**BEST IN SHOW AND BEST MINI
PETITE JEWEL
WON BY LINDA MCQUEEN**



**BEST TRAILER
HARMONY'S GUNDARTOO
WON BY BOBBI JOHANNSEN**

HORTICULTURE SWEEPSTAKES

54 blue ribbons
Won by
Bobbi Johannsen



**BEST IN DESIGN
"A TOAST TO GROWING"
WON BY CATHY CARTER**

**Best Gesneriad—Primulina linearicalyx won by Bobbi !
Johannsen**

Best Chimera—The Alps won by Bobbi Johannsen

**Best Optimara and Best Standard—Optimare Hawaii II won by
Nancy Sacco**

Best AVSA Collection Standard

Deep Sky, Optimara Hawaii II, Tiger won by Nancy Sacco

Best AVSA Collection Semi-Miniature and Miniature

**Jolly Dear, Lucky Ladybug, Rob's Combustible Pigeon won
by Bobbi Johannsen**

Best DAVS Collection Standard

**Buckeye Butterflies, Peach Puff, Wrangler's Dixie Celebra-
tion won by Carol McBryde**

Best DAVS Collection, Semi-iMiniature and Miniature

**Jolly Joy, Jolly Orchid, Petite Jewel won by Linda
McQueen**



**BEST SEMI-MINIATURE
ROB'S COMBUSTIBLE PIGEON
WON BY BOBBI JOHANNSEN**



THE WEBMASTER'S CORNER

By Linda Schwambach

Since more than 41 million people have been victims of identity theft, it behooves everyone to be proactive in keeping personal information secure. Here are a few cyber security tips.

Use varied and strong passwords for all online accounts. Now during sign-up for an account, many companies provide an indicator as you add your password as to whether it is a strong or weak password. Be sure to heed the information reported and take action accordingly.

Keep your software up to date. The reason is that tech companies monitor their software for “bugs”, security breaches and other problems and then create software updates or new releases to fix these issues. Some people set their devices to automatic updates for trusted software and then they do not have to remember to manually check for updates.

We all know to install antivirus software, and a firewall coupled with that is even better. Antivirus software detects malicious code attempting to gain access to your hardware and software. A firewall protects against outside access. The paid versions offer more security updates. Also, notice what countries the software comes out of as this may give you a clue as to how reliable and safe that anti-virus software is.

Most of us know that anytime you are giving out financial information like credit card numbers, to double check the web address to be sure it begins with “https” and displays a padlock sign. The padlock sign means you are securely transmitting information. Public networks like those at the library and coffee shops are not as secure and your information is more vulnerable. Recommend not using public networks for banking and other sensitive transactions.

Phishing and other digital scams are rampant. For instance, cyber thieves create emails that imitate trusted vendors such as banks and also the banks’ websites. They can be very enticing promising refunds, convincingly demanding money or some other “emergency” situation in exchange for you verifying personal information. If in doubt, always call the organization and never reply to the e-mail. Use a trusted phone number you have on file and don’t use a phone number provided in the email. This avenue will give you peace of mind as well. Many times if you hover over a hyperlink in an email, it will reveal an unusual URL or one with a slight misspelling if it is a phishing or other scam.

While two-factor authentication can be inconvenient and take extra time, it is well worth the effort in many instances. It is a powerful tool that helps discourage cyber criminals. I definitely use this technique as much as possible when appropriate. It requires a username and password for the first factor and another piece of personal information such as a security question or onetime code sent to your phone as the second factor.

Finally, since e-mail is an easy way for hackers to snatch sensitive information, never send financial or personally identifying information through e-mail. This includes your Social Security number, driver’s license number, or credit card information.

AVCF Webmaster Standing Committee Report for May 2018

The African Violet Council of Florida website has over 37,900 visits. The website is updated as necessary when new information is available or old information becomes outdated. The Webmaster gleans information from various sources when it is readily available. However, if you would like your information, articles and such posted, please call or add me to your e-mail list and it will be posted in a timely fashion. My e-mail is VioletsRFun@yahoo.com.

We have almost 600 followers on Facebook as of this writing and thousands of likes. That activity is only increasing. AVCF events and affiliate club shows and sales, pictures and events are posted in advance of their live date, along with AVCF meetings, and post show information.

Usually when a member joins, their information is forwarded to me so that I can create a member username and password for them and then notify the member. We decided at a previous meeting not to do that when we instituted the honorary novice members' policy. Perhaps we should rethink that? From my research the question asked most often from the website is where the nearest African violet club is located which I give them. Then I contact that club's president or contact and give them the inquirers contact information. A few of the updates that have been made to the website since the last report are the addition of new tabs and information for our Fall show, sale and spring meeting, affiliate show and sales and new tabs for history on those events, as well as, many other detailed changes and modifications and more in the works (following the AVSA convention) such as the addition of a local (Florida) judges page. Jim B is assisting with that.

Margaret Madison and I have worked diligently to scan in historical Florida Connections and convert them to post to the AVCF website for easy access. After taking a break with the AVSA convention we are entering the final stretch on this incredible project!

Linda Schwambach

Webmaster





COMING EVENTS

July 3-7, 2018 – Gesneriad Society Convention & Show, Sheraton Framingham Hotel and Conference Center, Framingham, MA. Visit their website: <http://www.gesneriadsociety.org/>

October 4th –October 6th (Thursday-Saturday)

The African Violet Council of Florida will have its 2018 Show and Plant Sale, "Violet Vibes in the Fabulous 50's" at the Hilton Garden Inn, 3839 Don Emerson Drive, Lakeland, FL. Details will be sent later.



AVCF 2018/2019 Officers

- President—Jim Boyer
- 1st Vice President—Carolee Carter
- 2d Vice President —Elvie Blakely
- Corresponding Secretary—
- Recording Secretary—
- Treasurer—Sharon Gartner
- AVSA Representative—Lynne Wilson
- DAVS Representative—Phyllis King

- Affiliate Awards Chair—
- Parliamentarian and Bylaws Chair— Mary Lou Harden
- Newsletter Editor—Peggy Madison
- Judges Chair—Thad Scaggs
- Historian—Mary Jane DiLorenzo
- Convention Handbook Chair—Carolee Carter
- Communications Director—Patrick Greenstreet
- Past President —Linda Price



**DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES FOR THE JULY/SEPT 2018 ISSUE:
AUGUST 20TH 2018**