



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 Members,

Thanks to many of you for attending our 2018 Convention & Show "Violets Dance Across Dixie" in Birmingham, Alabama.



We had a beautiful Show with many winners. Marian and Greg Zoller did a wonderful job handling the awards and announcing show winners. They certainly deserve thanks from all for a difficult job well done.

Thanks go out to our vendors: JO'S VIOLETS, Joanne & Geoffrey Schrimsher, MRS. STREPSSTREPS, Kathy Spissman, TRAVIS' VIOLETS, Travis & Darlene Davis, THE VIOLET GALLERY, Brenda & Mahlen Petry, and our newest commercial member, GLENDA'S HOUSE OF VIOLETS/AMBROSIA VIOLETS, Glenda Williams. I saw many smiling faces as they were leaving the sales room.

The raffle table was a busy spot and the hospitality room had many goodies to share with our fellow members. Speaking of goodies, our host club presented those attending with a fun goodie bag which had the theme and dancing lady printed on it.

Our programs were well attended. Betty Ferguson arranged to have Robbie McMeel speak about packing plants for travel, Mary Jo Modica spoke on Chinese Gesneriads, Brenda Petry told us about the species (wild children of the family) and Betty Ferguson gave us clues on how to form a better dish garden.

Special thanks to Kathy Spissman for working with the hotel and arranging meeting rooms, dinners, etc.

Becky McMeel has agreed to be the Dixie Plant registrar, and Pam Kopec has agreed to serve as our new Georgia

director. Kurt Jablonski and Beth Baker have volunteered their services as Facebook administrators. Thanks to Becky, Pam, Kurt and Beth for their willingness to serve and help move Dixie forward!

Happy growing!

JOIN OR RENEW YOUR
MEMBERSHIP
TODAY!

Dues for all classes of memberships are due **February 1** each year. If you haven't mailed your dues, please do it NOW! And we're always happy to welcome new members! Look for the Membership Application on page 17 of this issue and become a member today!



Cajun's No Fear
Registered by Belinda Thibodeaux

DID YOU KNOW? The African Violet Society of America Inc. (AVSA) is the largest society devoted to a single plant in the world.

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Jolly
Orchid
Best
Miniature

by Stephanie Newman, Hoover, AL

CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

by Kathy Spissman

Dixie's Convention Director

770-939-5289 or mrsstrepstrels@comcast.net



Hi Dixie Members,

If you did not attend 'Violets Dance Across Dixie' Convention in Birmingham, Alabama, you missed a beautiful show, great sales and wonderful convention.

The Early Bird African Violet Society truly went above and beyond with all they did for all of us to enjoy. This is the 3rd convention I have worked with this group. They make my job so much easier as I knew they were on top of all things. They truly are a great group of violet lovers to work with.

We did have issues with the hotel but they recognized they did not live up to some things in the contract and did not charge us for some things, so Dixie made a little money.

Also a big THANK YOU to all the other Dixie members who helped as Chairpersons, Presentation Speakers, plus anyone who helped me in any way. I greatly appreciate it.

As discussed at the Annual Meeting we will now be able to hold our conventions in the Spring or Fall. The consensus was that it might serve us well to have our shows in the Fall to avoid conflicts with so many Spring shows. By the next newsletter I hope to have a host club, location and date for the Fall of 2019.

Again, if any club or individual is interested in hosting a convention, please contact me. We all need to work together to continue Dixie.

If you have any questions, contact Kathy Spissman, Convention Director mrsstrepstrels@comcast.net or 770-939-5289.

TIP: African violets don't just happen to grow to be show plants. People looking at African violets at a show may think of a prize-winning plant as one loaded with blossoms and do not consider the rest of the plant that makes those blossoms possible.

AVSA Judges Handbook

**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.



WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!

by Johnnie Berry
Treasurer and Membership Chair

- Glenda's House of Violets, Glenda Williams, McDade, TX
- Taf & Patrick Greenstreet, Orange Park, FL
- Sharon Stilson, Pensacola, FL
- Elizabeth F. Kubica: Old Hickory, TN
- Rebecca Pappas, Jefferson, GA



Berry Smoothie
Registered by, and shown by Kurt Jablonski

DIXIE REGISTERED VARIETIES

By Becky McMeel, Registration Chair

Registered March 30, 2018, by Belinda Thibodeaux:

Cajun's No Fear

Single-semidouble purple frilled star/pink puff fantasy, thin white edge. Variegated medium green, cream and pink, plain. Standard. #1819



Registered April 5, 2018, by Kurt Jablonski:

Berry Smoothie

Semi double rose/mauve fluted pansy, darker eye. Black green serrated/red back. Semiminiature. #1820



find us and seemed to enjoy the show. The theme was "Violets Hit the Vegas Strip."

The club has a present membership of 20 and the possibility of 3 more members.

For pictures and more, visit our Facebook page-Sundowners African Violet Society.

LOUISIANA STATE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

by Becky McMeel
Louisiana State Director



Sundowner's AVS had their annual plant sale on the LSU campus on March 10th and 11th. As this was the first time the club sold at that venue, there were reservations as to how they would do. I am pleased to report that the club was just about sold out by noon. The sale started at 9 a.m. Members went home Saturday afternoon and scrounged up more plants to sell on Sunday. I am also happy to report that the club made money with their plant sale for the first time in many years.

Sundowner's AVS also held their Annual Show with some plants and Show Plants for sale on March 24th



and 25th at the Café Garden and Teaching Center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The show was well attended and interest was high. There were 135 horticulture entries and 12 design entries. Best in Show and Horticulture Sweepstakes were won by Belinda Thibodeaux. Best in Design and Design Sweepstakes were won by Becky McMeel. Judges were Mary Corondan, Bill Foster and Sue Ramser from Texas. Laura Moser won Best Mini/Semimini, Wilhelmina Allen won Best Trailer and Best Species, Robbie McMeel won Best Other Gesneriad, and Belinda Thibodeaux won Best Standard.

Despite a move to a new venue, (due to renovations at the Garden Center) violet lovers still managed to

TENNESSEE STATE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

by Marian Zoller
Tennessee State Director



As state director for Tennessee I have been reporting mainly news from my club, the Memphis African Violet Society, because I knew few other African violet people across the rest of the state. I did not hear of other activities that were happening.

At the 2018 DAVS convention I was able to meet several wonderful Tennessee violet lovers who have promised to keep me informed about their activities. I know there were others who were not able to attend the convention so I ask you to e-mail, mail, or call me with any information about yourself or your club so I can get it noted in the Dixie News. Also feel free to write an article about violets and send it either to me or to Mary Lou Harden for publishing in the Dixie News. Mary Lou is always on the hunt for new authors.



Carolee Carter with "Ellie Gardner"
DAVS Birmingham Show



A Glimpse of the 2018 Dixie Convention

by Betty Ferguson

bettywithviolets@gmail.com

It came. It went. Faster than a speeding bullet. Almost faster than the speed of light. I didn't even manage a thorough look at the show. I didn't get all the winners congratulated. And I didn't get to spend time with all the people I'd looked forward to seeing or to meet all the new people I wanted to meet. But the 2018 Dixie African Violet Society Convention sure was a success and fun while it lasted. Thanks to the vendors, winners, workers, and the wonderful attendees. And welcome to our new Dixie members.



We dove in (well, we have to them or fold) with a board meeting consisting of current board members, past presidents and state directors. A primary focus echoed at the general board meeting, as in almost all of our clubs and conventions was: "Help! We're shrinking. Where are the life rafts?" One possible strategy for saving Dixie and re-building our membership and convention attendance is talking up Dixie within our local clubs. One way is to share a newsletter on occasion with the group as an appetizer. Send in an article or a brief on your club news so club members will feel a part of Dixie.

Another strategy, which was voted on with a preponderance of yeas at the general meeting, was to change our by-laws to allow for a fall or other season convention in order to diminish the competition from other conventions and shows. A season change is not a promise, but now it is possible.

Yet another matter is that we're forgetting to pay our membership dues in February. Embarrassing to admit, that included me, and Johnnie had to request my membership before she'd hand me my convention packet. As your Vice President, I found that humbling enough to immediately put a reminder into my phone calendar for February, repeating yearly and with weekly reminders to last until I get tired enough of seeing them pop up and do something about them—something besides merely deleting the reminder. I hope you'll do the very same thing even before you finish reading this entertaining, all right, informative article.

Our first educational workshop, entitled "Species: The Wild Children of the Family" by Brenda Petry, included drool-inducing slide photos of our violet species, many in their native settings. (We should all grow at least a few of the wild ones.)



Robbie McMeel, displaying a humongous orchid shipping box for show and tell, shared his methods of "Packing for travel: The Plants Not the Clothes." Chicken boxes (well washed!) from the grocery store work, too, he said. A hint from the audience—florists' shipping

boxes also make fine boxes for travel.

We got to ooh over more breath-taking slide photos of members of our favorite plant family clinging contentedly to limestone walls and to hear stories of her rocky trip in Mary Jo Modica's presentation, "My Brief but Spectacular Encounter with Chinese Gesneriads."

Then after giving the history according to my suspicions of the Chinese and Japanese influence on AV dish gardens, I harped on staying true to scale and provided hints and tricks in my workshop, "Dish Gardens Are Easier Than You May Think." If you'd like the info on good places to order plants for mini gardens, for making muck, or for wiring your tree into the pot, email me.



Mary Jo Modica

Many of our members are quiet like the proverbial church mice about educational information you can share in a convention workshop. Please, please contact me about doing a future workshop. I don't know everyone's specialty to come to you to ask. Or even suggest someone else who might contribute.

There's so much more I could tell about our 2018 Dixie Convention and the many people who deserve a whole lot of credit, but what I'm going to do now is get motherly and ask some tough questions.

- Upon returning home, did you isolate your new plant babies and your show plants? Our vendors and exhibitors are responsible growers, but sometimes creepy little pest demons find sneaky ways to hop on for a ride, a meal, and a cushy new home in spite of our best efforts.
- Did you make a note on your pot label indicating size—standard, semi-mini, mini, trailer—so identification is quick and easy when preparing for your next show? Did you label any trailers with a special notation so you don't come along later and pinch out those persistent suckers?
- Did you manage to get your income tax taken care of prior to show so you didn't have to fret over that burden, ruining your good time and dreading your arrival back at home? (Another good reason to change our convention timing—except for you lucky ones who don't have to dread and pay.)
 - If you're a wicker, did you get wicks in all your new additions so they don't dry out?
 - Hint for the future: If you buy minis or leaves, your husband/wife/partner will be more likely to smile appreciatively and appear easily appeased when inspecting your teensy box of greenery than if you bring in boxes of the big boys. That is until you and s/he take a look at the checking account or credit card bill.
 - Did you either thank the donor of your show award or make a To Do note to write that thank you note ASAP? And did you contribute to next year's awards? The Zollers' contact info is in the newsletter.
 - How long did your suitcase hang out in your bedroom waiting to get put away?
 - Did you thank the Birmingham members for the great convention and your goodie bag? It's not too late. Here's their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Birmingham.violets>

One more motherly reminder. Start planning now for next year's convention and start talking it up to your club. Ok, two. Did you stop and put "Pay Dixie dues" on your calendar?

*Preponderance, a big word from the *AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges* I used in my dish

garden workshop, which means: the quality of being greater in weight, force, influence, greater part, mass, bulk, weight, lion's share, greater numbers, extensiveness. A superiority in numbers or amount.



FROM THE DAVS AWARDS DESK

Marian & Greg Zoller
marigregz@gmail.com

We want to say a big "Thank You" to all those who gave a donation to the awards fund since the last Dixie News was published, but before the 2018 DAVS convention. They are:

Mahlen and Brenda Petry
Memphis African Violet Society
Jo's Violets – Jo Schrimsher
Victoria African Violet Society

All the donations are much appreciated and helped make the 2018 convention a success. Now, after the convention, if you weren't there you missed a lot of fun. We hope you'll start making plans to attend the 2019 DAVS convention. One of our duties as DAVS Awards Chairmen is to start asking for donations at this year's convention and did we ever get a great response. Here is a list of the many attendees who gave donations while at the convention. I think that they deserve a round of applause! We want to thank them very much and they are:

Violet Gallery
Mary Lou Harden
Michael Jackson (X2)
Lynne Wilson
Becky and Robbie McMeel
Linda Xia
Mary Jo Modica
Terry Jordan
Betty Ferguson
Pam Kopec
Phillis Hinkle
Anonymous

Thank you, Thank you!!!

We are now accepting donations from all of you, so please send your contributions. We want to

encourage everyone to come to the next DAVS convention and bring as many plants as you can.

There were 35 Best in Class awards that were not paid out. There were 4 collections which did not have a 2nd best awarded and one Special Award (Best Chimera) that was not awarded. That is a lot of award money left on the table. I hope that you all will bring plants because we would much rather hand out awards than bring those envelopes home.
Please send your awards to:

DAVS Awards
c/o Marian & Greg Zoller
4815 Oak Lane Cove N.
Arlington, Tn. 38002

BECOME A MEMBER!
(Membership Application on p. 17)

Please send check payable to DAVS to
Johnnie Berry, Membership Secretary
287 Fennel Way, SW, Atlanta, GA 30331
johnniepearl@comcast.net

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.

TIP: For best results, repot plants into same-size clean pot unless it's a seedling moving up, every three to four months. AVSA Judges Handbook

PUBLICATION DEADLINES

February issue – January 15
May issue – April 15
August issue – July 15
November issue – October 15

DIXIE AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY
MINUTES OF MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Saturday, April 7, 2018
Birmingham, AL

The annual meeting of Dixie African Violet Society was called to order by President Lynne Wilson at 9:30 am at the Birmingham Marriott Hotel, Birmingham, AL. The Secretary was present.

The President acknowledged the following past presidents who were attending: Travis Davis, Darlene Davis, Genelle Armstrong and Laura Walker.

Betty Ferguson gave the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance was said. The Minutes of the June 2, 2017, were approved.

Treasurer Johnnie Berry reported \$1,101.54 in income and \$1722.44 in expenses for a \$620.90 loss for the year. She also reported that there is \$14,716.55 in Savings with a total bank balance of \$27,525.94 and that there is one new Life Member.

Convention Chair Kathy Spissman reported that she is still looking for a convention site for 2019. She hopes to announce the place in the next newsletter. She gave a few details on what is required of the local sponsoring club and explained that she helps the local club in deciding what they are able to provide. She works with a company that helps find sites and they set up site visits.

The President recognized Show Chair Michael Jackson of Birmingham's Early Bird African Violet Club and thanked him for their work in hosting the DAVS convention.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Greg Zoller congratulated the award winners. He reminded the winners that the envelopes have the donor information and asked that they send a card thanking the donor. He distributed envelopes for awards for the 2019 convention and show. He asked winners to return ribbons if they did not need them for judges or did not want them as they are saved for the next year. He also pointed out that of the 90 classes in this year's schedule, 40 classes did not have entries.

The President thanked the Commercials for attending. The Commercials at this convention are: Kathy Spissman (MrsStrepStreps), Jo Schrimsher (Jo's Violets), Brenda and Mahlen Petry (The Violet Gallery), Travis and Darlene Davis (Travis' Violets) and Glenda Williams (House of Violets/Ambrosia Violets) who is a new seller this year.

Mary Lou Harden, Bylaws Chair, led a discussion about future convention/shows. ARTICLE X states that Dixie will have an annual meeting and show each Spring. It was suggested that, because there are so many shows and conventions in the Spring, our Bylaws be changed so that our shows and conventions could be held either in the Spring or the Fall. Al Armstrong moved that our bylaws be changed to allow our conventions and shows to be held either in the Spring or the Fall. The motion was seconded by Kathy Spissman and passed. Mary Lou will prepare the bylaw amendment and publish it in The Dixie News, to be voted on at our next convention.

The Nominating Committee report was presented by Marian Zoller, Nominating Committee Chair. The proposed slate is:

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

There being no nominations from the floor, Sue Hoffmann moved that the slate be accepted and Al Armstrong seconded. The slate was unanimously accepted.

The President thanked Becky McMeel for serving as our new Registration Chair. She also introduced Pam Kopec as our new Director for the State of Georgia.

Beth Baker stated she has placed ads for DAVS on Facebook. Kurt Jablonski had set up our Facebook page and volunteered to assist Beth. Mary Lou Harden requested that members send her pictures for use in the newsletter. She also asked that each State Director send information about activities in their State as well as pictures for the newsletter. She further reminded State Directors that a part of their duty is to help increase DAVS membership.

The President thanked everyone for attending the meeting and the convention.

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 am.

Laura Walker
Recording Secretary

KNOW YOUR DIXIE MEMBER. . .AND BEST TRAILER AWARD WINNER:



BOBBI JOHANNSEN

by Betty Ferguson
bettywithviolets@gmail.com

Did you see that trailer Bobbi Johannsen won Best Trailer in the 2018 Dixie Convention show with? What a beauty!

But, if you know Bobbi, you know already that this was not her first big win. Somewhere along the way, Bobbi underwent a transformation because she HATED plants when she was a kid. Plants "meant weeding and working in the garden. Ugh!" she says.

I told, no, I *ordered* Bobbi to do some bragging because I figured I'd never hear the whole story if I didn't. I'm sure I still didn't get all the facts, but she did admit that one of her violets played a starring role in a movie. Sorta. What she really told me is that at one of her workplaces she had an African violet in a window by her desk. The violet was blooming and looked so nice that when a promotional film was made for her business, Bobbi's violet was summoned to join the cast as a background extra.

Some time prior to the film-making episode, one of Bobbi's coworkers grew a violet on top of their shared credenza. Bobbi recalls her coworker's excitement (and probably Bobbi's, too) when the plant "split" and created a "baby." They severed that baby's umbilical cord and Bobbi had her first violet.

Bobbi's mother grew houseplants, including some African violets on a window sill of their home. Bobbi believes those were probably the first violets she had ever seen or noticed. She wonders now what ancient varieties they were with their very plain green leaves and plain burgundy blooms.

Life was simple in Clinton, Iowa, the small town on the Mississippi River where Bobbi grew up--no cable, no internet, no cordless phones to distract from the wholesome activity of playing outside. Her mom was a bookkeeper. Dad was the high school psychology teacher. So, as expected, he psychoanalyzed a lot, and that uncomfortably included Bobbi. Being a teacher's daughter in a small Iowa town was like being a minister's kid, she said. "A lot was expected of you,

and you were carefully watched. You were either a lot of trouble—rebellious and so forth, or you were good. I was the latter. With just a little bit of trouble!”

Her teen years were happy and she went on to earn her BS degree from the University of Northern Iowa with a major in Computer Science. (They called it Math with Computational Emphasis.) She remembers trying to re-order a batch of keypunched cards after dropping a stack. She minored in physics and has always wondered if she should have further pursued that field, but she was the only girl in the physics classes.

She chose a career as a computer programmer and systems analyst, which got her to Florida, and needing computer programmers, her new company, Blue Cross, in Jacksonville even paid for the move.

Bobbi is married to Erik, also a computer analyst. “Yes, we met at work!” she said. The couple has parented menageries of cats and dogs, and parrots and cockatoos, fish and the occasional rescued possum.

When asked what Erik has to say about her plant hobby, she replied with a quote from Erik—a sigh. “Seriously, he is often impressed,” she said, “but he thinks I am crazy...and have WAY too many ...inside and outside.” In addition to her violets and other Gesneriads, she grows houseplants of all kinds, most in a shade house out back.

Harue Grady was the AV guru that Bobbi knew in her



early days of growing. Harue was in Bobbi’s first violet club and grew huge plants, but she was pretty secretive about her methods. “Maybe that is why I share everything I can with whomever I can about what I do with my plants and why I do it,” Bobbi said. “There can never be enough beautiful plants!”

Bobbi with her winning Trailer
“Harmony’s Gundartoo”

Her favorite thing about growing violets? Repotting and seeing the improvement and rejuvenation. The least? Washing the pots. Favorite other Gesneriad? “All of them!! Primulinas are the least fussy and end up in the show even if I haven’t paid them any attention.”

Bobbi is a founding member of her local club, Heart of Jacksonville African Violet Society, and has held almost every office. Her current position is Chairman of Special Events. HJAVS participates in any indoor event they can find, she explained—including lots of arts and crafts shows. People are usually pleasantly surprised to find the violet people next to the afghans and ceramics!

How did she transition from hating plants to owning a movie starlet to repeatedly winning impressive awards? She says, “When I got my own place, I started to dabble with houseplants in general and killed plenty. I didn’t have any success until I had gotten too many to keep up with. Then I didn’t have time to over pamper and over water them. It seems that method continues to work for me, as I really have too many plants, but they seem to survive on my semi-neglect system.

“Joining a local Club was the real beginning of the Gesneriad collecting disease,” she continued. “I encourage anyone dabbling by themselves to get ‘infected’ by finding like-minded people, preferably in person, but now there are also so many online options.

“I also encourage people to try all the many kinds of Gesneriads available to us now. In the AV genus, you have options from standard to micromini, trailers and chimeras. The rest of the Gesneriad world also awaits with plants for any person and their growing condition. Their needs can be quite varied, and you won’t know how they will grow for you until you try. Sometimes you don’t select the plants you like, but they select you!”

A little P.S. I didn’t ask Bobbi if I could tell you this because she would have said absolutely not. But she is a Dixie life member. Being a life member didn’t stop her from paying annual dues last year just the same. My sources say that when she was told she’d paid and didn’t have to, she refused to take the refund. I think Johnnie donated it to Awards. Now, isn’t that a member to smile about?



Kurt Jablonski,
Best in Show
Winner at DAVS
Birmingham Show



Harmony's Gundartoo
by Bobbi Johannsen

DIXIE AFFILIATES REPORT

April 2018

by Robbie McMeel

DAVS Affiliates Chair

We have finally come out of a very weird winter this year. When we were at the Dixie Convention in early April, we had an unusual cold front that came through and we had temperatures in the 30's on Sunday morning. I'm glad spring finally showed up and stayed for a while.

We had a very nice convention in Birmingham with a lot of nice plants in the show. The Birmingham club did a great job hosting the convention. It was nice to see old friends and meet new ones. At the board meeting Wednesday night, we went over the membership and affiliate clubs. We still have some clubs that have not paid their dues as of this time. I would like to remind all affiliate clubs that the dues for clubs as well as individual members are due at the beginning of the year. It is vital to pay your dues to be able to have and show plants in the classes in a Dixie show. I will soon be contacting the clubs in reference to your dues.

So far this year we have had 5 requests for Dixie Ribbons. Results for 2 of the shows have come in, listed below are the clubs and winners of the Dixie Collection Awards:

Heart of Jacksonville AVS, Jacksonville, FL

Sharon Gartner, Show Chair

Theme – "Cheers for 25 Years"

Gold Rosette – Best Dixie Collection – Standard

Carol McBride – Jacksonville, FL

"Buckeye Butterflies", "Peach Puff",

"Wrangler's Dixie Celebration"

Gold Rosette – Best Dixie Collection –
Semi/Miniature

Linda McQueen – Jacksonville, FL

"Jolly Joy", "Jolly Orchid", "Petite Jewel"

Purple Rosette – 2nd Best Dixie Collection –
Semi/Miniature

Cathy Carter – Jacksonville, FL

"Cajun's Lil Tizzy", Jolly Magic", "Precious Pink"

**Sundowners African Violet Society, Baton Rouge,
LA**

George Ramirez, Show Chair

Theme – "Violets Hit the Vegas Strip"

Gold Rosette – Best Dixie Collection – Standard

Belinda Thibodeaux – Patterson, LA

"Cajun's Sugar and Spice", "Cajun's Déjà Vu",

"Cajun's Ma Cher Amie"

Dixie African Violet Society, Birmingham, AL

Michael Jackson, Show Chair

Theme – "Violets Dance Across Dixie"

Gold Rosette – Best Dixie Collection – Standard

Kurt Jablonski – Miami Beach, FL

"Cajun's No Fear", Cajun's Code Blue",

Buckeye Torrid Zone"

Gold Rosette – Best Dixie Collection – Semi/Miniature

Kurt Jablonski – Miami Beach, FL

"Little Pro", "Tiptop", "Berry Smoothie"

Congratulations to all winners.

As a reminder to all members and affiliate clubs, Dixie has rosettes for Best and 2nd Best Standard Collection and Best and 2nd Best Collection in the Semi/Miniature Collection. In the future, please try to grow Dixie Collections for both. There are a lot of great Dixie registered plants to choose from. To find out what they are, go to Dixie's website and there is a PDF file with all of the Dixie registered plants. Let's keep Dixie in all of our shows.

Respectfully and keep up the good growing,



WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED GROOMING



by Sue Hoffmann
DAVS Judges Chair

Among the most frequently used words by AVSA judges on AVSA entry cards is: Grooming. Too often judges forlornly give a red ribbon and say, "The blossoms are so pretty. If only they had groomed the plant." So growers, what the heck does this mean? What is this thing called grooming?

I was surprised when my internet search "African violet grooming" brought up several pages of possible sites to check, plus multiple YouTube videos showing step-by-step procedures on removing suckers, taking off smaller outside leaves, and the proper use of cosmetic brushes to clean soil and unwanted dirt without damaging the foliage.

Here is expert advice from top growers on grooming. An African violet grown by a "good groomer" will be more symmetric, cleaner and score higher in show than a plant grown without a grooming regimen.



Buckeye Nostalgia
2nd Best in Show, DAVS 2018
By Kurt Jablonski

From www.myviolet.com/grooming:
A good grooming routine is important. It will help keep your African Violets looking beautiful as well as keeping them healthy. When done on a regular basis, grooming takes very little time. To maintain a

consistent routine, many recommend grooming your African Violets as part of your regular watering schedule.

On the www.AVSA.org website:

Question: Please tell me how to clean the leaves of my African violets and what to use.

Answer: Turn on the faucet with mildly warm (tepid) water (no pressure) and rinse the leaves holding the plant so water does not get into the crown. You may use your thumb to gently rub across the top of each leaf as you wash it. After all leaves have been rinsed, you may blot excess water off the leaves with a paper towel. Keep the plant out of sunlight until thoroughly dry. Good Growing, Jim Owens

African Violet Society of Canada
<<http://www.avsc.ca/html/grooming.htm>>
www.avsc.ca/html/grooming.htm>:

1. Remove dying or dead foliage and blossoms.
2. Rotate plants one-quarter turn at intervals to assure even growth.
3. Remove suckers.
4. Remove dust and soil particles from foliage with a soft, natural bristle brush.

These basic steps create a healthy, content plant. Watch the outer row of leaves which start to fade long before they die. Removing them makes the plant look healthier. Old outer rows are often smaller than the next row and upset the proportions of the plant. Also remove suckers, those tiny plantlets that sometimes appear in the leaf axils. A plant will not be judged if it has suckers.

The Violet Barn - <https://www.violetbarn.com>:
It's all right to brush your violet's leaves. We're big believers in regular brushing. A clean plant is a healthy plant. Why wait until show time to clean a plant, when regular brushing makes washing unnecessary?



It is true that leaves can be scarred, if the improper brush is being used. A member in our local club, taking our advice, regularly brushed her plants. They arrived at the show with little brown "pimples" on their leaves. It turns out that the brush she had been using had bristles that were too stiff and hard, and had scratched the plant's leaves, particularly those with glossy or pebbled foliage. Use a brush with very soft bristles, but

bound thickly enough so that it will effectively remove dust and dirt. Personally, we use a sable-hair brush, and have never had problems, and we brush more often than anyone. Cosmetic brushes are also good, and are probably cheaper.

From Optimara:

www.optimara.com/africanvioletcare4.html<<http://www.w.optimara.com/africanvioletcare4.html>>

First, most water has at least some dissolved minerals in it. If water is left on the leaves, these minerals will form a powdery, white residue in the form of spots or streaks. While this residue can easily be removed using a damp cloth, it is easier to prevent them by wiping up the water before it evaporates.

Second, water on the leaves can cause brown spots to develop. These spots may be caused by water which is too cold, or they may be the result of sunlight which has been magnified by the water. In either case, the spots are actually damaged tissue and, therefore, cannot be removed.

Third, excessive moisture on the leaves can promote the growth of fungi. Some of these fungi, such as Crown Rot or Pythium, are particularly deadly. For this reason, be particularly vigilant to any water which may remain on the leaves of the crown.

As you are wiping off the leaves, take the opportunity to look for potting soil or other debris which may have accumulated on the leaves. Dust and dirt can be wiped clean with a soft, damp cloth. For other debris, you may want to use a soft-bristled brush, such as a small paint brush. Note, however, that any brush of this kind should be reserved exclusively for use on your plants. Do not use the same brush on your plants as you would for painting.

Next, inspect your African Violets for spent leaves and flowers. Also, keep your eyes out for leaves and flowers which are damaged. Both should be removed with a sharp knife. Spent leaves and flowers encourage rot which, under the right conditions, can spread to healthy parts of your African Violets. Damaged leaves and flowers leave your African Violets vulnerable to bacterial diseases, viruses and other micro-organisms, such as Nematodes.

While grooming your African Violets, be on the lookout for suckers. If you are trying to maintain the symmetry of a single-crowned plant, suckers should be removed as soon as you see them. Otherwise, suckers will develop into new crowns.

Finally, your grooming routine should always include an inspection for insects and other pests. Often, the pests themselves will be clearly visible. Even if you do

not see them, however, most pests will leave symptoms. The appearance of any unusual characteristic, on your African Violets, should be cause for further investigation.

Upcoming Events

July 3-7, 2018 – 62nd Annual Gesneriad Society Convention & Show, hosted by the New England Gesneriad Society, Framingham, MA, Sheraton Framingham Hotel and Conference Center, Framingham, MA. <http://www.gesneriadsociety.org/>

September 8, 2018 – Tampa Bay Gesneriad Society's Gesneriad Celebration at USF Botanical Gardens, 12210 USF Pine Drive, Tampa, FL 33612. Information: JoAnne Martinez, President, 4jam@tampabay.rr.com.

October 4-6, 2018 – African Violet Council of Florida Annual Show & Sale, Hilton Garden Inn, 3839 Don Emerson Drive, Lakeland, FL 33811. Information: Jim Boyer, President, jasb39@gmail.com.

October 13-14, 2018 - Fall Plant Festival, USF Botanical Gardens, 12210 USF Pine Drive, Tampa, FL 33612. <http://gardens.usf.edu/>



Buckeye Northern Lights
by Kurt Jablonski
DAVS 2018 Birmingham Show

DAILY CARE OF PLANTS. Growers of blue-ribbon plants look at their plants every day. Few plants require care every day, but a second for a quick look is sometimes all that separates the green thumb growers from the brown. AVSA Judges Handbook.



2018 Birmingham Convention
Photos by Neil Lipson

NOTICE OF PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the following proposed amendment to ARTICLE X – MEETINGS AND QUORUMS, SECTION 1, of Dixie African Violet Society Bylaws will be presented at the 2019 DAVS Convention, date and time to be announced:

CURRENT BYLAWS:

ARTICLE X - MEETINGS AND QUORUMS

SECTION 1. **The annual meeting and show shall be held in the Spring, either by invitation from one of the regional states or as determined by the Convention Director.** The place for the following year shall be announced at the regular business meeting. A special meeting may be called by the president or the Board of Directors in the event of an emergency.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT:

ARTICLE X - MEETINGS AND QUORUMS

SECTION 1. **The annual meeting and show shall be held in the Spring or Fall, either by invitation from one of the regional states or as determined by the Convention Director.** The place for the following year shall be announced at the regular business meeting. A special meeting may be called by the president or the Board of Directors in the event of an emergency.

RATIONALE: The Society will no longer be limited to having its annual convention and show in the Spring, which may reduce conflicts with other conventions and shows, helping to eliminate local hosting problems and conflicts and opening up additional venues.

CREATIVE DESIGNS USING AFRICAN VIOLETS

By Mary Lou Harden

In AVSA shows, the Design Division has three sections:

1. Interpretive Flower Arrangements – Using fresh-cut blossoms in an arrangement with other material
2. Interpretive Plant Arrangements – removing entire plant from its pot and using the plant in an arrangement with other material
3. Container Gardens - (a) Dish Gardens, (b) Terrariums and (c) Natural Gardens

Steps to creating a design:

1. Study the Show Schedule. Read the Design Division rules, as well as the various class titles. Note the (a) Class titles, (b) Dimensions, and (c) Number of entries allowed.

2. Class Title will determine the type of design and what form you will use. If the title is Grand Tetons, you may want to plan the design using a vertical design. If it is Indianapolis 500, you will probably choose a Hogarth curve or spiral or zigzag.
3. Select LINE material. Line material is the foundation for your design. It creates the visual path through the design. Without the

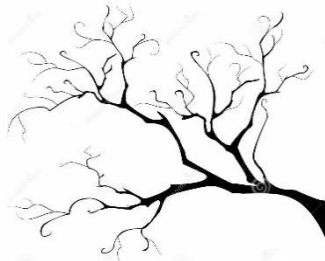


appropriate line material, the design is doomed. The height of your line material is determined by the space allowed in the Schedule. If niche size is 16x12x12, your line material should reach about 14" or 15". If the niche size is 24x18x18, then the line material should be about 22-23" high. However, you must

consider whether you will use a base and also the size of your container – how will they affect the length of your line material? No part of the line material or the plant material can reach above the top of the niche or touch the sides or back of the niche. Sometimes the schedule will permit you to use a few inches in front of the arrangement.

4. Choose plant material. If fresh-cut, make sure it is something that will hold up well. Choose plant material for transition, if necessary. If creating a small design, remember that scale is the most important consideration – make the design the same way you would create a large design, just make it on a small scale. Use small foliage, and a lighter line material – nothing heavy. Also use small blossoms.
5. Choose Blossoms. Remember that color is the most compelling part of a design. It's better to use only one variety of blossom in a design. Using too many colors creates confusion.
6. Use of Mechanics, such as pin holders, dowels, driftwood. Use the minimum necessary to give your design the stability it needs. If possible, cover all mechanics.

7. Begin working on your designs several days, even weeks, in advance of your show. Use a work area that won't be disturbed, and leave the design up so you can look at it every day and critique it. You may think it looks great when you first put it together, but the more you study it, any flaws may become apparent or you may see ways to improve the design. Don't be afraid to take it apart and completely re-work it.
8. Select draping for the back and bottom of your niche. Most schedules prohibit the use of draping on the sides. The draping should enhance the blossoms or plant and in fact, the entire design. If in doubt, it's better to use plain color material or card stock. Fabric with designs often distracts and the draping competes with the design.
9. Use a Base. Bases can be just about anything – mirror, piece of wood, cardboard, piece of fabric, straw mat. It should give visual stability to the arrangement and it can add to the distinction of the design.
10. Don't be afraid to use new or different materials. You want your design to be distinct – it should stand out from among all the others. A judge looks for superior qualities— distinction.
11. Space. Keep the design simple, but the design should fill the allotted space.
12. Texture. Use of different textures – rough or smooth, etc. -- creates interest.
13. Balance. Your design should have visual as well as actual stability.
14. Be Yourself. Don't try to be someone else – just use the gifts God gave you, and do a little dreaming. Take a good look at trees – formation of their branches, symmetry of palms, gorgeous colors of flowering plants and shrubs. Take a good look in your yard and your garage. Also, take a walk through the flea market or visit some garage sales. Keep your eyes open for containers and things you can use for line material or otherwise incorporate in a design, especially unusual items.
15. Sign up to do a Design! Creating designs can be challenging, but it's fun. Just because you've never entered the Design Division doesn't mean that you can't.
16. Don't allow yourself to be intimidated by seasoned designers – remember that they,



too, were beginners at one time. But they accepted the challenge and tried, and they quickly learned that creating designs is a rewarding experience.



Terrarium by Betty Ferguson
Best Design
DAVS 2018 Birmingham Show



Best in Show-Horticulture, Best Standard, Best Variegated, Buckeye Exotic Dancer; 2nd Best in Show, Buckeye Nostalgia; Best AVSA Collection-Standard, Buckeye Nostalgia, Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, Buckeye Country Gal; Best AVSA Collection-Semiminiature, Rob's Whodunit, Thunder Surprise, Rob's Calypso Beat; Best DAVS Collection-Standard, Cajun's No Fear, Cajun's Code Blue, Buckeye Torrid Zone; Best DAVS Collection-Semiminiature, Little Pro, Tiptop, Berry Smoothie; Best Semiminiature, Thunder Surprise; Best Dixie Registered, Buckeye Nostalgia; Best Species, S. 5c1 clone tongwensis; Runner-up to Horticulture Sweepstakes (20 Blue ribbons), **Kurt Jablonski, Miami Beach, FL.**

2nd Best AVSA Collection-Standard, Jersey Snow Flakes, Cajun's Blue Bayou, Cajun's Dixie Pride; Best Miniature, Jolly Orchid; Best Novice, Buckeye Nostalgia; Best Wrangler, Wrangler's Gambling Fever, **Stephanie Newman, Hoover, AL.**

Best Vintage Violet, Amethyst, **Carolee Carter, Ocala, FL.**

Best Trailer, Harmony's Gundartoo; Horticulture Sweepstakes (20 Blue ribbons), **Bobbi Johannsen, Jacksonville, FL.**

Best Gesneriad Collection-Blooming, Kohleria 'Florida Freckles,' Kohleria 'Kapo,' Kohleria 'HYC's Jardin de Monte,' **Kathy Spissman, Tucker, GA.**

Best Gesneriad-Non-Blooming, Primulina 'Destiny,' Best Gesneriad, Primulina 'Deco,' **Robbie McMeel, Houma, LA.**

Best Russian Hybrid, LE-Karusel, **Debbie Wesch, Lecanto, FL.**

Best Streptocarpus, Syb Serenity, **Terry Jordan, Lakewood Ranch, FL.**

Best Travis Hybrid, Streptocarpus 'Travis' Frosted Ethel Gail,' **Travis Davis, Ochlocknee, GA.**

Best in Show-Design, Best Container Garden, Terrarium, **Betty Ferguson, Little Rock, AR.**

2nd Best in Show-Design, Best Interpretive Flower Arrangement, "Do-si-do," Best Interpretive Plant Arrangement, "Salsa," Design Sweepstakes (6 Blue ribbons), **Mary Lou Harden, Seffner, FL.**

Runner-up to Design Sweepstakes (3 Blue ribbons), **Becky McMeel, Houma, LA.**

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

Dear Dixie Members,

Although the 2018 Dixie convention is history, the wonderful memories remain. It was a beautiful show with many gorgeous plants and designs and it was such a pleasure to renew friendships with people we've known for many years and to meet new, enthusiastic lovers of African violets! Michael Jackson deserves the African Violet Emmy award for his outstanding work in pulling this convention and show off with only a handful of volunteers from the Early Bird African Violet Club! Kudos to Michael and all his helpers – a great example of what can be done by a few committed people!

With the ability now to host the convention in either the Spring or Fall, I'm hoping that one of our affiliates will step up to the plate and volunteer to host the 2019 convention and show. Our Convention Director, Kathy Spissman, will tell you how easy it is because she does a lot of the background work in making arrangements with the selected venue. And just because you are hosting the convention doesn't mean you and your club have to do all the work. Dixie has

many good workers who are happy to help whenever needed.

I hope each of you will consider it your responsibility to get new members for Dixie. If each of us got just one new member, we would of course double our membership. If your club would like a few copies of The Dixie News to use as incentives to your club members or at your show, just let me know in advance and I'll see that you get some.

Have a wonderful summer. . .but don't forget to send me some news for the next newsletter. . .and don't forget to sign up a new member!

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