



# THE DIXIE NEWS

Publication of Dixie African Violet Society ([www.DAVS.org](http://www.DAVS.org))  
Affiliate of African Violet Society of America, Inc. ([www.africanvioletsocietyofamerica.org](http://www.africanvioletsocietyofamerica.org))  
Mary Lou Harden, Editor ([mlhard@verizon.net](mailto:mlhard@verizon.net))

August 2022  
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## President's Message

Betty Ferguson



[bettywithviolets@gmail.com](mailto:bettywithviolets@gmail.com)

The AVSA convention, while much smaller in number than normal, was fun and beautiful. Even though our Little Rock club is small, everything flowed because people from across the nation and Canada, too, volunteered as chairpersons and many people helped in other ways. (That concept is going to come up again further down in my message.) I was ever so excited to see Dixie friends, and I missed those of you who were not able to attend.

Welcome back to Rich Follett, who is now our Virginia State Director. Carolee Carter is our new Florida State Director. They both bring valuable experience to our Dixie Board. Johnnie says we have brand new members, too, and we welcome you.

Dixie. Where do we go now?

As you learned from Kathy Spissman's article in our last *Dixie News*, our 2022 Dixie convention had to be cancelled. Hotels are struggling to meet financial budgets. In doing so, they often raise the cost of meals for convention goers. They usually require at least 50 attendees and can charge the society for fewer attendees than contracted for. Gas and plane fares have gone

Oskey high (no pun intended, of course). Young peoples' priorities do not include plant conventions. Other plant societies struggle with the same issues and are implementing new approaches to offer their members affordable conventions.

The Dixie Board of Directors has discussed the future of Dixie through emails, a special meeting at the AVSA convention, and in a Zoom meeting. We've searched for workable solutions, and many positive options have been presented. We are in agreement that our conventions should be restructured because we simply don't have enough members and resources at this time to hold traditional conventions.

The solutions we are planning to implement and present to you, our membership, include:

- Holding our conventions in a less expensive venue—a community center, church, nursery, arboretum, or botanical garden.
- Attendees would book their own rooms at nearby hotels. Dixie will arrange discount room rates at select hotels near the convention/show venue.
- Some of our meals can be on our own, and banquet meals may be catered, or we may reserve a room at a nearby restaurant.
- Changing our convention duration from four days to three. People who find that many nights to be a strain, may choose to come for only one day.
- Returning to our past practice of holding our convention on a specific date and selecting a set city/locale for our

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Ness' Crinkle Blue

President’s Message, continued from p.1

conventions to be held year-to-year would allow us all to plan far in advance.

- We may be able to join with a local club show.
- Rather than one club taking on so much responsibility, we will spread the convention duties among all of us.

Considering all of these options, we’re doing a preliminary search in a couple of centrally located areas, and we are confident we’ll soon come up with some positive solutions.

In the meantime, do you have a place in your area for a convention? Other suggestions or solutions?

A Zoom meeting will be announced at a later point for the entire Dixie membership to vote on changes. Some of our By-Laws will need to be changed, and this requires the vote of the full membership. One of those changes will be to allow for electronic meetings. Mary Lou, our Parliamentarian, will announce needed changes in the *Dixie News*.

Together, we’ll deal with our challenges and see Dixie continue to thrive!

Betty



Toy Castle

**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 (AVM) filled with great growing information
- Regular columns include
  - For Beginners
  - Question Box
  - In Search of New Violets
  - Gesneriad Advice
  - Registration of new cultivars
  - 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. Each issue contains commercial ads as well as an Index of Advertisers. Members have access to this information on AVSA’s website [www.africanvioletsocietyofamerica.org](http://www.africanvioletsocietyofamerica.org).

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. After judging, shows are open to the public. Informative presentations are made by experts in African violet culture. Commercial members also display their newest introductions and have booths where plants and plant-related products are sold.

Individual Membership in AVSA is \$30 per year. Send check with contact information to:

AVSA  
P.O. Box 22417  
Beaumont, TX 77720

**Last, but not least, SUPPORT AVSA.** AVSA especially needs the support of its individual members, its affiliates and commercial members at this time. Donations should be mailed to: AVSA Office, P.O. Box 22417, Beaumont, TX 77720. Online Donations are also accepted. Dixie encourages all Dixie affiliates and members to support AVSA. AVSA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All donations are tax-deductible. Donate online or by mail to: **AVSA Office, P.O. Box 22417, Beaumont TX 77720.**



**BECOME A DIXIE MEMBER  
DIXIE AVS DUES**

Individual	\$15.00 Yr
Individual Life	\$175.00
Affiliate Club	\$20.00 Yr.
Commercial	\$25.00 Yr.
Dual (2 at one address)	\$20.00 Yr.

Mail application (**p.22**) or a copy with check payable to Dixie AVS to:  
 Johnnie Berry, Membership Secretary  
 287 Fennel Way, SW  
 Atlanta, GA 30331  
[johnniepearl@comcast.net](mailto:johnniepearl@comcast.net)





# GEORGIA STATE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

by Phillis Hinkle  
[pchinkle@bellsouth.net](mailto:pchinkle@bellsouth.net)

Greetings from the Peach State!  
(by the way **they** are GREAT this year)

Johnnie Berry, Barbara McGrath, and I attended the AVSA convention in Little Rock. We had the best time. It was so good to see everyone. The seminars were very informative and of course we loved the plant shopping.

We have had a quiet summer. We don't have a July meeting so it is always good to see everyone in August. Our meeting this month was well attended with members busy at the plant and leaf sales tables. The program was presented by Linda Greiss a fairly new member. The program title was "A Newbie's Experience". Linda shared how her addiction has progressed. She's adding more plants so that means more shelves and more lights. You know the drill.



In September we will have a club show. It will not be an AVSA-judged show. We need to get back into the swing since COVID, and decided that we would scale down the schedule and try to encourage especially new members. We have many new members who have never experienced presenting or showing. I hope to have some good pics for the next Dixie News.

These are the "Dog Days" so stay cool.

Phillis Hinkle



## WELCOME TO DIXIE!

by Johnnie Berry,  
Treasurer and Membership Chair  
[johnniepearl@comcast.net](mailto:johnniepearl@comcast.net)

## New Member

Janice Tyler-Blanchard  
 Mooresville, NC

## DON'T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

**(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](mailto:johnniepearl@comcast.net)

## ARKANSAS STATE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

by Betty Ferguson  
[bettywithviolets@gmail.com](mailto:bettywithviolets@gmail.com)



The Central Arkansas African Violet Society has transitioned from our focus on the AVSA Convention to our upcoming club sale in September. We picked up new members at the convention and were excited (No! overjoyed!) to have 15 visitors and members in attendance at our July meeting.

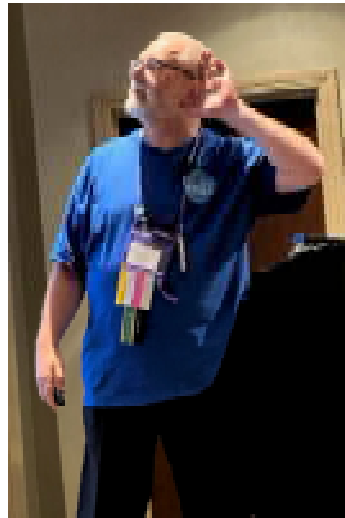


Danny Tidwell, club president, brought enough project plants, Buckeye Seductress, for us all. He got a good deal on them, thanks to David Harris. We learned how to repot, and we each repotted our new plants. They'll be ready for show at our 2023 club show. Danny also gave a demonstration on grooming our plants for show.



Buckeye Seductress

I'll present our August program on container gardens.



Rich Follett,  
our new Virginia  
State Director.

Rich presented an entertaining and educational program at the AVSA Convention, "It Followed Me Home. Now what?" He shared a variety of lovely and unusual starter plants with his audience.



Carolee  
Carter

Our new Dixie Florida State Director, Carolee Carter, shopping in the AVSA Convention salesroom.

## FLORIDA STATE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

by Carolee Carter

I'm happy to report that Florida affiliates are alive and well and emerging from two years of little activity due to the pandemic. Here's what's happening in the Sunshine State!



***Blooming Violets of Marion County (BVMC)*** is beginning its second year of existence as an official affiliate. In its first year, 29 members have joined the affiliate, and we are lucky to have found a meeting location that doesn't charge a monthly fee. All members are enthusiastically engaged, and we have had monthly programs that are well received. Our raffle table is full every month, and we're anxious to see how our newer members do in growing beautiful blooming violets. The Board met in July to discuss programs for the coming year. No shows are scheduled yet; it's a learning curve!

***Blooming Violets and Gesneriads of Palm Beach*** is struggling to keep their club together. They have members, but there is little participation in attending their meetings. They are trying to change their location to attract more plant-loving people who might enjoy growing violets. The current members are very helpful and encouraging, so they continue trying to spread the love of violets and gesneriads.

***Central Florida AVS*** is once again able to use the Beardall Center for its meetings. During the height of the pandemic, this city facility was closed. We are slowly getting back into the swing of regular face-to-face meetings. Last month, our program was a round table discussion on the INSV virus which destroyed one member's collection. We have purchased INSV testing kits, and members will be testing their plants. This month we have planned a program on fertilizers: "It Pays to Read the Label."

Because several members lost many plants in their collections, CFAVS decided to not have a spring show this year. Instead, we will be holding a sale and display to maintain our connection with African violet lovers in the spring. Details to follow.

***First Lakeland AVS*** is still meeting each month on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday. This month they are starting preparations for their show on February 10-11 at Christ Lutheran Church in Lakeland. They are also participating in the Lake Alfred Community Fun Day on August 6<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm.

### ***Heart of Jacksonville AVS***

<https://jacksonvilleviolets.org/> is on summer hiatus from member meetings, but that doesn't mean we aren't doing anything! The extended board is working hard to come up with interesting programs, revise the bylaws and plan sales events. Our first sales event is September 24 – right around the corner – and then one more sale in early November. We had a healthy number of new members after our long-awaited Spring Display and Sale, and we are anxious to show them how much fun they will have in a full season with HJAVS.

### ***Tampa African Violet Society (TAVS)***

<https://www.tampafricanviolets.com/> is on the move! Unlike some other plant societies, we continue to meet throughout the hot summer months, mostly at a nearby public library. Our night meetings (by Zoom) have been well attended and we've had excellent programs and speakers.

In April, Laura Perdomo of the Peacock Cottage, Ocala, FL, gave us growing tips and a tour through her shop. Laura is a commercial member and sells African violets and other types of plants as well as supplies and gift items.

In May, Adrienne (Annie) Rieck of Olympia Fields, IL., answered lots of questions! Annie hosts a popular video podcast on YouTube – All About African Violets. In



June, Natalia Lukashova, a TAVS member who is originally from Ukraine. She grows and sells African violets from the Ukraine. She is also a talented artist. Karen Allen, who grows over 150 Streptocarpus varieties, gave us a program in July titled "Growing Streptocarpus Hybrids to Their Full Potential." Karen has also hybridized some beautiful Streps!

Our in-person day meetings have featured Celeste Christman, a local realtor and new TAVS member, who specializes in growing Episcias; Mary Beth Bryant, TAVS past-president, who shared her tips on growing and showing African violets; Glenn Shelton, an AVSA Master Judge and long-time TAVS member who gave a comprehensive "Back to the Basics" program; and Mary Lou Harden who focused on "The most common problems in growing African violets," listing "neglect" as No. 1 on the list!

Members of TAVS were deeply saddened at the passing on May 1<sup>st</sup> of our dear member and friend, Terry Jordan. Terry was a great supporter of our club, as well as other local, regional, and national African violet clubs, including Dixie. She especially loved growing and showing Streptocarpus and enjoyed sharing them with club members. She was a cheerful and willing helper at our shows and plant sales at USF Botanical Gardens. We loved Terry and will miss her.

Our state organization, *African Violet Council of Florida*, has not had much activity so far this year. However, we will be having our fall meeting on Saturday, October 1, at 2 pm by Zoom. Guest speaker will be Joyce Stork, a past president of AVSA. Title of her program is "Culture, Pests or Pathogen." Plans are underway for the Council to have a joint show with Tampa AVS in the spring. Details to follow.

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## LOUISIANA DIRECTOR'S REPORT 3rd Quarter



by Becky McMeel  
[beckymcmeel@gmail.com](mailto:beckymcmeel@gmail.com)

Hello from Louisiana- where the weather has kinda, sorta, settled into some semblance of a routine. There is sun and heat mixed with clouds and rain!

Some days there is no rain...which is good as there is always grass to cut!

The active time of hurricane season is right around the corner, and we are all hoping the Saharan dust and upper steering currents stay active! Storms hate that...lol. Let us pray Mother Nature takes this summer off!



Louisiana Lagniappe AVS has been meeting in person and enjoying being able to mix and mingle, hug and converse, sans masks.

Their May meeting saw the club handing out project plants for the 2023 October show. The program for May involved discussing the judges' standards. The club had their show in April, and several members had questions which could have been answered if the scoring sheets had been available for viewing. Unfortunately, that is a choice of the judges, and ours opted to seal them.



At the June meeting, members were schooled on how to properly break down a plant that needs repotting. The first step was identifying leaves that needed removing (using colored dots). Once leaves were removed, they were placed on a paper plate with name of said leaves. After this task was completed, members could bag and tag any leaves they wished to take home and propagate. It was a 2-fold accomplishment in that the plants were now ready for re-potting (all the plants belonged to one of the members) and lots of leaves went to new homes. Win! Win!

The July meeting's program involved the Russian trailer RS Zimnyi Tsvetok, (Winter Flower), and whether it blooms/bloomed true. One of the members brought her plant and it was broken down. The crowns were bagged and each member present took one home to grow. They will report back with results at a later date. The plant blossoms should be white with a green edge, but this particular plant also had blossoms that were white with pink and no edge. Had it sported?

Next up, a quiz was given. Members were given the name of a sport and asked if parent plant

could be named. What a great idea! Maybe your club could do that!

Our newest club-Acadiana AVS, meets on the first Saturday of the month in Opelousas. They are working on officers and by-laws. Baby steps, Chris! Baby steps.



Their meeting in August will see them having a potting workshop with members bringing their own pots. Soil will be provided.

July meeting was a re-potting and dividing violet demo and Plumeria care.

The May meeting was African violet species and Dracaena care.

That is just about all for Louisiana!

Take care y'all, and Happy Growing!

Becky McMeel  
Louisiana Director



Rob's Boolaroo  
Photo: AVA of Australia



## DIXIE AVS AFFILIATES REPORT Third Quarter 2022

by Robbie McMeel  
[rmcmeel@bellsouth.net](mailto:rmcmeel@bellsouth.net)

As we now get into the “Dog Days of Summer” many of us are experiencing some of the hottest days of the year. I remember just a few months ago, we were experiencing some of the coldest days we have had in a while. Go figure, Global Warming????

Most of the clubs have finished with their spring shows and members are starting to grow their plants for next year club shows. As we are now again hosting club shows and sales to the public, let us as clubs, keep growing the Dixie Registered Plants for our shows. I know that we all have our favorites but we can always try something new.

Listed below are the results from the Louisiana Lagniappe African Violet Society in Baton Rouge, LA:

Louisiana Lagniappe AVS, Baton Rouge, LA  
Show Chair – George Ramirez  
Theme – “Violets Celebrate the 20’s”

Gold Rosette – Best Dixie Collection – Standard Collection

Belinda Thibodeaux – Patterson, LA  
“Cajun’s Another Chance”, “Cajun’s Solaris”,  
“Cajun’s Sweet Sensation”

### **Congratulations to Belinda!!!**

As a reminder to all members and affiliate clubs, Dixie has rosettes for Best and 2<sup>nd</sup> Best Standard Collection and Best and 2<sup>nd</sup> 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,

Robbie McMeel  
DAVS Affiliates Chair

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## ROSETTES AVAILABLE

BALTIMORE AFRICAN VIOLET CLUB BEST FANTASY ROSETTE. The Baltimore African Violet Club is offering a rosette for the Best Fantasy in any MAAVS or AVSA affiliate show. Send request and a check for \$5 made out to Carolyn Epstein at  
Carolyn Epstein  
14317 Yosemite Court  
Rockville, MD 20853.  
[inky4ever@aol.com](mailto:inky4ever@aol.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](mailto: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.

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Kissaway Trail

## DOING DESIGNS FOR SHOW

by Betty Ferguson  
[bettywithviolets@gmail.com](mailto:bettywithviolets@gmail.com)

The Creativity, the Thrill and the Uh-Ohs! Mostly the Uh-Ohs

It was at the sixth-grade science fair that I learned beauty just may be in the eye of the creator, not the judges. My mom had driven me to greenhouses around town and to neighboring towns in search of tropical plants dinosaurs would have liked to live among. Among the plants I choose I remember a parlor palm and ferns. I carefully placed the plants and mosses into my 5-gallon aquarium. Then we hit Cam-Ark pottery for clay to fashion dinosaurs and even a flying tetradactyl held up on a thin wire. I don't remember who won the blue ribbon, but my beautifully crafted terrarium didn't. The next year, I got together with a couple of the boys, and we casually put together our arrowhead collections and went to State.



This design fared well even though I left some of the parts at home and had to improvise.

My first design for an African violet show failed to impress even the designer. I worked all afternoon

on that little design in a brass Aladdin's lamp. I didn't know anything about mechanics. I didn't know a frog is that metal gadget with pins or that Oasis is that green foam stuff, not merely a waterhole in a desert or the name of a bar. My design held together long enough to get it down the hotel elevator to the showroom. I volunteered to clerk. When the judges got to the novice design class, they stood there silently staring at the only design between the ribbons. They had to have known it was mine. I was only newcomer and my face glowed redder than my Apache Redcoat's blossoms. At last Kent Stork spoke. "Wel-l-l. We'll have to give it a blue. It has all the elements of design."

And then there was the Missouri Valley convention held at Little Rock. On show day our show chairman overslept. We still needed two clerks. The judges needed instructions. Where should the hospitality food go? Where, oh where was the show chairman? This convention was his baby. And it was before cell phones. I walked into the showroom to find one of my designs had tumbled into a heap inside its niche. Somehow the show went on, and the chairman appeared well rested a couple of hours late.

I must have filled in for one of the missing clerks at that convention because I was right there when the natural gardens were being judged. I remember one of the judges saying, "We've all had red ribbons on our gardens." I stood gloating because I had never gotten a red ribbon on one of my gardens. About that time one of the judges spotted a big chunk of wood I'd left my garden propped on overnight with intentions of removing it that morning. A red ribbon showed up beside my garden. A complimentary comment was handwritten on my entry card prior to the scolding.

And there was that AVSA convention. I must have entered every single design class. Not a wise idea for a working girl with too many hobbies and obligations and too little time. I had left my tools, dirt and plant pieces scattered all over the design

section. One of the more seasoned designers remarked, "You have made a mess." Already frustrated that the time was near for designers to be locked out of the show room for the night and my designs weren't coming together well, I snapped, "I know. But I'm a big girl and I'll clean it up." I wish I could remember who that designer was, and I'd apologize and laugh with her about the incident.

In time I learned about frogs and Oasis and floral glue and those wonderful, blessed hot glue guns. I attended a Dixie convention in Memphis, but I didn't exhibit. I remember a certain gentleman presenting a program on design. Something about his manner challenged me, and I made up my mind right then and there I was going to beat him out of a Best in Class one day.



This Best Design, not mine, deserved its awards

I didn't exactly though. Some years later, the Dixie Convention was held in Chattanooga. That was close enough for me to go. I labored over a hanging design, painting twiggie branches gold and carefully balancing them from my dowel so they wouldn't tangle. This time I was pleased with

my handiwork. At the show, I began hanging my design in the niche, and that certain gentleman beside me mumbled he'd left a piece of his design at home and began taking down his playing cards. Dad burnit. There went that chance. But hooray! My hanging design won the Best in Show design award, which was almost as good, I guess.

It was that design and that gentleman that got me hooked on Dixie. He asked me to do a presentation the next year on design, so I *had* to return for the next convention. Then, being the only

member from Arkansas, I was invited to be a State Director. I'm often thankful for that gentleman and his challenge because of the wonderful friendships I've made within our Society.



This garden was fun to create. The rock holds a little pond I sealed with aquarium silicon.

Our varied talents and skills amaze me. I'm still urging my violets to magically turn into a Best in Show violet. The BIS violet hasn't happened yet. I knock them off the shelf and break leaves when I groom, and watering is simply a chore, but I find myself almost unable to decline a container garden class. To 'fess up, the gardens are enough of a passion (addiction, maybe?) that a



secondary hobby is collecting miniature-growing plants. You understand passionate behavior, so I don't need to tell you about going out of my way to find nurseries and garden centers in cities I visit and trips to the other side of town in search of new terrarium plants.

Every chance she gets, Joyce Stork tries to educate judges and designers to use the scale of points in our Handbook for judging arrangements and gardens and for critiquing our own work. Yet, judging designs allows for more subjectivity than judging, say, collection plants. Judges and designers alike should study and review the elements and principles of design listed in the Handbook and familiarize ourselves with the scale of points.

What have I learned through my years of doing design for show besides frogs, Oasis, floral glue and glue guns? One thing is that when my designs don't do so well, I can just chalk it up to bad judging. If they do well? We had fantastic judges for that show! Seriously, I have learned to stand back and honestly critique my own designs. I've learned to appreciate and learn from others' amazing designs without feeling envious. I've learned that it's really all about having fun. And I've learned not to let defeats defeat me and not to let wins influence the circumference of my head.

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## NOTICE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO DAVS BYLAWS

As published in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2022  
issue of *The Dixie News*

**NOTE: Proposed amendments to authorize electronic meetings, including hybrid meetings, in conformity with the laws of the State of Georgia, highlighted in red.**

### ARTICLE V - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**SECTION 1.** The Board of Directors shall consist of the elected officers, state directors, directors at large, chairmen of standing committees, editor of *The Dixie News*, and the immediate past president.

#### **SECTION 2. Votes.**

1. A vote by mail or by use of an electronic service designated by the Board of Directors for the meeting is authorized.
2. Unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws, a two-thirds (2/3) vote is required for action by the Board of Directors at a meeting at which a quorum is present in person, electronically or in combination.
3. A verified report of any action taken by mail or by use of any electronic service by the Board of Directors at an authorized meeting shall be made a part of the minutes of the meeting.

### ARTICLE X - MEETINGS AND QUORUMS

**SECTION 1.** The annual meeting and show shall be held each Spring or Fall, either by invitation from one of the regional states or as determined by the Executive Committee and Convention Director. The time and place for the annual meeting and show shall be announced at the regular business meeting if the details are then known, and will be published in *The Dixie News* no less than six months prior to the convention.

A special meeting may be called by the president or the Board of Directors in the event of an emergency.

#### **SECTION 2.**

A. Meetings of DAVS membership, its Board of Directors, Executive Committee and all subordinate groups subject to these bylaws, and any committees which may hereafter be formed, may be held electronically, in whole or in part, as long as all participants can hear each other simultaneously and can participate during the meeting.

B. When authorized by the Board of Directors, and subject to the guidelines and procedures as the Board of Directors may adopt, members not physically present at a meeting of the Society may, by means of remote communication:

- a. Participate in a properly noticed meeting of members, and
- b. Be deemed present in person and vote at a meeting of members, whether the meeting is held at a designated place or held wholly or in part by means of remote communication, provided that:
  - (i) The Society implements reasonable and adequate

procedures to verify that each person deemed present at the meeting by means of remote communication is a member, and

- (ii) When any member votes at the meeting by means of remote communication, a record of such vote or such other action shall be maintained by the Society.

**SECTION 3.** Twenty-five percent of the members registered and attending the annual convention shall constitute a quorum at the annual meeting. Three officers and five members shall constitute a quorum at Board of Directors' meetings. A majority of members present shall constitute a quorum of the Executive Committee.

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### SYMPATHY

Alice Terry Dryden Jordan, of Lakewood Ranch, FL, and Virginia Beach, VA, passed away on May 1, 2022, in Norfolk, VA. Terry was a member of, and actively involved in, Tampa AVS, Virginia Beach AVS, AVSA, Dixie AVS and The Gesneriad Society. She was passionate about African Violets and other members of the Gesneriad family, especially Streptocarpus.

Terry is survived by her husband Joe, her daughter Carolyn and other relatives.

**COPY DEADLINE  
FOR NOVEMBER ISSUE  
October 15**



Optimara 'My Dream'

# the other Gesneriads: Smithiantha

by Carol Schreck\*



Smithiantha

Smithiantha, named after Miss Matilda Smith, a botanical artist, is the only genus of Gesneriaceae to be named in honor of a woman.

Smithiantha is a small genus of six species that are native to Guatemala and Mexico and are grown from scaly rhizomes which the plants manufacture underground, seeds or cuttings. An outstanding characteristic of these gesneriads is their beautiful heart-shaped, velvet-textured leaves, sometimes red, sometimes green, and sometimes mottled with purple or brown. Smithianthas often go by the common name "Temple Bells" because of the tubular-bell shape of their flowers which are in clusters at the top of the plant. The blooms of red, yellow or orange appear in late summer, fall and early winter.

One problem with growing Smithianthas is their height of two to four feet which makes them difficult to grow in light gardens. There is a smaller, newer hybrid, S. 'Little One' which is a more compact grower.

Another way to get a plant that is manageable under lights is to make a cutting from the top portion of the plant and root it. Trim the cutting so it is left with two pairs of mature leaves and then

remove the lower set of leaves. Place the cutting in a pot of fresh soil with the leaf nodes down far enough in the pot that the soil is nearly up to the leaves that are remaining on the stem, water it, and seal the whole thing in a plastic bag. In a couple weeks, the cutting should be rooted and the bag can be removed. Now you have a shorter plant that will fit – and bloom – under your lights. I've also used this method with my Kohlerias. When I grew the species *Smithiantha zebrina* in the greenhouse, I found that it needed the weight and support of being potted in a clay pot because it was too top-heavy in a plastic pot when left to grow to its natural height.



HCY's Winter Glory

A satisfactory soil mix for growing *Smithiantha* is the same mix you use for African violets. Feed them lightly, but regularly. You will also find that the leaves will curl on *Smithiantha* if the humidity is not high enough. They like 50% humidity.

Blooms may continue for two to three months, and as the lower blooms shrivel, cut them off of the main stem. Eventually flowering will stop and when this happens, the plant is ready to rest for a while. Now you should water it less, but do not let it get bone-dry. Your *Smithiantha* is now manufacturing its rhizomes for next season's growth. When the foliage begins to die down, remove the plant from the pot and harvest the rhizomes. A good way to store rhizomes is in a plastic Zip-loc bag with some dry vermiculite. In about May, they will begin to sprout and you can pot them up—one to a 4" pot.

There are a few intergeneric crosses I have grown and like. The following pictures are crosses between *Achimenes* and *Smithiantha*,

hence, their names each begin with "x*Achimenes*antha."



'Ballerina'

'Texas Blue Bayou'



'Inferno'

'Northwoods Sunburst'



(Photos this column of the Intergenerics from the Gesneriad Reference Web.)

\*Reprinted from *The Florida Connection*, quarterly publication of The African Violet Council of Florida.



# Upcoming Events

**September 23-24, 2022 – Central Arkansas AVS Fall Show and Sale**, Patrick Henry Hays Senior Center, 401 W. Pershing Blvd., North Little Rock, AR. Information: Alice Brown at [jerrynalice@att.net](mailto:jerrynalice@att.net).

**September 24, 2022 – NASA Area AVS, League City, TX. Fall Plant Sale**, Bay Harbour United Methodist Church, 3459 FM 518 E., League City, TX 77598. Information: Dianne Duggan at [ddgcampbell@earthlink.net](mailto:ddgcampbell@earthlink.net).

**October 1, 2022 – African Violet Council of Florida Fall Meeting, by Zoom.** Program, “Culture, Pests or Pathogen.” Guest Presenter: Joyce Stork

**November 3-5, 2022 – Lone Star AV Council, Houston, TX, Annual Convention, “Violets Cruise Texas Rivers.”** Doubletree by Hilton Hotel, Houston Intercontinental Airport, 15747 JFK Blvd., Houston, TX 77032.

## LOOKING BACK AT PREVIOUS DIXIE CONVENTIONS –



Phyllis King  
Florida



Jane Rexilius and Ruth Goeke – Texas

### THE PURPOSES OF AVSA

The African Violet Society of America, Inc. (AVSA) was organized November 8, 1946 and incorporated June 30, 1947. Since then, it has grown to be the largest society devoted to a single indoor plant in the world.

The purposes of AVSA are to:

1. Provide a convenient association for people interested in African violets;
2. Stimulate interest in propagation and culture of African violets;
3. Promote distribution of all varieties and species among members and others interested in growing them;
4. Publish reliable, practical information about plants and the organization.

AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors and Judges, p.11.



Glenda & Jim Williams - Texas

**Sinningia  
Kaleidoscope**  
Photo: Lyndon Lyon  
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## PUBLICATION DEADLINES

**February Issue – January 15**  
**May Issue – April 15**  
**August – July 15**  
**November – October 15**

From the Editor. . . Mary Lou Harden  
[mlhard@verizon.net](mailto:mlhard@verizon.net)

It's greatly encouraging that so many of our affiliates are once again able to have in-person meetings. While electronic meetings have made it possible for us to at least stay in touch as well as have some wonderful programs by Zoom, I'm sure you'll agree that there's nothing like getting together and sharing life with like-minded friends.

So, although it was disappointing that our fall show had to be cancelled, I'm hopeful and optimistic that we'll find the perfect venue for a convention and show in 2023. I hope you'll take time to consider all of the suggestions and options in our President's message. It's obvious that we need to make some changes, so I'm hoping that together we can make good decisions and come up with a winning plan.

We welcome Carolee Carter as the new Florida Director, and Rich Follett as the new Virginia Director. Our directors perform a valuable service for Dixie as they promote Dixie in their own local clubs and in their shows. Hopefully you will get some good ideas especially about programs from the articles they write for our newsletter.

Please keep in mind that we're always looking for good articles and information about your club. You can also submit pictures of your plants. And don't forget to promote Dixie in your club meetings!

Hope you and your violets are surviving the summer heat!

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