

SPRING-SUMMER  
2017

# The Rosette

Albuquerque African Violet Club

## Sharon's Sharing

Sharon recently emailed all Club members telling them of an exciting new project.

She wrote: *"Dodie introduced an exciting Club project at our meeting yesterday (the 9<sup>th</sup>) and I wanted to make sure that EVERYONE has an opportunity to participate so I'm sending this email to all members."*

*"Dodie and Kathy are working together to teach us a methodical stay-by-step process for taking a plant and growing it into a show plant in 11 months. Either Kathy or Dodie will be at each monthly meeting giving instructions on what needs to be done at that time. They will be bringing in their plants and we will be bringing in our plant so that we can see their progress and compare ours with theirs. If we have any problems/issues they will be there to advise us. This will take place after the presentation (during refreshment time)."*

Sharon attached to the email an excellent write-up on how to get started written by Dodie. A copy of that write-up is included in this newsletter. Ed.)

2017



Check out AAVC's web site:

[www.albuquerqueafricanvioletclub.org](http://www.albuquerqueafricanvioletclub.org)

and on Facebook

AAVC is an affiliate of the African Violet Society of America and a member of the Council of Albuquerque Garden Clubs, Inc.

## OUR 2017 SHOW

WHAT A TRAILER!



WHAT A DESIGN!



## AAVC OFFICERS

**President – Sharon Shannon**  
**V President - Dodie Nelson**  
**Secretary – Robin Cassell**  
**Treasurer – JoEllen Bowden**

## **What a Brilliant Idea**

Whoever came up with the idea of sharing a step-by-step process of having a plant ready for showing in 11 months... Dodie and Kathy...they need to be thanked. While the project will focus on a plant ready for showing, the process is really an educational design for encouraging Club members to understand the entire process of caring for an African violet. A practical 'textbook' experience. Whether one is an experienced grower or novice, there is so much to consider in the violet scheme of things when it comes to adequate plant nurturing. So many things to consider...so many things to try...so many things to assess...where does one begin, end. The project will bring clarity to our judgments and push us to consider new ideas.

### **Albuquerque African Violet Club Club Project for 2017-18**

#### **How to Grow a Show Plant**

Our aim here is to have every member grow a show-worthy plant – if the levies don't rise...

#### **Selecting A Show Plan**

Some African violets make better show plants than others. Some varieties are interesting to grow, but will never shape up for a show. Many experienced African violet growers use the list of Best-in-Show or the Best Varieties list (in the *African Violet Magazine*) for selecting show plants. Select a sturdy plant showing four or more leaves with symmetrical growth.

The Optimara plants we have purchased recently are all "well-behaved" plants and are all approximately the same age which means that we will all start out even.

Some folks believe that if you obtain two plants that are the same, then one at least will perform better than the other for show and if one croaks, then you still have one to enter. This is up to you.

#### **Preventative Measures-Routine**

After selecting the plant you intend to grow for show, inspect it thoroughly, disbud it, and take off the large leaves leaving 3 or 4 rows. You need to inspect the roots of the plant as well, so, when repotting take most of the soil off the root ball and repot in clean soil and pot. You will be "potting down" into a smaller pot. Any subsequent repotting will be "potting up". Repotting should take place when you see the roots creeping out of the pot at the bottom – about 2 to 3 months. In ideal conditions, violets should grow one row a month. Taking off the bottom leaves will remove any blemishes allowing you to start fresh.

Many folks will then take the freshly repotted plant and put it into a plastic bag for a few days up to a week. If it's a newly acquired plant, they may "isolate it" by keeping it in a plastic bag for 4-8 weeks or by placing it into another room with adequate light and attention.

**BIG CONGRATS**  
**to our**  
**2017 AAVC Show Award Winners!!!**

African Violet Sweepstakes – Kathy Hajner  
African Violet Runner-up Sweepstakes – Lona Pidanick  
Design Sweepstakes – Carol Skaggs  
Design Runner-up Sweepstakes – Jessica Burns  
Best Design – Lona Pidanick  
Best Standard Collection – Kathy Hajner  
Best African Violet – Kathy Hajner (Rob's Humpty Doo)  
Best Standard African Violet – Kathy Hajner (K's Cherry Chip Frosting)  
Best Blooming African Violet, Green Foliage – Kathy Hajner (Carolina Ariosa)  
Best Blooming African Violet, Variegated Foliage – Dena Brent (Buckeye Concerto)  
Best Trailer or Species – Kathy Hajner (Rob's Humpty Doo)  
Best Other Gesneriad – JoEllen Bowden (Episcia 'Cocoa')  
Most Floriferous – Dena Brent (Tiger)  
Special Rosette for Educational Exhibit – Dodie Nelson

**Soil It Is**

Not too long ago I attended a lecture on soil...an Introduction to Soil. It hit me as I listened for an hour or so that we really take for granted the soil in our African violet world. It is there, we use it, some of us manipulate it in a variety of ways to guarantee a good product. The bottom line is we need soil to support our mutual interest. Consider...

Water.. One of the basic components of soil is water...the other are air, minerals, and organic matter. It is the most limiting factor in African violet management. Water travels through pores by capillary action in soil and should be available throughout. Constant attention is necessary. Plants not getting sufficient water spend enormous energy just to survive. Plants getting too much water die because no air can get to them.

Structure. We ordinarily do not think of soil as having a structure...but it does. Structure by way of particle or size of aggregates allows all for water regulation. Thus structure will determine the soil's holding/draining capacity. If the particles are too large water just run through without any or little maintained for plant use; small pores will prevent water and air from moving at all. A mineral such as perlite is often added to 'heavy' soils allowing for structure relief.

pH. All soils have a pH factor somewhere between <6 to 9. African violets do best in soils that are slightly acidic, 6.5 to 6.8. The pH in soil affects many things. It affects the availability of nutrients, the prevention of toxic actions of particular mineral elements, measurements of chemical fertilizers, and the overall microbial activity. The response of plants to pH will accompany their particular needs.