

**Reports from the Officers,
Board Members, and
Committees for the Year 2023**



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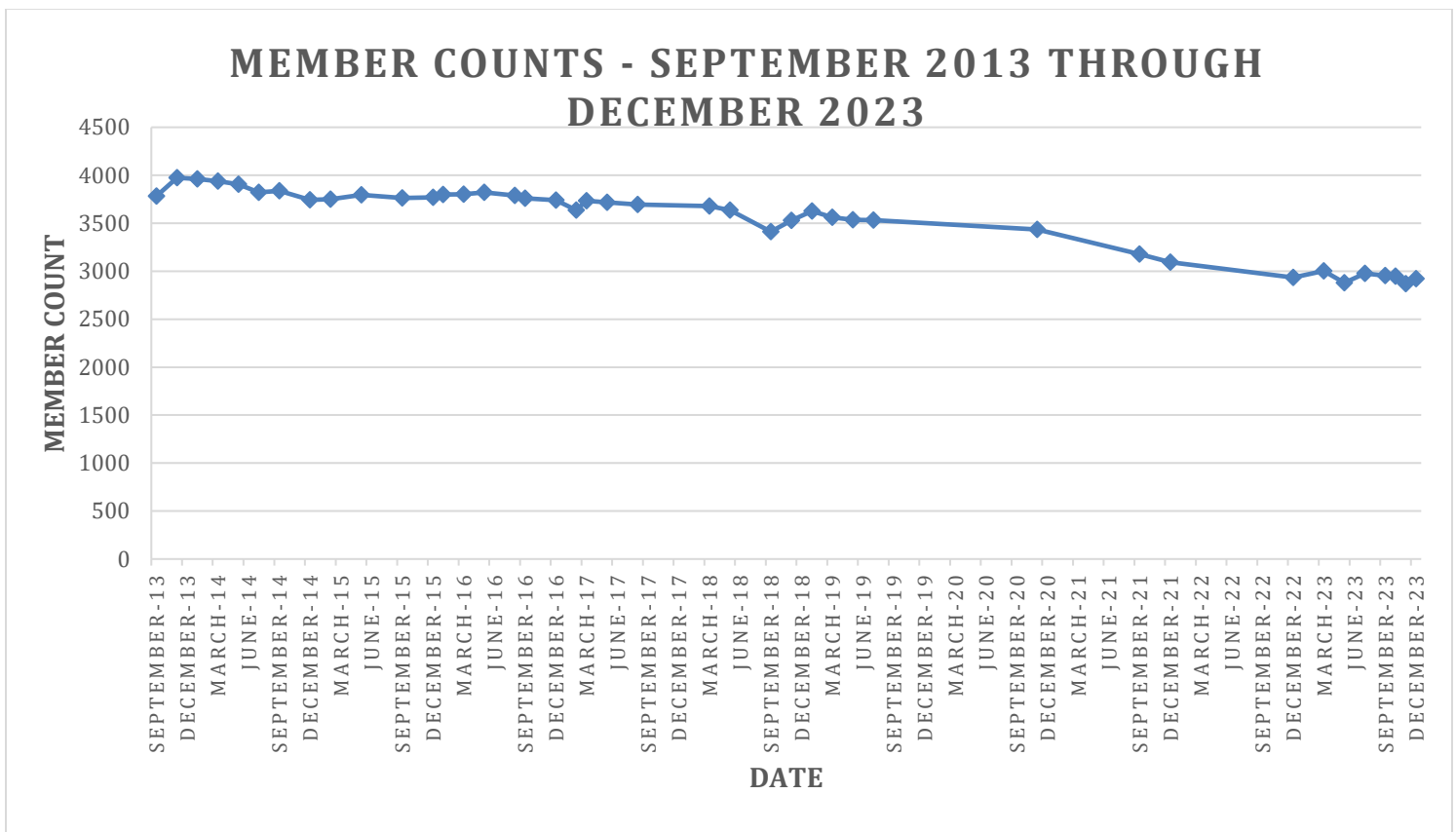
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Report of the President

Annual Report Office of the President Mary Corondan

It has been an eventful nine months serving as AVSA president. A new Marketing Committee Chair, Chris Brooks, was appointed and has made fantastic strides. A membership drive was begun in September 2023 that will continue through December of 2024. The Virtual Circle was launched and has had two Zoom meetings. The 2025 AVSA Convention was lined up for Kansas City, and *Growing to Show* is being revised by the Publications Committee with Sandy Skalski as Chair.

The graph below shows the total AVSA members from September of 2013 through December of 2023. At this point, the membership count seems to be stabilizing. The next challenge is to raise the total number of members to approach the 2013 level. This will require teamwork and dedication. The Membership Committee, in conjunction with Marketing, will be launching some promotions this year to bring this dream into reality. One of these will be an appeal to affiliates to encourage 100% within their club.



Marketing Chair, Chris Brooks, has continued the *Growing Tips* emails weekly as well as the monthly *AVSA News*. He and his committee developed new culture brochures to bring the latest growing methods to the public. Roxanne Clapp created some lovely graphics to give the brochure eye appeal.

The Virtual Circle Committee has worked to present two Zoom programs to the AVSA membership. One featured Kathy Lahti with tips on “Preparing for Show”, and the other was presented by the Phoenix convention chairs. This Zoom meeting had highlights of the convention presentations, tour reviews, and a discussion regarding the entries process and show rules. Everyone is looking forward with eager anticipation to this event. The next Virtual Circle Zoom meeting will be this summer.

A site centrally located in the continental United States was sought for the 2025 AVSA Convention. HelmsBriscoe recommended a hotel in Kansas City that would keep costs low. Missouri Valley African Violet Council was approached as a possible host affiliate for the convention. They accepted this position and will be partnering with the African Violet Club of Greater Kansas City and Sho-Me African Violet Club. Randy Deutsch will be Convention Chair, and Linda Hall will serve as Show Chair.

The Publications Committee has been meeting regularly to update and revise the 2008 *Growing to Show* book. There are a few sections that need major revamping and others that will need very little. The goal is to have the new edition ready to go on sale at the Kansas City AVSA Convention in 2025.

The Executive Committee meets monthly. By doing this, it is easier to keep the forward momentum going on projects. It also results in shorter meetings at national conventions and enables the Executive Committee more time to comingle with the membership at convention. Strategic planning is being addressed as time permits.

Meetings are held with Amy as often as they are needed. Keeping communication lines open with the AVSA Office is essential.

It is a pleasure and an honor to serve AVSA as president. The support of the officers, board, and staff is greatly appreciated. Together, we can move AVSA forward and prepare the organization for the future.

Mary Corondan

Report of the First Vice President

Annual Report *Office of the First Vice President* Glenda Williams

After serving the past ten (10) months as 1st VP, I again reflect on the leadership knowledge and experience I continue to gain, especially from working with the talented committee chairs noted in this section of this report, as well as committees from prior years. Much work was undertaken and completed as the AVSA has over the past few years, made great strides in rebranding our organization with a fresh, new look, new technologies, new membership, and a growing community of African violet enthusiasts! Our hopes are high that we will continue these successes with the hard work of all of our AVSA committees. To all Committees – please accept my sincerest gratitude for your dedication to our organization and your commitment to making your committee work positively impact who we are.

As a member of your AVSA Executive Committee, I regularly attend EC monthly and any other specially called meetings and events. With the advent of remote meeting technologies, the AVSA has made great strides in conducting regular and special Society business on a more frequent basis than just the previous Spring and Fall meetings.

The EC meets regularly with Amy Carruth, Office Manager, to keep abreast with the daily operations of the national office, to maintain healthy lines of communication, and address any requests from office staff. Amy and I usually connect weekly to keep updated on office issues. I am preparing now for my new duties as Salary Chair where I will facilitate annual AVSA employee evaluations and work performance. The Salary Committee will meet this spring to discuss, review, and process annual employee performance evaluations. I frequently travel through Beaumont and spend in-person, face-to-face time with office staff. They are quick to have me help out with the telephone calls while I am there! I have also stamped envelopes and even helped with some of the daily office work!

Your EC continues to work on the strategic planning process as a major foundation upon which the AVSA will achieve its critical mission. This is noteworthy, as outcomes from this process will provide AVSA with a more focused direction and approach for the future. Input from all Committees continues to be instrumental in how this future direction is put into play. This is an excellent opportunity for all Committees and volunteers to make a difference in the future of AVSA. The EC continues to work to “fine-tune” committee governance by consolidating committees and streamlining AVSA business and committee processes, roles, and responsibilities. Consolidation of committees to better meet the business needs of AVSA is crucial to maintain efficiencies, as well as improve allocation of our limited and much-valued volunteer resources. AVSA is like many nonprofit organizations today, working to maintain healthy membership numbers as we provide valuable resources and information to our growing communities. I continue to encourage all of you to do your part and help your Vice Presidents in this process through your continued input and feedback, especially with recommendations of where improved efficiencies can be implemented and realized.

I continue to work hard to enhance and improve - wherever possible - communications between all the 1st VP committees, especially when committees overlap. It is important for all AVSA committees to communicate and collaborate whenever possible, as this is a wonderful way to enhance the effectiveness of our limited volunteer resources to achieve all the work we do. From the beginning of my term, my 1st VP committees have had availability of my personal upgraded Zoom account at no cost, allowing for meetings longer than 45 minutes. Some committees have taken advantage of this and those that have not should consider this offer as a way to keep your committees communicating.

With planning almost completed for the upcoming 2024 Phoenix National Convention, I continue to be guardedly optimistic about in-person attendance. Post-pandemic issues, our struggling economy, and competing hobby interests continue to be the driving force behind attendance and participation decisions. The AVSA should focus on increasing public outreach and education to growing communities to encourage membership and convention attendance growth.

I actively participate in the Lone Star African Violet Council activities as Past President and Commercial Vendor. Although attendance was still low compared to years pre-pandemic, the show was filled with beautiful entries. Post-pandemic issues as well as shrinking wallets continue to impact attendance and sales at all events. I encourage all to continue to attend – in person - local, state council, and national events, as these are the foundations of keeping interest going in our AV growing communities.

I currently serve as Secretary/Treasurer/Parliamentarian of the Central Texas Judges Council and as President of the Heart of Texas African Violet Society, one of Texas' newest affiliates, specializing in public outreach and education using remote technologies.

I continue to present numerous AV-related presentations across the country (via zoom and local sites), as well as provide my services as a Senior Judge for shows and displays. Visitors to my website www.ghviolets.com can find downloadable **free** information files about AVs, including access to my personal blog – “AV Chatterbox.” I offer my services **gratis** and ask that any donations be made to AVSA in lieu of speaker fees. I am passionate about public outreach and education about AVs, and this is my way of giving back to AVSA. I will continue this as long as I am able to travel and can afford it.

I continue my education as an AVSA Senior Judge by auditing and attending judging schools whenever and wherever possible. Being able to separate the classroom component into online education has been extremely beneficial to me as well as other Executive Board members who are also continuing their education. Kudos to the Show and Judges Committee for developing/evolving this improved curriculum for judging. Your judges really needed this!

I recently assumed the role of AVSA Archivist when Janet Riemer retired. Janet did a wonderful job managing the archives throughout the years. Her work was beyond excellent and is evident today in our archives. A new project/initiative is in planning now to use current technologies to build on the archive framework setup by Janet and digitize, store, and archive current paper artifacts. The AVSA archive room is filled with so much AVSA history and I enjoy every opportunity possible to connect with all the physical artifacts stored there.

Membership growth remains relatively stagnant. Amy continues to report new memberships are still happening, but AVSA continues to lose about as many members as are gained during the year. Data from the recent Member Survey provided us with informative and valuable data that is driving several new initiatives that are underway. AV Magazine articles were written to inform membership of the initiatives and to encourage new member interest. The Membership Campaign is well underway, offering discounts and benefits to everyone, especially those who are renewing memberships. I encourage each of you to reach out to the public as a way to garner interest and encourage new membership.

The Membership Committee continues to work with the EC to increase membership and with other committee chairs to prompt AVSA membership.

1. Next step is to increase AVSA membership via our affiliates. This is a challenging task since it would involve deploying our directors to interact heavily with the AVSA affiliates they oversee. The Membership Committee is open to any ideas from the EC they may have.
2. Working on the dues increase sandwich board selection.
3. Committee continuously works with the "Virtual Circle" programs.
4. Working with the Advertising committee to support the AVSA membership drive and formulate a new way to

promote it.

AVSA is truly blessed with Sophia Bennett, our highly competent Editor. The AVM continues to advance to a more sophisticated document under her leadership. Transition to the new print shop with the newly formatted and designed AVM has saved the AVSA a substantial amount of money. Kudos to Sophia and Mary Corondan who worked hard to make this transition happen with minimal issues.

The AVM Advertising Committee is commended for their proactive hard work generating a 7.9% increase in ad revenue, bringing three (3) new commercial memberships on board. Even with several commercials having to address, even temporarily closing and/or ceasing advertising due to a serious INSV issue, Advertising was able to achieve noticeable and successful growth over the past year. The committee works closely with the AVSA Office to ensure ad notices are sent out in a timely manner, as well as to follow up on commercials who are delinquent in payment for advertising. Most commendable is how proactive this committee is working with the Commercial Committee to network and encourage improvements in communications between committees and commercials.

The Fundraising Committee continues with their annual Booster campaigns. There is still work to be done educating membership about the many AVSA funds, their importance, how they operate, and their part in how the organization functions financially. The Fundraising Committee should continue working on the goal of educating the membership on the purpose of the various funds and how they can be involved in the giving process.

The Publications Committee will continue working with the AVM Best Articles Contest. The committee also acts as lead in the "Growing to Show" Book Update project/initiative. This is a collaborative effort between the Publications and Library Committees to revise this book, originally written and published by author Paula Bartholomew. The last publish date was 2008 and the time has come to revise key areas, especially lighting (LED); diseases and pathogens; fertilizers; and other key topics where common practices, techniques, and technologies have evolved.

The Tally Time Committee was busy this year keeping up with collecting and reporting on affiliate results. Information was aggregated and posted on the AVSA website. There were reported problems with reporting this year due to reporting process and technology changes, as well as issues obtaining affiliate reports. The chair is working closely with the TechWeb Committee to report and hopefully resolve these issues through process streamlining and technology solutions.

Since September 2019, I have functioned as the AVSA Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery (BC/DR) Coordinator and offer my continued support in this role as long as needed. The AVSA Policy and Procedures Manual "Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery Policy" section was officially updated in 2023, expanding the previous "Hurricane Policy" into a more in-depth and comprehensive policy to benefit AVSA in the event of a disaster event.

As I continue into my second year as 1st VP, I will continue transitioning into this new role and to further grow my skills, knowledge, and experience as an EC member. I again thank the EC, EB, and the AVSA membership for the opportunity to serve in this capacity. It continues to be a humbling experience and will most certainly be memorable. Please continue to go forth and be advocates for our AVSA organization. Encourage new membership and participate in more public outreach and education.

Respectfully submitted,

Glenda Williams

Report of the Second Vice President

Annual Report ***Office of the Second Vice President*** **Richard Follett**

In my capacity as AVSA 2nd Vice President 2003-2004, I have interacted purposefully with the committees in my purview, obtaining reports and reporting diligently as needed, when and where needed. In addition, I have given additional support to the Marketing Committee in the form of proofreading and editing services, content suggestions, and brainstorming future initiatives and projects. I have also written the bi-monthly AV Creative Corner for the AVM, participated actively in AVSA Executive Committee meetings, presented at the AVSA convention and repeatedly at affiliate clubs throughout the year, volunteered at the AVSA convention to prepare 'goody bags' for registrants and also at the AVSA membership table, and promoted AVSA membership and bests interests wherever possible. A list of activities, by committee, follows.

Commercial Committee: Kathy Bell has been trying to recruit new commercial members. She has been working with Candace Baldwin to resolve some complicated issues regarding plant inspection for the Phoenix convention.

Convention Show Awards: Terri Post has been handling Convention Show Awards and has done an excellent job of keeping the EC updated at each meeting. At present, there is some concern that available awards funding will be lower than usual this year.

Library Committee: Janet Reimer has stepped down. Kurt Jablonski has assumed the chair position but has been largely inactive, by his own report.

Shows and Judges: The Shows and Judges Committee has been active with updates to the bylaws to bring them into alignment with current AVSA practices.

Handbook: With the AVSA handbook so recently updated, Winston has not had a heavy workload for this committee.

Society Awards: Linda Hall has announced that she will be stepping down after the Phoenix Convention. A successor is being sought. This year's slate of nominees has been presented and voted upon.

Marketing: marketing is the committee with which I have had the highest level of engagement. Chris Brooks has been a dynamo with regard to publishing the weekly growing tips, proposing new activities and initiatives, navigating the African violet hat contest, and brainstorming promotional ideas to further AVSA's interest and increase membership.

Rich

Report of the Third Vice President

Annual Report *Office of the Third Vice President* Richard Craft

Third Vice President activities since June, 2023

My goal as Third Vice President is a lofty goal. AVSA came into existence over 75 years ago and comments have been made that our organization is still operating in the 20th century (ideas, thought processes, technology, committees, etc.) The median age of members is...old. Can a nonprofit organization with an objective “to stimulate a widespread interest in the propagation and culture of African violets,” be relevant today?

The advent of the internet allowed people with computers to search for answers to their African violet growing needs. Then social media became mainstream which allowed groups to gather together, in an open forum, to discuss the latest advances in growing everything from African violets to zinnias.

Today, hand-held mobile devices connect to the same internet and allow people to ask questions about their ailing plants while they are traveling by bus or car or even plane. Answers to their questions are returned in minutes instead of days or weeks later. But is all that advice being thrown about beneficial to your specific growing conditions?

I had a new club member go on Facebook and asked a question about watering her plants. A guy answered insisting that only rainwater should be used to water her African violets.

Dude! She lives in Las Vegas, Nevada surrounded by desert. If she waited long enough to collect enough rainwater at her house, her plants would be a crispy mess. Uninformed advice like this will kill your collection.

Then there are the self-professed experts who parrot information they have heard in order to make themselves appear smart...and some couldn't keep African violets alive if their life depended on it.

There's lots of forums to gather information online to become a better grower, but there is also information which has to be carefully discerned before applying it to your growing regimen.

What's my lofty goal? To close the gap by “gathering and publishing reliable, practical information...” about “...the culture and propagation of the African violet, and other information of interest to the members.” Read on to see what incremental steps I've been taking to close the gap between AVSA 1.0 and AVSA 2.0.

I serve on the following committees:

Advertising Committee (Chair)

I am in charge of all the advertising within the pages of the African Violet Magazine (AVM). My responsibilities include servicing all the commercial members' ad accounts and invoicing them throughout the year. I created an area on the AVSA website to display their business logos and link to their online businesses. Nothing new there that wasn't done in the early days of the internet.

However, Growing Tips, a weekly email newsletter, features those same business logos, which are exposed to a larger audience. Chris Brooks, our new Marketing Chair, has created some interesting, innovative content each week for the Growing Tips. The newsletter is also distributed to Facebook and Instagram which have generated many discussions in the African violet groups. Closing the gap by leveraging social media.

Library Committee (Vice Chair)

For this committee, the busiest time of year for me is at Convention where I do showroom photography and videotape presentations. I am in the process of locating enough server space to host recent convention photography and recorded presentations.

TechWeb Committee (Web Designer)

Some of my responsibilities include:

- Improve website performance, redesign webpages, add new content
- Posting the digital version of the African Violet Magazine (AVM) on the website in a book-like format for members to read online. There is also a link to download the AVM, so they can read it at their leisure.
- We have recently signed up for a TechSoup account which helps nonprofit organizations such as AVSA, providing discounted hardware, software, and technology solutions. I've been exploring the opportunities we can take advantage of.
- I provide tech support for AVSA's latest addition for members only, the Virtual Circle. I set up the landing page where visitors can learn about the next upcoming event and register online. The registration process is linked to our iMIS membership management website that verifies that registrants are AVSA members.
- I am working with Dr. Jeff Smith to develop an online form to register African violets (see below for detailed info)

Closing the gap by using today's technological tools to create a more appealing, accessible website.

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In addition to serving on the committees above, I have enjoyed participating in the following events.

Heart of Texas African Violet Society (McDade, Texas) I am a charter member of this virtual club which has been in existence for nearly two years. I moderate the first 90 minutes of the Zoom session, often doing educational presentations on various topics.

Copper State African Violet Club (Phoenix, Arizona) Last year I helped set up and tear down their spring Show & Sale. I brought plants to exhibit in their show and served on a panel helping to judge the show. Additional plants were brought to sell and benefit their club.

Lone Star African Violet Council (Kerrville, Texas) At their fall convention, I helped some of the vendors setup their sales areas and served on a panel judging the gesneriads. It was an honor to do my presentation, "The ABCs of N-P-K."

Mid-Atlantic African Violet Society (Gettysburg, Pennsylvania) The AVSA Executive Committee traveled to the east coast to hold our fall meeting. Three of our officers did presentations for the convention attendees.

Initially, their original venue in Baltimore closed its doors a month before the start of their fall convention. They were fortunate to locate a venue in time for their convention. However, in a series of unfortunate events, the original show room became a freezer due to an irreparable heating system. In the middle of placement, exhibit plants were moved across the street to the hotel lobby. Vendors had to setup in the hallway. The first banquet was moved into a room so

small that people were eating elbow to elbow. Despite horrendous circumstances, MAAVS managed to put on a great show.

Closing the gap by participating in local and state activities and sharing my growing knowledge.

As Third Vice President I am assigned a number of committees to oversee. My goal was to challenge each Chair to make small improvements to their committees—do things a little different than was done by their predecessors—in order to move AVSA forward. I declare that each Chair successfully met that goal.

Plant Registration and Master Plant List Committee (Dr. Jeff Smith)

It has been a pleasure working with Jeff since he moved into the Chair role to lead this important committee. In the beginning, we both had to learn the specific procedures that had previously been managed by the talented Joe Bruns. That allowed Jeff to start organizing those procedures into a workflow he could manage his way.

I gave Jeff two challenges to tackle. He went above and beyond and collected so much data, that I'm now behind in attempting to sort them out.

1. The first was to research the plant registration record keeping system of other plant societies in order to develop one that AVSA can ultimately implement. This is a work in progress.
2. The other challenge was to consider alternatives to First Class, the electronic version of the Master Varieties List. This is in a preliminary stage and has been tabled for the time being.

One other challenge to improve Jeff's committee falls on me. It involves developing an online form to register new plants. Currently there is a PDF that the hybridizer has to download and fill out. The completed form with pictures needs to be returned by scanning and emailing the files. The alternative is to stuff the paperwork into an envelope and send via snail mail. This is so ancient that it has received quite a bit of nasty comments on social media.

This is a gap that not only needs to be closed, but eliminated altogether. There are website tools that can be used to bring much needed reform to streamline the processes involved in plant registration.

See Dr. Jeff Smith's Plant Registration and Master List Committee Report elsewhere in these Annual Reports.

Violet Preservation (Mary Thompson)

Mary has continued with marginal success matching some people with their wanted violets. She continues with her AVM column, "Violets Most Wanted List."

See Mary Thompson's Violet Preservation Committee Report elsewhere in these Annual Reports.

Affiliate Committee (Mary Thompson)

This is another situation where a committee member has stepped up into the Chair position to take over leadership. Mary had the unenviable task of contacting all the affiliate clubs asking them to update their contact info on the AVSA website. Problem was that a lot of clubs had outdated contact information, and some had even disbanded. Mary discusses this in the January 2024 AVM.

Are African violet clubs a thing of the past? Depends on who you ask. There are the aging clubs which have devolved into nothing more than social gatherings. This may work in a tight-knit community where like-minded people gather and idle chatter suits them fine. Yet, for these types of clubs, attracting new members becomes difficult.

Some clubs have a robust teaching schedule and have monthly presentations done by club members or guests invited to make presentations via Zoom. The Zoom phenomenon grew out of popularity during the years 2020-2022, otherwise known as the pandemic years. It continues to this day, some clubs even adapting a hybrid style mixing in-person meetings

and Zoom meetings. These types of clubs have managed to close the gap and stay relevant to their community attracting new members.

But are these clubs growing enough to replace the numbers lost when clubs disband? There is a discussion being planned at Convention this year when I meet with Steve Covolo-Hudson, Membership Chair and Chris Brooks, Marketing Chair.

Mary brought up her own challenge and pointed out that some people get totally frustrated and are intimidated trying to use the Webpage titled, "Guide for Starting a New Club." I spoke with Terri Post, AVSA Treasurer and she concurred that the content labeled "Legal Checklist" needs to be rewritten.

See Mary Thompson's Affiliate Committee Report elsewhere in these Annual Reports.

TechWeb Committee (Candace Baldwin)

Candace continues to lead this committee with the skills she learned through her previous job experience. There are many tasks associated with keeping the AVSA website running smoothly. The TechWeb team meets regularly, every 3 weeks to prioritize tasks. Special meetings may be called to meet deadlines. Recently, we've been meeting with Joe Bruns to support him in finishing updates to the Entries program.

See Candace Baldwin's TechWeb Committee Report elsewhere in these Annual Reports.

Directors

Recruiting five capable Directors each year has become a challenge. A bylaw amendment will be voted on to begin a drawdown, reducing the number of Directors chosen each year. By 2027, there will only be three Directors chosen each year.

I will be developing a guideline for potential candidates to be read before they apply for a Director position. They will also receive this document or be able to read it online when they are installed at Convention.

Closing the gap by empowering ambassadors to reach out to the public.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Craft – Third Vice President

Report of the Secretary

Annual Report *Office of the Secretary* Sue Ramser

The activities of the secretary since the Atlanta Convention are as follows:

Minutes

1. Received files and documents from Retiring Secretary Rich Follett.
2. Prepared Agendas and distributed them to members of the Executive Committee.
3. Attended Monthly Zoom meetings of the AVSA Executive Committee and Amy Carruth, Office Manager.
4. Prepared correspondence necessary resulting from the Executive Committee Meetings.
5. Forwarded digital files of the minutes and associated documents to the AVSA Office for archiving.
6. Attended the in person Fall Meeting of the Executive Committee at the MAAVS Convention in November in Gettysburg PA.
7. Prepared minutes resulting from the Fall Executive Committee Meeting
8. Forwarded minutes and associated documents to the AVSA Office for Archiving.

Official Correspondence and Other Duties

1. Submitted an annual report for distribution to the Board.
2. Compiled the 2023-2024 Directory of Officers, Directors, and Committee members.
3. Emailed the directory to officers, directors, chairmen of standing and special committees and to the AVSA Office for archiving.
4. Prepared the January 2024 Directory of Officers, Directors and Committee members and emailed the Directory to officers, directors, and Committee Chairs.
5. Received and answered correspondence from members. Requests were channeled to appropriate persons for possible action.

Policies and Procedures

1. Incorporated Policies and Procedures Motions from the Atlanta Convention and emailed a copy of the updated Policies and Procedures Manual to the Board and Candace Baldwin TechWeb Chair for posting on the AVSA website.
2. Emailed a copy to Amy Carruth, Office Manager for archiving.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sue Ramser

Report of the Treasurer and Finance Chair

Annual Report ***Office of the Treasurer and Finance Chair*** **Terri Post**

During the first four months of 2023, I compiled and prepared the financial statements for fiscal year 2022, and I also filed an extension for the 2022 Form 990 tax return. I then prepared a 2024 budget to be presented to the board.

In March, 2023, I filed the final report for the foundation that AVSA received a grant for during 2022. They require financial statements by December 31. During April, 2023, I filed for the new 2023 grant. They rejected our filing for the 2023 grant.

In September of 2023, I prepared and filed the 2022 Form 990 tax return. This return is public information and a copy can be obtained by filing a written request to the AVSA office. The return is also available for the public to view at www.guidestar.org. This is a website endorsed by the IRS.

To recap AVSA investments:

The Life Fund is primarily invested in bonds and CDs. A few CDs were called and/or matured during 2023 and the funds from them was reinvested into municipal bonds and CDs. The approximate rate of return for the entire fund was 2.66%. AVSA also had to withdraw \$10,000 from this fund during 2023 in order to meet operating expenses.

The BERF fund has been invested in treasury bonds, CDs and a mutual fund. The BERF committee has asked to keep some of this fund liquid in order to pay out any possible scholarship as needed. The approximate rate of return for this fund during 2023 was 3.84%. Scholarships of \$2,000 were also awarded from this fund during 2023.

The Tinari Fund has also been invested mainly in CDs and bonds. The approximate rate of return for this fund was 3.14%.

The Burde Fund has been invested in bonds and some CDs. The approximate return for this fund during 2023 was 1.88%.

During the year 2023, the Hudson monies earned approximately 2.2%. It is hoped that this fund will be able to pay for future awards with earnings.

I feel that we have been able to reinvest earnings on our investments and, at year end we were able to draw on them to help us with immediate cash needs. This enables us to continue to grow and provides financial stability for the future, as was the desire of the original endowment donations.

The 2025 budget will be prepared and presented to the board for approval at the Phoenix convention.

Respectfully submitted,

Terri Post
Finance Committee Chair and AVSA Treasurer

Report of the Immediate Past President

Annual Report ***Office of the Past President*** **Susan Anderson**

Since the 2023 Atlanta Convention, I have continued to promote AVSA and share my joy of growing African violets. As the Immediate Past President, I have participated in the Executive Committee's virtual meetings. Meeting regularly has allowed us to conduct the business of our society. The EC met in person in November 2023 during the Mid-Atlantic African Violet Society's convention in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. It was truly inspirational to witness the camaraderie and perseverance of the local members, as they worked through several challenges to deliver an absolutely beautiful, successful show. We are grateful for their hospitality. I particularly appreciated being invited to present a design program on color while I was there. I presented the program virtually, earlier in the year, for a couple affiliate meetings and this was the first time I could present it in-person, which was very fun.

Meanwhile, I am preparing for the 2024 Phoenix Convention, where I will be serving as Convention Show Chair. I am working closely with Kathy Lahti, Convention Director, and Candace Baldwin, Convention Chair. The hotel was secured and theme decided immediately upon conclusion of the Atlanta convention. Since then, preparations for the show and convention are coming together well. The show schedule is complete, award rosettes ordered, and the various committee chairs are busily working on their respective portions of the show. I am looking forward to welcoming everyone to Arizona.

The AVSA Virtual Circle program was initiated in the fall of 2023. This was a huge accomplishment for AVSA and I hope the membership appreciates the level of effort it has taken to get it underway. I had the opportunity to serve as a Q&A moderator, along with Scott Ammann, during the first program with Kathy Lahti. At the second virtual program, I was a speaker and introduced participants to the Phoenix convention show. It was exciting to have so many members register and participate in the virtual program.

I am also serving on the Publications Committee, which is working to update the Growing to Show book. While I have not had much time to devote to this effort yet, I intend to get more involved after this year's convention to assist wherever I can be of use.

I also continue several additional activities within AVSA, including Show Schedule Approver and Tally Time Chair. The processes for each activity evolved and will continue to do so, as affiliates choose to hold in-person events again. I am

hopeful that the show results can be integrated within the Entries program to simplify the reporting process. There are still some updates needed to make it function seamlessly. I have recently set up a new email address specifically for the show schedule approval process because I have encountered difficulties with the avsa.org email address. I have also created a google spreadsheet, that I share with Amy Carruth and Mary Corondan, to ensure we each have the same information regarding the show requests. On the shared spreadsheet, we can each record pertinent information about the shows and affiliates. If we all work off the same reference document, we should be able to better coordinate our efforts. I hope this will assist with knowing which clubs are maintaining their memberships, holding shows, and reporting results in a timely manner.

As a method of promotion for AVSA, I renewed the application to the Chase's Calendar of Events to have the week of April 21 – 28, 2024, declared as National African Violet Week, to be celebrated in Phoenix, AZ. The event was accepted and published in the 2024 edition. The listing includes information about our AVSA convention, office location, and website. The Chase's Calendar of Events is the most comprehensive reference available on holidays, special events, international days of celebration, federal and state observances, and more. This is a source for most media and publishers. I have just received the renewal notice for 2025 and will submit for the Kansas City convention.

This past year, my own affiliate, Copper State African Violet Club, was fortunate to host a show and sale in April 2023. We had a fabulous turnout! People were very excited and eager to purchase violets. We have continued to have monthly meetings with informative and interactive, hands-on programs. Copper State AVC is looking forward to hosting the 2024 AVSA Convention.

I have and will continue to promote AVSA by attending local and regional events, whenever possible.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Anderson
Immediate Past President

Reports of Elected Directors

Scott Ammann

I continue to edit the Newsletter for the Missouri Valley African Violet Council and was Convention Chair for our Fall Show and Sale, which I was able to judge in as well.

I've become president of my local affiliate the St Louis Metropolitan African Violet Council which had our first post covid show and sale May 12-13, 2023 at the Missouri Botanical Gardens for which I was Show Chair.

I've continued as Vice President of our local gesneriad chapter, Gateway West Gesneriad Society. We held our Show and Sale in September 2023 which I judged.

I am now President of HAGS, the gesneriad group of Kansas City and was able to judge their show in fall 2023

I am participating in the Growing to Show Rewrite.

I am serving on the nominating committee for AVSA and have volunteered to help with more online offerings from the society for engagement of those members unable to attend convention.

I have volunteered to help with the 2024 AVSA Convention Phytosanitary Certificates.

I stay in communication with many of our affiliates, who are finally seeing a few new members due to increased popularity of our plants online through social media, however still not enough to offset those who are no longer willing or able to participate.

Respectfully submitted,
Scott Ammann

Kurt Jablonski

Nothing to report.

Thank you.
Kurt Jablonski

Patricia Mattson

I have nothing to report and no budget request.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Mattson

Leonard Re

I have nothing to report except my participation on the Society Awards Committee.

I have no budget requests.

Leonard Re

Danny Tidwell

I have been working with Geneva Stagg from the Memphis AVS they have not had a show since before Covid. I am happy to say are now having a show in April.

I have recently been in contact with Carol from the Tulsa AVS. The club has not been active for a few years and ok shows. They have some newer members that are very active and growing nice plants. She said she didn't think they would have a show because the current active members are not familiar with putting on a show. Carol was excited that I be willing to help them get things going for a show in the future.

I know these clubs are not my territory since the restructure of the Directors territories. I will however continue work with these clubs even though I am going out as a director.

It has been an honor to serve as an AVSA Director.

Thank you,

Danny

Sam Cunningham

The most I've been able to accomplish for my duties this year has been to send greetings and introduction emails to the leadership of my region affiliate clubs. Out of a dozen or so, I got 3 responses.

I have continued to attend the Spring Branch affiliate club and gave a little presentation on African Violets and the AVSA at a local community event. I hope to do more this upcoming year.

I am also the sole administrator of a Face Book group with 7,000 members that supports the AVSA, and its values.

Thanks,
Sam Cunningham

Marge Farrand

I attended the national convention in Atlanta last year. At that time, it was interesting to meet the other members of the board and to participate in the board functions. I also entered several plants in the show and helped judge the horticultural division as a Senior Judge. I have maintained my Senior Judging status by taking the scheduled examinations, entering plants, and judging shows. I also wrote an article which was published in the AVM in the spring and I serve on the Fund Raising committee chaired by Randy Deutsch.

Locally, I have been an active member in two local clubs, the Michigan State AVS (MSAVS) and the Town and Country AVC. I've attended meetings, lent my expertise, and written articles for their respective newsletters. I serve as Vice President of the MSAVS and participated in the MSAVS spring and fall sales where I sell plants I have grown, speak to the public, and share growing knowledge.

I am also a member of the Ohio State AVS and participated in their September convention. I judged the show and also entered plants.

All the clubs in Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana have been assigned to me as a liaison to the AVSA board. I have contacted all the local clubs listed in Michigan and Ohio to introduce myself and share information they should find helpful. During that time, I discovered out of date contact information listed on our website and shared those corrections with Mary Thompson. Soon I will be contacting the other local clubs to which I'm assigned.

It's been a busy year!

Respectfully submitted,

Marge Farrand

Jackie Leitzel

2023 was another great year for AVs and Gesneriads. Meetings are back in full swing, as well as the shows. I have lucky to be able to participate in 4 shows in 2023. I attended the judging school in Gettysburg, PA during the MAAVS convention with several others, and all in attendance passed and we AVSA now has a handful of new judges in the Mid-Atlantic area. I am still serving as Secretary and Membership Chair of the Mid-Atlantic African Violet Society. I am a member of the Tidewater African Violet Society and the Springfield African Violet Society, and I did my first virtual talk in February on how I grow and care for my micro miniature African Violets and Sinningias.

Respectfully submitted,
Jackie Leitzel

Bill Patterson

As a member of the Board of Directors, I serve on the following committees:

- 1) Director
- 2) Virtual Circle – Committee Chair
- 3) Nominating Committee - Member
- 4) 2024 Convention – Show Co-chair
- 5) Copper State African Violet Club – Treasurer
- 6) Desert Sun African Violet & Gesneriad Society – Vice President

1. I sent introductory letters to the affiliate clubs assigned to me with very little response if any. I attended as a guest a meeting of the Tucson African Violet Society.
2. I attend both Copper State and Desert Sun meetings monthly and often do a presentation for the meeting.
3. In October participated in a Sale for Copper State as treasurer and presenter of information to the public at the booth.
4. In November participated in Desert Sun's Show I was the Show Cochair, submitted entries, and was a judge for the show.
5. Spent many hours in meetings and preparation for the 2024 Convention in Phoenix as the Convention Treasurer and Show Co-Chair for entries and design.
6. As Chair of the Virtual Circle Committee
 - i) Organized the start-up and initial meetings of the committee.
 - ii) Sent out and prepared Zoom invitations for the committee meetings.
 - iii) We were able to successfully have two Virtual Zoom sessions for membership.
 - iv) I spent many hours in preparation for the two Life Virtual meetings.
 - v) Moving forward with the Virtual Circle the committee needs to look into if the time being spent is worth the return. There are so many clubs now doing their own virtual meetings and offering them across the country. Should AVSA maybe include these as events in the AVM and on the AVSA website allowing clubs and affiliates to organize events and get more virtual opportunities out to the entire membership, more than just what Virtual Circle is trying to do?

Bill Patterson

April Van Ness

What a joy it is to experience an AVSA Convention! As I serve as a director and attend meetings and conventions, I am amazed at just how much more there is to learn. Thanks to the different classes held at convention I have met new people and have been able to share new ideas with people and clubs along the way. While clubs vary as far as time and meeting space, most have a common problem- attracting new members and also communication.

These two areas are a stumbling block and something that needs to be addressed if we desire to have affiliate clubs continue to exist. The thing that I constantly share with people is to be patient with their plants and themselves! I have enjoyed sharing with different groups and have made contact with a local school- as was suggested at our convention in Atlanta. The other valuable lesson is that even the “experts” in clubs need to be willing to teach, demonstrate and participate with newer members. Some will share and others will not! I encourage everyone to find a group that is open to share knowledge, is nonjudgmental- after all we have all killed plants- and one that they really enjoy. Growing African violets is meant to be fun in my book, and if it’s not fun people will just drop out!

I continue to serve as president of Garden State African Violet Club in New Jersey and am a member of Mid Atlantic African Violet Society. Oh, I was thrilled to show at National in Atlanta for the very first time! Oh, the lessons I learned. Special thanks to all who were willing to help me out to get a Blue Ribbon! You guys ROCK!

May your growing continue along with your joy and confidence in showing!

April Van Ness

Penny Eggleston

I have been setting up kits with soil, wicks, cups and a set of leaves. I then put a FC 2 pictures and description on each bag.

I have gone into several high school horticulture classes and the word got out because I have been invited to speak at 2 more schools.

3 young students have asked to join our club

Penny Eggleston

Anna Lammersen

I have received my list of affiliate contacts and sent out an email in early January to the contact emails. There was no information for Humboldt or So Cal council available. Two contacts responded, one of which asked about insurance information for the club and I sent the necessary information back along with additional contact information. I also responded later in the month about (to this same contact) about the shared room information for the convention since she asked about the process.

Anna Lammersen, Director

Gail Podany

I attended the 2023 Convention and as a Board nominee sat in on the Board of Directors meeting. I attended the Meet the Board of Directors luncheon.

I was co-chair of the Host/Hostess Committee and worked at the AVSA Table.

I attended the Annual Membership meeting.

I have been a member of the Publicity Committee since my previous term on the Board.

As a Director I was assigned to be a contact between the AVSA and 11 affiliate clubs in New York and Virginia. I emailed each club contact advising that they could contact me with any questions or concerns about AVSA activities or policies.

I will be attending the 2024 Convention.

Gail Podany

Carol Semrau

I attended the 2023 Board Directors Meeting

I attended the Annual Membership Meeting

I worked at the AVSA Table

I was Co-Chair of the Host/Hostess Committee and worked as a Hostess

I attended the Meet the Board of Directors Luncheon

I was asked as a Director, by Richard Craft, to be the contact between several affiliate clubs and the AVSA. I contacted the affiliates to introduce myself. I found out that unfortunately 2 clubs have disbanded. I informed Mary Thompson about this.

I am a member of the Sales Committee and worked behind the sales table of Paul Sorano during sales.

I will be attending the 2024 Convention in Pheonix, AZ.

Carol Semrau
Director

Nancy Sullivan

I'm still hearing back from the clubs that I've been assigned to. I did find out that the Cedar Valley Violet Club in Iowa has not renewed their membership in AVSA and there is no contact information.

Nancy Sullivan

Reports of the Standing Committees

Affiliate--Mary Thompson

Mary Thompson- Chair

Jeri Anderson -Vice Chair

Carolee Carter

It was my pleasure after the last convention to take over the chair. I am having so much fun. Jeri Anderson was so patient with me as she guided me through the process of updating the website.

I spent several hours sending update notices to clubs. At this time there are still about 35 who have not updated their information. As I add sale/show information I am again requesting updates. I will spend time in February contacting the clubs who have not updated.

Recently 6 clubs have updated and we have 15 events that were added recently. As of today, we have 36 events planned for 2024.

We do not need any finances.

AVM Advertising—Richard Craft

AVM Advertising Chair activities since March 1, 2023

It took a little persistence, but one of our long-term commercial members was convinced to bring their membership up to date and they also paid their AVM ad invoices.

Commercial Member Losses:

- Swift Moist-Rite Planters – loss of ad revenue, too

The office has sent out the requisite renewal notices. In addition, I have asked the Commercial Chair to contact those commercial members who dues have expired or about to expire.

New Commercial Members

- Miska's Blooms (Oregon)
- Rolling Ridge Rosettes (Texas)
- Summer Joy Silver (Texas)

AVM Ads

- Moonlight Nursery did not renew their ad, but is expected to continue in the spring.
- Rolling Ridge Rosettes placed ads in the AVM.
- VDM Designs placed ads in the AVM.

2023 Ad Revenue

Collected \$6358.00

This is up 7.9% from 2022.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard Craft – Advertising Committee Chair

Commercial Activities—Kathy Bell

Sent invitation out the end of February to commercials.

Contacted my committee to see who would be available to help at convention and only a few were at convention but it worked out. Also, have a new committee member Anna Lammersen.

Again, this year I am giving each commercial a free table. AVSA already has the money to cover the cost and what is left over is to be used to help out with other expenses.

My committee and I were available starting on Tuesday to help commercials if needed when setting up. Had signs on their sales tables in case we weren't in the salesroom when they arrived.

Put signs on the door that a sticker on badge is needed to have special access while commercials are setting up and where disabled enter when salesroom opened on Thursday. They really like it when they are not bothered with people coming in asking questions while they are setting up.

Met with Commercials on Thursday, June 1, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. to discuss what AVSA could do to help them. Most of the discussion was where convention hotels are. Would like them to be in areas that is easy for them and to get more locals to come on Friday and Saturday. Convention chair for 2024 came and invited commercials and answered their questions about parking, agriculture requirements, etc. They were happy that the hotel is not downtown!! AVSA picks hotels for price and space but downtown is not good for parking, locals, etc. in most cities. Not sure what the answer is.

Usually there are only 2 or 3 commercials willing to sale to designers and sometimes the commercial isn't setup when the designers come in and the designers are not happy. I don't have any ideas to fix it other than have the designers come in salesroom later in the day and pre-order.

Omaha was suggested for the next convention.

Kathy Bell

Convention—Kathy Lahti

Our 2023 AVSA annual convention and show was held in Atlanta at the Sheraton Atlanta Hotel, May 28 – June 4, 2023. It was a successful convention even though the hotel was sold while we were holding our conference. This made it a little more challenging.

I am now working with our 2024 Convention and Show Chairs for our convention at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Phoenix-Tempe, Arizona. This convention will take place April 21 - April 28, 2024. All information is now on the AVSA website.

The AVSA Website Committee did a great job putting all the convention material on the website. They are a talented group of people. THANK YOU!

Three tours have been organized. We are trying in-hotel entertainment for Friday evening with a buffet. We have hired a comedy group as entertainment.

Our 2025 Convention date has been set. I signed a contract with the DoubleTree by Hilton Kansas City, Overland Park, KS. The dates of the convention are May 25 – June 1, 2025. This convention will be hosted by the Missouri Valley African Violet Council and the Kansas City Affiliates. Randy Deutsch will be the Convention Chair and Linda Hall the Show Chair.

I am looking for convention locations for 2026 and beyond. Anyone that has an idea, please let me know.

Thanks to all AVSA members who volunteer their time to make all our conventions successful. We couldn't do this without all your help.

Kathy Lahti

Kathy Lahti
AVSA Convention Director

Convention Show Awards—Terri Post

During the first four months of 2023, the records received were compiled and prepared to come up with awards donations received and special awards donations. After calculating this amount and preparing the ribbon order, we were finally ready for the Atlanta convention in May.

Since this was the first year that our current committee was preparing and working on awards, the committee that came together included Linda Hall, Carla Deutsch and Bob Clark. They were invaluable to me as chair and we were able to get everything together, tallied and presented.

The total amount of awards given out at the Atlanta banquet was \$3,735. The show was a smaller show than we have had in the past, but it was beautiful.

We are hoping to have a good show in Phoenix, and we are currently working to get everything in place!

Respectfully submitted,
Terri Post
Awards Committee Chair

Finance—Terri Post

See Treasurer's Report submitted by Terri Post

Fundraising—Randy Deutsch

2023

The committee was very involved with ordering the Atlanta convention pin as well as the design, sales and delivery of the convention t-shirts.

We were also very busy at the end of the year with our annual 'Giving Tuesday' fund raiser, we offered the opportunity to donate at the end of the year for an entire week.

We were also heavily involved in the Annual Appeal process to again raise funds for our continued operating expenses. This was held during November and December. We had a successful campaign.

The committee is also responsible for gathering the information and making sure that all donations are reported to the editor for publication in the AVM, as well as sending out thank you letters for any donation over \$50, and also any donation notification to families that a donor asks us to recognize their memorial for.

Convention time is a very busy time for us. We are always very involved with the donations given for the future conventions auction tables. Another big part of convention time for us is the Wednesday auction. Candace Baldwin is the

chair for that event. She received the items, logs them, puts the spreadsheet together that is given out to the members at the event. She also secures an auctioneer for this too. She keeps enough people on her committee to be able to serve the members during the actual auction.

Key chairs within the Fundraising committee continue to function within their various areas. Candace Baldwin is the chair of the Annual Auction. Janet Riemer is the chair of the Tinari Endowment Fund. Linda Hall is the chair of the AVSA Legacy Society. Jill Jensen serving as vice-chair of the committee.

I need to announce a huge change for one of the committees under the Fundraising umbrella. Since the Anne and Frank Tinari Endowment Fund was created Janet Riemer has been the chair of that committee. She has guided and nurtured the committee for many years. Janet is stepping down as the committee chair as of December 31, 2023. I want to thank Janet for her many years of dedication to this endowment. Carla Deutsch has assumed the duties of this committee beginning on January 1, 2024.

It's been another busy year. Many of our projects cross over to other committees as well. It's great to all work together for the common good. If ever anyone has a comment or idea, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy G Deutsch, Chair

Library—Kurt Jablonski

Nothing to report.

Thank you.

Kurt Jablonski

Marketing—Chris Brooks

- Chris Brooks, Chair
- Roxanne Clapp, Graphic Design
- Carolee Carter, Proofreader
- Donna Guiliano, Proofreader
- Holly Howes, Instagram and Pinterest
- Sophia Bennett, AVM Editor
- Candace Baldwin, Website
- Amy Carruth, AVSA Office Manager
- Terry Watkins, Misc.

Marketing has focused on the following platforms and projects this year:

- AVSA Email – managed by Chris Brooks
 - Weekly Growing Tips – 6860 subscribers - sent each Monday.
 - AVSA News – 1989 subscribers - sent monthly or as needed.
 - Group emails to specific interest groups as needed, such as affiliates and commercials

- Facebook
 - AVSA main page managed by Amy Carruth and Chris Brooks with assistance from others – Followers 21K
 - The AVSA Facebook group has been paused but will be relaunching by summer 2024

- Instagram managed by Holly Howes (Followers 6000).

- Pinterest managed by Holly Howes (Followers 2910).

- Fundraising – Booster Donations Annual Appeal – working with Randy G. Deutsch.

- Best Varieties Voting – working with Trudy Brekel.

- AVSA Scholarship – working with Charles Ramser.

- Promotion of Convention – working with Candace Baldwin.

- AVSA Store – working with Amy Carruth.

- Promotion of AVM – working with Sophia Bennett.

- AVSA Executive Committee special requests.

- Membership Drive – working with Stephen Covolo-Hudson

- AVSA Hat Contests – Created and promoted by the marketing committee to promote engagement in a fun activity by the AVSA membership and to encourage nonmembers to join. The contest included a decorative violet themed hat picture submission with the winner receiving a prize. The winner is to be announced at the 2024 convention.

- Culture Brochure update – The marketing committee took on the task of a culture brochure/folder update that has been completed and is available in the AVSA store. It included a graphics refresh, update of culture information, and contact information for the AVSA. Thanks to Publications and Membership for their assistance.

The Marketing budget includes paying for a monthly subscription to MailChimp. This cost is justified by results from advertising membership and products for sale.

The Marketing team stands ready to assist any committee chair with a project that needs to be promoted.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Brooks
Marketing Committee Chair

Membership—Stephen Covolo-Hudson

The membership committee continues to work with the EC to increase membership and with other committee chairs to prompt AVSA membership.

1. The next step is to increase AVSA membership via our affiliates. This is a challenging task since it would involve deploying our directors to interact heavily with the AVSA affiliates they oversee. The membership committee is open to any ideas from the EC they may have.
2. The committee is working on the dues increase sandwich board selection.
3. The committee continuously works with the "Virtual Circle" programs.
4. The committee is working with the Advertising committee to support the AVSA membership drive and formulate a new way to promote it.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Covolo-Hudson
Membership Chairperson
Stephen Covolo-Hudson

Nominating—Winston Goretsky

Members of the committee:

Stephen Covolo-Hudson
Gail Podany
April Van Ness
Bill Patterson

Retiring chair of the Nominating Committee, Linda Price, passed along the records of the previous term, which had a few candidates for consideration during this current term of nominations.

Our committee worked with diligence to seek out and prepare a slate of candidates, which for this term, would be nominations for the position of Director:

| <u>Candidate</u> | <u>Location</u> |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Robert (Bob) Clark | Seattle, WA |
| Jeffery Hudson-Covolo | Springville, CA |
| Mary Thompson | Paso Robles, CA |
| Donna Christianson | Fargo, North Dakota |

The candidates were confirmed and requested to supply their biography and a recent photograph, which would be used in the Jan-Feb-2024 issue of the African Violet Magazine (AVM).

All candidate supplied their requested materials and the column was published in the Jan-Feb-2024 issue of the AVM.

The current bylaws indicate that Directors shall be elected from the membership-at large, one (1) and no more than two (2) of whom shall be a resident of a nation other than the United States...

Our committee was unable to secure a nomination to fulfil this requirement and it is hoped that a nomination from the floor, at the AGM, will yield a satisfactory candidate to complete the proposed slate.

With the diminishing population of our membership, it has been difficult to secure willing members to serve as Directors.

As such, a proposal was drafted and submitted to the bylaws committee and then to the Executive Committee to reduce the number of Directors from 15 to 9 members, with a transition period during which the number of directors shall be 15 in 2024, 13 in 2025, 11 in 2026 and 9 in 2027 and thereafter.

Notice was given int the Jan-Feb-2024 AVM (page 23) that the proposed amendments to AVSA Bylaws, Articles IV, V and VII will be voted on at the AVSA 2024 Annual Convention in Tempe, Arizona.

At this time, there are no anticipated budgetary requirements and no funding requests have been made to the Finance Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,



Winston J. Goretsky

Plants Registration and Master Plant List—Dr. Jeff Smith

Committee Membership

Dr. Jeff Smith, chair – jsmith4@bsu.edu

Kathy Hajner – hajnerhybrids@gmail.com

Lynn Lombard – lynn_lombard@att.net

Dr. Smith accepted to serve as chair of this committee in May 2023. His status as the registrar for African violet cultivars has been made official with the International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS) and he appears as the contact person on their website.

During the time from May 2023 to February 2024 a total of 33 new cultivar registrations from 10 hybridizers have been approved. An additional 2 cultivars have been “listed” in First Class but were not registered. The listing request was made by the hybridizer as these plants are chimeras and do not always reproduce true to type even by traditional reproduction methods for chimeras violating the three-generation stability requirement for registration.

The current online registration system appears to be working well. However, we would like to point out some processing procedures that may not be known to the general AVSA community. These steps are intended to provide good customer service for hybridizers with new cultivar registrations.

1. Messages sent to the registration@avs.org address come to Dr. Smith, but an acknowledgment message is not automatically generated and sent to the sender. Dr. Smith replies to all inquiries or applications, and provides assistance with the process and checking of all required application materials. An online form will be developed by the TechWeb Committee later this year and an acknowledgement will be sent to the applicant’s email address upon submittal.
2. Application materials are placed on a Google Drive site with each application in a different folder. The application materials are also backed up on Dr. Smith’s laptop.
3. The Google Drive application folders are “shared” with the committee members and a tentative description is generated and discussed by the committee.
4. The committee has been writing more detailed descriptions than were used historically. Since the data is electronic and not printed in hard copy, costs are not as big a factor. More detailed descriptions should make plant identification easier.
5. The Google Drive folders can be shared with Joe Bruns for publishing in First Class and with Sophia Bennett for picture use in the African Violet Magazine.
6. Any questions or concerns about the application (most usually about the requested cultivar name) are sent to the applicant by Dr. Smith.
7. Once a description has been approved by the Committee, notifications are sent to the applicant, Joe Bruns for updates in First Class and Sophia Bennett for publishing in the African Violet Magazine.
8. Sharing the approval of a new cultivar with the hybridizer has proven important to their business and marketing efforts. There is a delay in the updates to First Class and publication timelines in the African Violet Magazine. Many hybridizers are marketing their new plants via Facebook or other sites.

The guidelines for the naming of new cultivars are covered in the International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants published by the International Society for Horticultural Science. The most recent publication is 2016 and is no longer

available in print. However, Dr. Smith obtained the use of a copy using his university's library loan system. He has made scans and copies of the relevant pages for future reference and referral.

One item that has been of interest is the record keeping system used by different plant societies. Dr. Smith has contacted the registrar of approximately 25 plant societies asking for information about their registration process and database. Responses have been received from approximately 12-14 groups. All responses have been forwarded to Richard Craft for consideration by the TechWeb Committee. The responses tended to fall into the following categories or groups:

1. Groups with small databases are using Excel
2. Groups with medium-sized databases have adapted other types of software.
3. Groups with large databases have contracted a software company for specific programs. One group estimated the cost was \$25,000.

The AVSA database for cultivars would fall into the "large" category.

One dilemma that has been identified is the storage and upkeep of the registration records. Older records are currently on cards or paper and stored in the AVSA office. Joe Bruns has previously reported that some are becoming illegible with time. Other data storage methods are microfilm, CDs (aging technology), or personal laptops. Some investigations have been made using SharePoint and OneDrive for record storage. The software used for First Class needs constant monitoring for updates. While no solutions have yet been suggested for all record storage needs, the Committee hopes that attention will be given to finding some sort of updateable electronic storage of the AVSA's cultivar records.

One question that has been raised concerns the status of sports of species plants. Are they still a species or are they a new cultivar? According to the International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants, Article 20: Naming Wild Plants Brought into Cultivation (page 23)

"20.2 Plants of a species or lower taxon brought into cultivation may not demonstrate the range of variation associated with that taxon in the wild. If an assemblage of those plants has one or more characters that make it worth distinguishing, it may be given a cultivar or Group name."

Although we have not yet received a request for registering a variegated species plant as a new cultivar, we feel that such a plant could be registered with an appropriate cultivar name. The name cannot be something like "variegated diplotricha" because the naming rules will not accept a Latin name as the cultivar name. Such a plant would also be recognized as a cultivar, not a species, and should not be exhibited in the species class of AVSA shows. Once named as a cultivar, these plants should be shown in the most appropriate cultivar class.

Respectively submitted,

Dr. Jeff Smith

Publications—Sandra Skalski

The Publications Committee successfully ran an Article contest for the AVSA magazine, that attracted 12 articles in a Beginner/Intermediate and an Advanced category. Prizes were given for the top three articles in each category. The same contest is in place for 2023-2024, with voting to begin soon.

The Publications Committee is actively working to complete a significant revision of 'Growing to Show'. The committee has invited writers and other talents to participate in the rewrite. The new version is targeted to be available for the 2025 Convention.

Assist in review/proofing of the new (2022) AVSA Handbook, along with the Executive Committee, and the Shows and Judges Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Skalski

Research—Dr. Jeff Smith

The current committee membership is:

Dr. Jeff Smith – Chairman (jsmith4@bsu.edu)

Dr. Minh Bui (minhbui82@hotmail.com)

Dr. Elmer Godney (ekprof@att.net)

I have asked both members to continue to serve and as of this report neither has indicated a desire to leave the committee.

Old Business

Dr. Smith serves on the Research Committee for The Gesneriad Society, Inc. This allows him to spot potential research projects for the AVSA from the proposal submissions to The Gesneriad Society. However, the 2023 grant applications to The Gesneriad Society were all on other genera with no applications relevant to the AVSA.

One grant request was received in 2021, approved in 2022 and concluded in 2023. This proposal was from Dr. Cornelius Mulili Kyalo from the National Museums of Kenya. The title of the proposal was "The conservation of African violets (*Streptocarpus*) in the wild: population expansion and community awareness, costal Kenya". Dr. Kyalo provided the required publication on the project for the African Violet Magazine which appeared in the March/April 2023 issue.

Dr. Xingbo Wu of the University of Florida had been in communication regarding grant opportunities. The project he had in mind would have a budget of approximately \$100k. Dr. Smith explained that was beyond the means of the AVSA and that a grant budget would need to be around \$2-3k. Dr. Wu countered with a project with a budget of \$25k. Dr. Smith

explained again that the AVSA is an organization of plant hobbyists and the size of a likely research grant. Dr. Wu reluctantly responded that he might be able to do something with a budget of \$3k. Dr. Smith suggested possible projects and offered to help with supplying plant material. Dr. Wu was sent the grant application. There was a discussion that an African violet project might fit one of Dr. Wu's students. Dr. Smith also sent Dr. Wu the link for the AVSA scholarship. However, there have not been any further communications from Dr. Wu.

New Business

Dr. Smith encouraged some of his students to conduct studies in fertilizer effects on starting leaf cuttings, rooting new plantlets and regeneration of adult plants. All projects were locally sponsored by Dr. Smith and the Indiana Academy for Science, Mathematics and Humanities. Manuscripts for two projects have been sent for publication in the African Violet Magazine. Two additional manuscripts will be sent soon. Dr. Smith will present the results of these studies at the Phoenix 2024 AVSA Convention. Hopefully, these types of small-scale research projects will serve as a model for future work.

A new grant application was received on February 21, 2024 from Dr. Cornelius Kyalo of the National Museums of Kenya. The application is titled: "Rescuing the last two populations of the critically endangered *Streptocarpus ionanthus* subsp. *rupicola* from limestone mining in coastal Kenya". The application materials are submitted as additional supporting documents to this report. The Research Committee has reviewed the grant application and recommends funding. The requested amount of \$4500 is the same as the last grant awarded to Dr. Kyalo. If funding is not immediately available, discussions should be held with Dr. Kyalo for an alternative amount, or perhaps releasing funds over the next few months as they become available.

Dr. Kyalo points out in his application that other populations of this species in Kenya are now extinct due to habitat destruction. The AVSA is fortunate that plants from these areas still exist in cultivation thanks to the conservation efforts of Ms. Anne Robinson. Many of the wild species populations are under extreme threat and conservation efforts such as those proposed in Dr. Kyalo's application are critical to keeping populations of the species from extinction.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Jeff Smith, Chair,
February 27, 2024

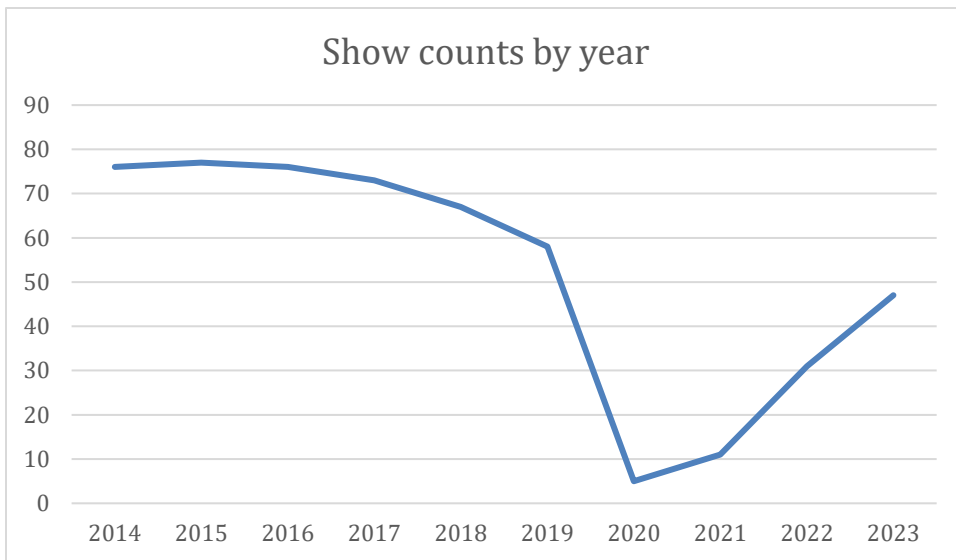
Shows and Judges—Mary Corondan

There were 7 judging schools offered in 2023. Fourteen students earned their student judge's certificate. There are nine new advanced judges, and ten renewed their advanced judge certificate.

The senior judge's exam was taken by 30 students. There will be 11 new master judges as of October 1, 2024. They are Karen Campbell (Nova Scotia), Valerie Despres (Nova Scotia), Kathleen Garbarino (NY), Lorraine Hilfer (OH), Susan Hill (OK), Lee Hoke (NY), Paul Hussa (MN), Penny Moore (NY), Dorothy Raymond (NY), Geneva Stagg (TN), and Carol Tjaden

(IA). The following 13 judges are retiring with Master Judge Emeritus status: Judy Carter (OK), Elaine Click (TX), Ken Froboese (TX), Dolores Gibbs (TX), JoAnne Martinez (FL), Wilma Wolverton (MO), Janet Riemer (NJ), Sandra Mims (SC), John P. Nabers (TX), Linda Neumann (OH), Barbara Pershing (IA), Catherine Thompson (IA), and John E (Jack) Wilson (FL).

There were a total of 45 shows in 2023. The SSAA award was earned by 20 shows, the SSA award was given to 9 shows, and 4 shows received neither award. No SSA score sheets were received by 12 shows. This may have been due to an issue with the entries program. Two shows were canceled. Below is a chart that shows the fluctuation in the number of shows annually since 2014.



| Year | Show count |
|------|------------|
| 2014 | 76 |
| 2015 | 77 |
| 2016 | 76 |
| 2017 | 73 |
| 2018 | 67 |
| 2019 | 58 |
| 2020 | 5 |
| 2021 | 11 |
| 2022 | 31 |
| 2023 | 45 |

A judge's renewal exam must be taken by June 15, 2025, for those who have not renewed their judging certificates since 2020 or taken a continuing education course. If their judging certificate is not renewed, it will expire on that date.

The Teaching Tools Manual has been updated to reflect changes implemented in the 2022 edition of the Handbook. Winston Goretsky is working to publish the new document in time for the Teachers' Breakfast in Phoenix.

It is an honor to serve AVSA in this capacity. The support of the Handbook Committee, Executive Committee, Board, and the general membership is greatly appreciated.

Mary Corondan, Chair

Society Awards—Linda Hall

This year the Society Awards Committee was able to meet via Skype on February 6, 2024. We were able to make suggestions for nominees and tell why they should be acknowledged for their accomplishments.

We had several nominations for the Hudson Award for Affiliate Leadership and one carryover from 2023. There were no nominations from the EC this year. There was one nomination from the membership and one from the Society Awards Committee.

Ballots were sent out to the EC and the Society Awards Committee members on February 9th. Once the results are in, I will start my research on the recipients and I will then order plaques and write the certificates that have been earned.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Hall, Chair

*See additional info/response under 2nd VP

TechWeb—Candace Baldwin

The TechWeb committee is a group of devoted and talented volunteers dedicated to improving the Society's technology presence for its staff, membership and public. The year was full of adventure with some ups and downs, but progress made on many fronts.

Major accomplishments and work efforts include:

WordPress and iMIS performance - regular review of WordPress (public front end) and iMIS (administrative back end) platforms are discussed to keep the technology for AVSA working optimally.

2024 Convention - completed build out with fine tuning of last year's foundation.

AVSA Show Entries and First Class programs - good progress made to update and/or enhance the programs. The update of the Entries program to run on Windows 11 and the move of the FirstClass database from a personal server to an AVSA server is 90% complete. The source code for both has been provided to the Society. Zoom support is available for Entries program owners, who have recently purchased new computers/laptop with Windows 11.

TechWeb articles - an article on browser information was published in the AVM.

Post-convention Survey - first year to provide a comprehensive survey using in-house technology.

Renewal of website security certificates - successfully completed without outside committee assistance.

Plant Registration and New Introductions - transitioned from Joe Bruns to Jeff Smith. A small program to load new and revised plant information into the FirstClass database is being developed.

Auto renew and multiple year renewal options from a technology perspective were introduced to the membership.

Support Activities:

Supported the Hat contest and Best Variety Voting activities.

Trained new Affiliate Chair to process event requests.

Provided support for office staff renewal of O365.

Countless hours spent by the volunteers to keep the content updated. A small update here, a change there, improve this flow, better organize this area, etc.

There are numerous future activities such as an online space where club programs and show schedules can be shared, document storage for the Board of Directors and committees, website reorganization to improve useability, etc.

I want to thank the committee members for their tireless pursuit of improving the website. They learn new things, take on new tasks, and always want the very best technology outcome for the staff, the membership, and the public.

Candace Baldwin

TechWeb Chair

Reports of Special Committees

Best Varieties and Honor Roll—Trudy Brekel

The purpose of the committee is to collect nominations of the best plant varieties from AVSA members, non-members and affiliates. Then have the tally published in the November African Violet Magazine.

This year, like last year, we gathered votes from non-members as well as members. The number of votes that could be submitted by each individual was 5.

I used the setup for online voting links on several of the Facebook pages and the AVSA website. Facebook is a very efficient way of gathering votes. People could vote by mail however I did not receive any of those votes this year.

Voting was down again even more this year. I couldn't add any plants to the Honor Roll. There were a couple of plants that could have made the Honor Roll, but they lacked 1 vote from getting on the Best Varieties list. Now they will have to start over to get the 3 years in a roll on the Best Varieties list to make the Honor Roll. I do not know what it will take to get members to vote. It seems to be something that the members don't want to bother with.

Respectfully submitted,
Trudy Brekel

Bylaws—Sue Ramser

Mary Lou Harden, Chair, retired and Mary Corondan appointed me to fill the Chair position. Mary Lou continues as Vice Chair of the Committee.

Mary Lou Harden submitted the following amendment to the Bylaws which was published in the Jan/Feb *AVM*:

NOTICE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO AVSA BYLAWS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the following proposed amendments to AVSA Bylaws, Articles IV, V and VII will be voted on at the AVSA 2024 Annual Convention in Tempe, Arizona.

| AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF AMERICA | 2024 PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENTS | |
|--|---|--|
| Current | Proposed | If adopted, will read: |
| <p align="center">Article IV Officers and Their Duties Section 2</p> <p><u>Regional Directors:</u></p> <p>All Directors shall be members in good standing of AVSA.</p> <p>1.The Regional Directors shall be not more than fifteen (15) nor less than fourteen (14) in number. They shall be elected from the membership-at large, one (1) and no more than two (2) of whom shall be a resident of a nation other than the United States.</p> <p>2. Directors shall be responsible for representing the membership.</p> | <p align="center">Article IV Officers and Their Duties Section 2</p> <p><u>Regional Directors:</u></p> <p>All Directors shall be members in good standing of AVSA.</p> <p>1. The Regional Directors shall be not more than fifteen (15) <u>nine (9)</u> nor less than fourteen (14) <u>eight (8)</u> in number. <u>There shall be a transition period during which the number of directors shall be 15 in 2024, 13 in 2025, 11 in 2026 and 9 in 2027 and thereafter.</u> They</p> <p>2. <u>Directors</u> shall be elected from the membership-at large, one (1) and no more than two (2) of whom shall be a resident of a nation other than the United States.</p> <p>3. Directors shall be responsible for representing the membership.</p> | <p align="center">Article IV Officers and Their Duties Section 2</p> <p><u>Regional Directors:</u></p> <p>All Directors shall be members in good standing of AVSA.</p> <p>1. The Regional Directors shall be not more than nine (9) nor less than eight (8) in number. There shall be a transition period during which the number of directors shall be 15 in 2024, 13 in 2025, 11 in 2026 and 9 in 2027 and thereafter.</p> <p>2. Directors shall be elected from the membership-at large, one (1) and no more than two (2) of whom shall be a resident of a nation other than the United States.</p> <p>3. Directors shall be responsible for representing the membership.</p> |
| <p align="center">Article V Nominations and Elections Section 2</p> <p><u>Terms</u></p> <p>3.Directors shall be elected to serve terms of three (3) years, five (5) being elected each year.</p> | <p align="center">Article V Nominations and Elections Section 2</p> <p><u>Terms</u></p> <p>3.Directors shall be elected to serve terms of three (3) years, five (5) <u>being elected each year.</u></p> | <p align="center">Article V Nominations and Elections Section 2</p> <p><u>Terms</u></p> <p>3.Directors shall be elected to serve terms of three (3) years.</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Article V Nominations and Elections Section 5</p> <p><u>Nominating Committee</u></p> <p>4.b. Select five (5) nominees for Director from the file maintained by the Nominating Committee Chair, maintaining geographic balance among all directors.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Article V Nominations and Elections Section 5</p> <p><u>Nominating Committee</u></p> <p>4.b. <u>In conformity with the transition plan described in Article IV, Section 2, Regional Directors,</u> Select <u>select</u> five (5) nominees for Director from the file maintained by the Nominating Committee Chair, maintaining geographic balance among all directors.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Article V Nominations and Elections Section 5</p> <p><u>Nominating Committee</u></p> <p>4.b. In conformity with the transition plan described in Article IV, Section 2, Regional Directors, select nominees for Director from the file maintained by the Nominating Committee Chair, maintaining geographic balance among all directors.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Article VII Board of Directors Section 1</p> <p><u>Composition</u></p> <p>The Board of Directors shall consist of the elected officers, the fifteen (15) directors, the chairs of the standing committees and the immediate Past President, provided that, that person has completed the full term as President of the Society. Otherwise, the president, with the approval of the Executive Committee, may appoint another Past President to serve in that capacity. This Board shall:</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Article VII Board of Directors Section 1</p> <p><u>Composition</u></p> <p>The Board of Directors shall consist of the elected officers, the fifteen (15) <u>elected</u> directors, the chairs of the standing committees and the immediate Past President, provided that, that person has completed the full term as President of the Society. Otherwise, the president, with the approval of the Executive Committee, may appoint another Past President to serve in that capacity. This Board shall:</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Article VII Board of Directors Section 1</p> <p><u>Composition</u></p> <p>The Board of Directors shall consist of the elected officers, the elected directors, the chairs of the standing committees and the immediate Past President, provided that, that person has completed the full term as President of the Society. Otherwise, the president, with the approval of the Executive Committee, may appoint another Past President to serve in that capacity. This Board shall:</p> |

Mary Lou Harden, Chair, AVSA Bylaws Committee
 Sue Ramser, Vice Chair
 Jill Jensen
 Joyce Stork

Convention Manual—Sharon Shannon

Approximately two-thirds of the convention manual has been reviewed and edited by our Convention Director. The manual is now in the hands of the current Convention Chair who will be reviewing it as she is using it to plan the 2024 convention.

Submitted by Sharon Shannon

Council of Past Presidents—Winston Goretsky

At the close of the 2023 convention in Atlanta, GA, Susan Anderson transitioned to Past President and became a new member of the Council of Past Presidents.

During the past year, there were no requests from the current Executive Committee or directly from President Mary Corondan.

There are no anticipated budgetary requirements and no funding requests have been made to the Finance Committee

Respectfully Submitted,



Winston J. Goretsky

Courtesy—Judith Carter

Since June of 2023 I have mailed four condolence cards to deceased members' families. Expenses for stamps and cards were minimal and I am glad to provide this for AVSA.

It was my pleasure to serve with this committee and remember our members.

Judith Carter
Courtesy Chair

Editorial Board—Jill Jensen

Our Editorial Board provides support to our *AVM* Editor, Sophia Bennett, and staff, Shirley Jones, through regular proofreading and review of the *AVM* before publication. Six times per year, Board members provide feedback about the *AVM*'s content, photographs, and layout in response to the pre-publication version furnished to us by Sophia and Shirley.

Our Editorial Board is comprised of dedicated and knowledgeable volunteers, some of whom are AVSA judges and Gesneriad Society judges. A number of our members have served on the Editorial Board for many years. Each of us comes to our Editorial Board task with a variety of experiences, perspectives, and insights. Thank you to Glenda Williams, 1st Vice President of AVSA, Winston Goretsky, Paul Kroll, Linda Harrell-Sadler, Dr. Jeffrey Hudson-Covolo and for sharing your time, knowledge, and timely input to making the *AVM* a publication of which all AVSA members can be proud.

Ensuring that the *AVM* is a high-quality publication is our primary goal. We welcome your feedback and want to know your thoughts about how we can make the *AVM* even better. We want to know what you think and what you want from your society publication. We welcome the contributions of AVSA members and others in providing the content which makes the *AVM* a great source of information for growers of African violets and gesneriads. If you are interested in furnishing articles or photographic content, serving on the Editorial Board, or providing input about the *AVM*, please contact me, Jill Jensen, or our editor, Sophia Bennett.

Editorial Board (MK)

Jill Jensen, Chair
Glenda Williams, 1st Vice President
Linda Harrell Sadler
Dr. Jeffrey Hudson-Covolo

Sue Hoffmann
Winston Goretsky
Paul Kroll

Handbook—Winston Goretsky

A motion will be presented at the 2024 Convention to move Handbook to Shows and Judges Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,



Winston J. Goretsky

Policies and Procedures—Sue Ramser

1. Incorporated Policies and Procedures Motions from the Atlanta Convention and emailed a copy of the updated Policies and Procedures Manual to the Board and Candace Baldwin, TechWeb Chair, for posting on the AVSA website.
2. Emailed a copy to Amy Carruth, Office Manager for archiving.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Ramser

Resolutions—Jill Jensen

I don't have anything to report from the Resolution Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Jensen, Chair

Salary—Glenda Williams

The Salary Committee will meet this spring to discuss, review, and process annual employee performance evaluations.

Respectfully submitted,

Glenda Williams

Scholarship—Dr. Charles Ramser

The Boyce Edens AVSA Scholarship process is currently open for applicant submissions of the necessary application and references. As this year requires the annual convention to occur a month earlier due to the “warm” climate in Phoenix, the deadline is in February—the earlier the better.

This year is exciting as half of our current committee is in their first round of the application process. (Dr. Minh Bui and Mr. Scott Evans join Dr. Bill Price and myself. Janet Riemer has retired from the Committee after many years of diligent performance and superb assistance in this process. We THANK HER with deep gratitude for how she has graciously helped out so immensely! My thanks to Chris Brooks, in Marketing, and Sophia Bennett, AV Magazine Editor, for valuable help this year, as well. My thanks to Minh and Scott for their willingness to join the committee.

As usual, the committee will be remaining ever so aware of how we can improve the scholarship process in its contribution to AVSA. We are continuing to look for new ways of publicizing the scholarship and of benefitting from the student's academic contributions. Our two current 2023-2024 recipients have been Mr. Adam McCabe, who is a Doctoral Student attending the University of Wisconsin, and Mr. Jesse Potts, a Doctoral Student at the University of Florida. We are certain this year's studies have been and continue to be successful and a major contribution to their future.

We continue to seek applications until mid-February for the 2024-2025 academic year!

Sincerely,

Dr. Charles Ramser, Chair

Tally Time –Susan Anderson

The duties for the Tally Time committee have been completed. There were a total of 42 reports from affiliates. A total of 292 different African violet varieties (26 species and 266 hybrids) were recorded. The final report was submitted on December 23, 2023, for inclusion in the March issue of the AVM.

The results will be shared with the TechWeb Committee for posting on the AVSA website.

This year there was some difficulty in obtaining the reports from affiliates. I sent reminders to many clubs to encourage them to send in their results. Reports were submitted via numerous formats. Results were (1) snail-mailed as hard copy hand-written forms, (2) scanned and emailed, (3) from the online website form, or (4) emailed directly from the Entries program. I even received two reports as (5) pictures via text message, after I contacted each affiliate about lacking their results. I do hope that the process for submitting results becomes more streamlined to ease the compilation effort.

There were no expenses for this committee. I do not foresee any future budget needs for this committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Anderson, Chair

Violet Preservation—Mary Thompson

Mary Thompson- Chair
Angela Newell - Co Chair
Trudy Brekel
Rich Follett
Nancy Sullivan

As you can imagine, the violet preservation list is more active in the spring and summer. There has been no activity for several weeks, but that can be expected this time of year.

We have made several matches. The one I was the most excited about was one that matched 4 people, me included.

I continue to add comments on social media and encourage people to send in requests for a violet or especially to share a violet. I'm hoping this will encourage people to join AVSA.

We do not need any finances.

Mary Thompson

Reports of Special Appointments

Archivist—Glenda Williams

I recently assumed the role of AVSA Archivist when Janet Riemer retired. Janet did a wonderful job managing the archives throughout the years. Her work was beyond excellent and is evident today in our archives. A new project/initiative is in planning now to use current technologies to build on the archive framework setup by Janet and digitize, store, and archive current paper artifacts. The AVSA archive room is filled with so much AVSA history and I enjoy every opportunity possible to connect with all the physical artifacts stored there.

Respectfully Submitted,

Glenda Williams

Virtual Circle—Bill Patterson

1. Organized the start-up and initial meetings of the committee.
2. Sent out and prepared Zoom invitations for the committee meetings.
3. We were able to successfully have two Virtual Zoom sessions for membership.
4. I spent many hours in preparation for the two Live Virtual meetings.
5. Moving forward with the Virtual Circle the committee needs to look into if the time being spent is worth the return. There are so many clubs now doing their own virtual meetings and offering them across the country. Should AVSA maybe include these as events in the AVM and on the AVSA website allowing clubs and affiliates to organize events and get more virtual opportunities out to the entire membership, more than just what Virtual Circle is trying to do?

Bill Patterson

Reports of Personnel

Office Manager

Throughout the year, I have continued to manage the office efficiently and keep association and office costs down, as much as possible. I have focused on making sure the needs of our society are met in the best way possible, and I have worked with the President to meet those needs.

Stephanie and I have entered all memberships into the system - new members and renewals - in a timely manner and mailed out all membership renewal notices on time. All orders were processed and mailed out in time, and we kept track of all office inventory.

I processed all convention registrations and ran the needed reports. I also worked with our convention director, Kathy Lahti, to make sure everything ran as smoothly as possible. When we arrived back from the convention, I completed all convention sales and paperwork. The final report was sent to the EC.

The Treasurer and I have worked together to keep AVSA's finances current. We have worked with Quick Books together to make sure the finances are entered correctly and reconciled.

Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of another great year here at AVSA.

Amy Carruth
AVSA Office Manager

Editor—Sophia Bennett

Things continue to go well with African Violet Magazine. I am seeing an increase in the number and quality of submissions. I'm not sure of the cause -- maybe people have more time and are less stressed since the end of the pandemic, or maybe regard for the magazine is growing -- but I'm very happy about it. Our staff team is wonderful. The Editorial Board, Publications Committee and Board of Directors are all very supportive and helpful. I look forward to your continued feedback and suggestions about the magazine.

Sophia Bennett

AVSA Past Presidents

Immediate Past President—Susan Anderson

Since the 2023 Atlanta Convention, I have continued to promote AVSA and share my joy of growing African violets. As the Immediate Past President, I have participated in the Executive Committee's virtual meetings. Meeting regularly has allowed us to conduct the business of our society. The EC met in person in November 2023 during the Mid-Atlantic African Violet Society's convention in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. It was truly inspirational to witness the camaraderie and perseverance of the local members, as they worked through several challenges to deliver an absolutely beautiful, successful show. We are grateful for their hospitality. I particularly appreciated being invited to present a design program on color while I was there. I presented the program virtually, earlier in the year, for a couple affiliate meetings and this was the first time I could present it in-person, which was very fun.

Meanwhile, I am preparing for the 2024 Phoenix Convention, where I will be serving as Convention Show Chair. I am working closely with Kathy Lahti, Convention Director, and Candace Baldwin, Convention Chair. The hotel was secured and theme decided immediately upon conclusion of the Atlanta convention. Since then, preparations for the show and

convention are coming together well. The show schedule is complete, award rosettes ordered, and the various committee chairs are busily working on their respective portions of the show. I am looking forward to welcoming everyone to Arizona.

The AVSA Virtual Circle program was initiated in the fall of 2023. This was a huge accomplishment for AVSA and I hope the membership appreciates the level of effort it has taken to get it underway. I had the opportunity to serve as a Q&A moderator, along with Scott Ammann, during the first program with Kathy Lahti. At the second virtual program, I was a speaker and introduced participants to the Phoenix convention show. It was exciting to have so many members register and participate in the virtual program.

I am also serving on the Publications Committee, which is working to update the Growing to Show book. While I have not had much time to devote to this effort yet, I intend to get more involved after this year's convention to assist wherever I can be of use.

I also continue several additional activities within AVSA, including Show Schedule Approver and Tally Time Chair. The processes for each activity evolved and will continue to do so, as affiliates choose to hold in-person events again. I am hopeful that the show results can be integrated within the Entries program to simplify the reporting process. There are still some updates needed to make it function seamlessly. I have recently set up a new email address specifically for the show schedule approval process because I have encountered difficulties with the avsa.org email address. I have also created a google spreadsheet, that I share with Amy Carruth and Mary Corondan, to ensure we each have the same information regarding the show requests. On the shared spreadsheet, we can each record pertinent information about the shows and affiliates. If we all work off the same reference document, we should be able to better coordinate our efforts. I hope this will assist with knowing which clubs are maintaining their memberships, holding shows, and reporting results in a timely manner.

As a method of promotion for AVSA, I renewed the application to the Chase's Calendar of Events to have the week of April 21 – 28, 2024, declared as National African Violet Week, to be celebrated in Phoenix, AZ. The event was accepted and published in the 2024 edition. The listing includes information about our AVSA convention, office location, and website. The Chase's Calendar of Events is the most comprehensive reference available on holidays, special events, international days of celebration, federal and state observances, and more. This is a source for most media and publishers. I have just received the renewal notice for 2025 and will submit for the Kansas City convention.

This past year, my own affiliate, Copper State African Violet Club, was fortunate to host a show and sale in April 2023. We had a fabulous turnout! People were very excited and eager to purchase violets. We have continued to have monthly meetings with informative and interactive, hands-on programs. Copper State AVC is looking forward to hosting the 2024 AVSA Convention.

I have and will continue to promote AVSA by attending local and regional events, whenever possible.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Anderson
Immediate Past President

Linda Hall

This year I was able to participate in 5 shows. They were the Omaha African Violet and Gesneriad Society, AVSA Convention in Atlanta, GA, Missouri State Fair, Heart of America Gesneriad Society and Missouri Valley African Violet Council.

I was able to judge several shows this year including traveling to Wisconsin to judge their state show, which was an honor. It was not only good to see old friends, make new ones, travel with another judge and my mom (who is 91 and still able), but I was able to purchase a lot of new plant material. That is always a plus for judging for me!

I chair the Society Awards Committees and we were able to meet via Skype, which is an excellent tool. I also chair The Legacy Society. This year we obtained one new member. I also have been working to update all the member files and create a new application form for the society. I am also the show co- chair for the 2024 Gesneriad Society Convention in St. Louis, MO in July.

Hopefully, we will all meet again in Phoenix, AZ in April and enjoy the wonderful convention that is planned for us and see old friends and make new ones. See you there!

Sue Ramser

Since the Atlanta Convention I have communicated with the Council of Past Presidents, Legacy Society via email and shared the highlights and questions with the EC which were outlined in EC meeting minutes.

The Legacy Society Committee has been working on plans to publicize and increase the number of members of the Legacy Society.

I attended the First African Violet Society of Denton's Summer Workshop.

As Judges & Clerks Chair for the Lone Star African Violet Council Show I received volunteer requests to judge and clerk and created the panels which were assigned at Judges' and Clerks' Instruction prior to the judging of the show.

As Secretary of the AVSA Shows and Judges Committee I attended the Committee meeting, Teachers' Breakfast and Judges' Breakfast taking minutes. The minutes were prepared and emailed to Mary Corondan, Shows and Judges Chair.

I presented a program for the North Texas African Violet Judges' Council.

I presented several programs for the First African Violet Society of Wichita Falls.

I continue to promote AVSA whenever the opportunity arises.

Sue Ramser
Past President