



Shows and Judges

By Mary Corondan

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A wonderful learning experience took place at the Judges Breakfast in Atlanta. By the way, did you know that any AVSA member may attend the Judges Breakfast? It is not only for judges; just like our Handbook, it is for growers and exhibitors too. Breakfast began with a delightful meal for all those grit lovers out there. That's right, grits! After all, we were in Atlanta. Then some ice breaker activities ensued, and raffle tickets were offered as prizes.

The report to the Board was given. There were four judging schools offered in 2022. They took place in Arkansas, Wisconsin, Nevada and New Mexico. A total of 14 people earned their Student Judge certificates and two more will be added when their proof of three blue ribbons is submitted. The total number of judges is currently 280.

The Senior Judge's exam was taken by 30 students. Proof of blue ribbons and shows judged were waived for all those taking the Senior Judge's exam due to the pandemic and the scarcity of shows. One judge took their first Senior Judge's exam, seven took their second exam and three took their third exam. Five judges have earned their Master Judge's certificate, which will go into effect on October 1, 2023: Betty Ferguson (Arkansas), Susan Hanna (Pennsylvania), William Price (British Columbia), Adrienne Rieck (Illinois) and Danny Tidwell (Arkansas).

There were 31 shows this year. This is up from 11 shows last year. The average number of

shows annually prior to the pandemic was approximately 70. The SSAA award was earned by 15 shows, the SSA award was given to five shows and five shows received neither award.

Judging certificates expiring in 2020, 2021 and 2022 have been extended until June 1, 2025, with the exception of the people who received a new certificate in 2022 and 2023 when they attended a judging school. Their expiration date is listed on their new certificate.

A continuing education program has been instituted in 2023 for Master Judges. Every three years, Master Judges will take a refresher course that emphasizes review, as well as changes that have been made to judging practices. Current Master Judges have been assigned either 2023, 2024 or 2025 as the year to complete their continuing education course.

Eleven Master Judges attended a Zoom continuing education meeting in January. Only one Master Judge took the short quiz. Five Master Judges are taking the Senior Judge's exam. Three Senior Judges are taking the Zoom course in July, and nine Master Judges have not responded. If their continuing education requirement is not met by December 31, they will be listed as Master Judge Emeritus until the course is completed.

The 2nd Best in Show will be listed in the "And the Winners Are..." column of the *African*

Violet Magazine beginning with the November/December 2023 issue. If you have an old hard copy form you have been using to send in the show winners by mail, you will want to download and print a new one from www.africanvioletocietyofamerica.org so the 2nd Best in Show will be reported. Sign in as a member, click on Leaders, then AVSA Shows and Judges, Shows and finally Affiliate Show Awards Report. You can choose to send the completed form electronically or print a hard copy to mail.

Please note that an Unusual or Novelty African violet class is no longer permitted as a class in shows. Likewise, a separate class for windowsill-grown plants will not be allowed in an AVSA-sponsored show. If an affiliate wishes to include any of these, it is recommended these classes be placed after the Educational/AVSA Display. Although it may still be judged, the blue ribbons should not be counted on the SSA sheet, nor should these plants be eligible for special awards.

It is highly recommended that the panel judging collections refrain from tying scores on violets in a collection. By doing so, the final panel is left in a predicament. Even if plant scores are one-tenth apart, at least there is a difference. All final panel members should review the collection sheet scores when choosing plants for the awards table. A point score may easily be misread by a single panel member. At the completion of judging, all AVSA Collection Score Sheets should be placed in an envelope along with the SSA form, then the envelope should be sealed. It should then be given to the Show Chair for mailing. As is stated on page 51 of the 2022 *AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges*, "Any exhibitor who would like to know the exact point-scoring on their own collection entries can write the Schedule Approver to request those results."

Use caution when selecting a container for a dish garden. Some are being used that are too deep and would not be considered a shallow container. If a container is used that the judges deem too deep, the exhibit may have points deducted under relation to container.

Although driftwood may be used effectively in a container garden as an accessory, the highest point in the container garden should be achieved by using plant material. The size of the driftwood in comparison to the other plant material must also be considered. A container garden is a miniature landscape. The exhibitor must be cautious to use a piece of driftwood that is in proportion to the remainder of the plant material. If the driftwood is too large, points would be deducted under landscape plan due to a disproportionate scale.

Handbook Update, page 41

11. An exhibit *may shall* not be altered or removed after judging until the show is closed, except to replace blossoms in a design. (**See page 42, optional rule 9.**)

Handbook Update, page 42, add the following.

9. Depending upon the decision of the affiliate, this optional rule may be added to rule 11 on page 41. A leaf support may be placed on large standard plants if it is displayed on a pedestal on the Awards' Table. This allows heavy leaves to be supported, if needed to prevent petiole damage. The leaf support should not be readily visible.

Handbook Update, page 69

2. All plants shall be planted in the container and no cut plant material shall be permitted unless it is used as an accessory. Height in container gardens should be achieved with plant material and not accessories. Driftwood, branches, and slate/rock are accessories and may be used effectively in the

garden landscape, but not to achieve overall height. No bases are allowed in container garden classes and containers may not be placed within other containers.

Following the question-and-answer session at the Judges Breakfast, a PowerPoint of container garden slides showed everyone a

visual of various options for container gardens. A discussion helped educate those who attended. Be sure to add this breakfast to your convention agenda in Phoenix. You may win some raffle tickets or leaves to rare and desirable varieties.



Photo credit: Svetlana Repkina

RS-Pianistka

**2023 AVSA Convention
New Introduction**

Hybridized by: S. Repkina