

The Desert Blooms

Newsletter of the Tucson African Violet Society



December 2011

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Kathy Bell

Season's Greetings

It would be so nice to see everyone at the Holiday potluck, but I know it just doesn't always work out for everyone. Darn maybe next year. Just a reminder, bring a dish to share (with food in it), serving utensil, gift exchange \$10.00 limit. The program will be a short talk about the experience members had at the National Convention in Philadelphia. I will start the meeting at 10:30 a.m. so please be there early so you can put your food and gift on the tables. If you want to come even earlier to help set up we would love to have you; be there at 9:30 a.m.

With all the holiday fun don't forget to take care of your violets. Pick out which ones you want to take to the show and give them some extra attention over the holidays. Take a few minutes and look over the show schedule to see what areas you will enter your plants. For those of you who have never shown it really is a lot of fun, so give it a try!

Haven't we had some great programs this year? I hope everyone has enjoyed the ones we have had so far. I think they have been great and our presenters have done a wonderful job, we have four more in the New Year that you won't want to miss.

Good news, we have another new member who has joined the Eastside Day group and her contact information is listed in this newsletter so make sure you add her to your membership list. Welcome Anne Esborn.

The two motions passed: 1) to send AVSA \$500 to help get office equipment and 2) is to donate \$50 in memory of Charley Lillard. Thank you everyone for passing these motions I think it is great that we can do this for AVSA and Charley.

If I don't see you at the potluck Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!!

As always thank you for your help ahead of time and feel free to contact me by email or phone.

GROWING TIPS

Allan Reith

I know by now your show plants have all been repotted and are nicely growing. If not, the time is right now. You should start using a high phosphate (ie. 10-60-10) fertilizer about the middle of December. Use it once every other week until March 1st. Keep grooming your plants; yellow and damaged leaves can still be removed. The blank space will fill in by show time. You can move a leaf by putting a plastic straw next to it and then force it over 1/8 to 1/4 inch per week until you fill in the blank space.

In the middle of December start increasing your light time by 15 minutes each week. Your lights should be on 10 hours now and you should stop increasing when you get to 12 1/2 hours. If you go past 12 1/2 to 13 hours per day you may be giving them too much light and they will start to get white centers. Check your distance to the lights; mini and semi-minis should be 8 inches from the top of the leaves to the light and standards about 12 inches from leaves to the lights. Make sure you keep turning your plants a quarter turn at least twice a week.

Here is something you may want to try; some of my semis are already full size (8ö). I'm going to experiment with several of them and only give them (10-60-10 fertilizer) until show time. If you have any plants that are full sized, you might want to try this. But, only try with 2 or 3 plants. Full size: mini = 6ö, semi = 8ö and standards = 12ö

Note: Saturday, Dec. 17th, is 12 weeks before the Show.

DECEMBER POTLUCK

December 3, 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Event: Joint Potluck Holiday Party

Program: Members who attended the national convention will give a brief talk about their experience.

Location: The Fountains in the basement where we have meetings.

Bring: Dish to share; please bring serving utensil.

Club will provide: drinks, paper products and plastic ware.

Gift to exchange (gift optional) (\$10.00 limit)

CELEBRATING ARIZONA'S 100TH BIRTHDAY WITH AFRICAN VIOLETS

Stephanie Griffith, Show Chair

Hello Everyone! Now that everyone has received the show schedule, it's time to put on our magical, creative caps to conjure up gorgeous designs for the show. Arizona's 100th statehood birthday is a special show theme which we want to bring to the public in a big way. We can do that by creating wonderful designs and showing outstanding plants....as we always do!!

I hope you all have a wonderful party in December. Sorry we'll miss it but we're off celebrating our 20th anniversary. All of you take care and have wonderful holidays!

LIBRARY

Ruth Connors, Librarian

Our library will be back in action for the January meetings. Yes, most of the books are old but they still have lots of information and even a few laughs.

As I said at the November meetings, if you would like to buy your library a Christmas gift, there is a listing on the white mailing cover of the AVSA magazine and the AVSA magazine has ads for the books by Nancy Robitaille and Joyce & Kent Stork. We do not have a copy of "Growing for Show" or the "Handbook For Growers and Judges."

A box of books will be brought to each meeting (we need someone to take charge of the book at each meeting & have each borrower sign the card inside the book and the date. Put that card in the file box or envelope provided and write in the date of return on the slip glued inside the book.)

You may borrow a book for 30 days or until the next meeting.

SOIL MIXTURE

Kathy Bell

Several people have asked for my soil mix and to put it in the newsletter so here it is.

6 cups Sphagnum Peat Moss (I get it at Home Depot, Miracle Gro brand and it has a tiny tiny amount of fertilizer in it but not enough to make a difference.)

4 cups Perlite,

4 cups Vermiculite

1/4 - 1/2 cup Horticulture Charcoal

a pinch of Blood Meal (little pinch) too much and your leaves get really dark

a pinch of Bone Meal (little pinch)

I cook my moist Sphagnum Peat Moss in a plastic bag in the microwave for about 10 minutes and keep it sealed tight after I take it out for an hour or so.

Have it loose while in the microwave as it might explode. It gets very hot and steamy so should kill anything that is in it. I really don't think I need to cook it because there really isn't anything in there that a bug could eat other than a termite. But I do it just for good measure.

Happy Growing !!

VINTAGE VIOLETTERS

Ruth Connors

Are you growing Vintage Violets? I hope so. So many have already been lost. We are getting a group started to grow these old beauties and share so they are not lost. If you are interested in helping to save these violets, let us know. We will be keeping a master list of Vintage Violets so send me your lists. If you do not have "First Class" to check, send the full listing to me and I will check and return it to you and send the Vintage list onto our Master List Keeper, Christie Kroger.

We plan to get together for lunch about every three months to share thoughts, ideas, plants, leaves and new finds. A get together after Christmas is in the planning stages. More later.

Please plan to join us.

LOOKING FOR

Lois Rose is looking for *Imps Fortuitous Fancy*. If you have it, please let her know.



Calendar presentation at The Fountains

December Potluck,
 Saturday, December 3rd The Fountains*
 10:00 a.m. ó 2:00 p.m.

Show Chair Meeting
 Tuesday, January 31st
 6:00 ó 10:00 p.m. Woods Library+

Spring Show & Sale
 Mar. 16th, 17th, & 18thFoothills Mall‡

AVSA National Convention
 Detroit, Michigan
 June 3 ó 10, 2012

Newsletter Deadlines
 Thurs., Dec. 22nd Deadline for January
 Thurs., Jan 19thDeadline for February



Ruth Connors presentation on vintage violets.

† The Cascades, 201 N. Jessica Avenue, Fourth floor.

*The Inn at The Fountains, 5830 N. Fountains Ave.,
 behind (south of) The Fountains Retirement Village,
 2001 W. Rudasill.

‡ Foothills Mall, corner Ina Rd and La Cholla.

+ Woodø Memorial Branch Library
 3455 N. 1st Ave, north of Ft. Lowell & south of
 Prince
