

LSAVC 2018 Speaker Introductions

Compiled by Marjorie Bullard

Mary Husk – “Unleashing Your Creativity through Small Floral Designs”

Mary has been growing African violets all of her life. She joined our FAAVS club in Austin in 2002 and has been active in violets ever since, serving currently as Vice President in our local club. She has generally grown standard AVs, and also found a real love of designs. Mary’s favorite designs are the small interpretive flower arrangements, but she also loves designing container gardens and mobiles.

Mary manages to juggle several hobbies and a full time job. One of her recent projects was making a fashion collection for her granddaughter’s Barbie dolls. She is Project Manager/Client Consultant active in the insurance industry. She is very proud of her family, husband Bob and son and daughter-in-law, Jeff and Renee, and of course beautiful granddaughters Livi (4yrs) and Isla (1yr).

We are very pleased that Mary Husk has agreed to present “Unleashing Your Creativity through Small Floral Designs”. We know you will enjoy and learn from it.

Debbie McInnis – “They Get No Respect...?”

Debbie McInnis definitely knows how to grow violets! She swept through our latest African Violet Convention in Buffalo, winning not only Best in Show with Cajun’s Fair Maiden, but LOTs of other awards. We have been seeing her wins in a number of the recent AVSA shows and conventions, but has surpassed all of that in Buffalo.

Debbie has been growing African violets for about nine years and showing for eight. She doesn’t have a local club, but has been adopted by one in Cincinnati. She goes whenever possible, even though a two-hour drive. She also maintains an active presence in Ohio State and in AVSA.

Debbie has many hobbies; a few are needlework, sewing, gardening, cooking, and canning. Her husband has been very supportive of her violet hobby. Debbie’s husband is a serious Lepidopterist, and their family vacations have taken them on excursions all over the US and several continents collecting butterflies. Their two daughters share his interest in the hobby. And that sounds like FUN!!

Grooming violets for show is one of Debbie’s favorite things (which might contribute to her continued winnings). We are very fortunate to have Debbie agree to present a workshop for us, and are looking forward to her presentation on the “little ones”.

Mel Grice - “Walk Through of the Gesneriads”

Mel has been growing African violets since he was ten years old and has been a member of AVSA since the 1970s. He retired in 2005 from a position of Media Specialist. He has traveled extensively around the world while working and now is traveling the USA and Canada attending African violet and Gesneriad shows. He is a member of the African Violet Society of Dayton Ohio and the Cincinnati African Violet Society (OH). He is currently the editor of “The Violet Connection” – the magazine of the OSAVS, and is an AVSA Judge and teacher and a member of the Ohio State Judges Council.

And then there are the Gesneriads! Mel is a member of the Long Island Gesneriad Society and serves as the editor of the newsletter – “Gesneriad News”. He is a member of the Gesneriad Society and is First Vice-President, and is a member of their Shows and Judging Committee. He also is the editor of “Gleanings” – a new e-zine available free to anyone through the Gesneriad Society website.

Mel enjoys using his computer skills editing newsletters and magazines for various organizations. This affords him the opportunity to be creative and artistic. He says he has way too many gesneriads and loves sharing them with others. He has to keep trying new varieties and loves learning how to keep them happy. He recently has been authoring some articles about some favorite plants and how to grow them. And he is having very much fun in his retirement!!

We are very happy to contribute to Mel’s fun! We are very lucky to have the benefit of his knowledge of gesneriads, and welcome him to Kerrville!

Dave Kesler – “First Class for All”

Dave started growing African violets in a support role for his wife Alva, and when she invited Dave to join her in this hobby, he jumped at the chance. They joined the First African Violet society of Dallas and became more involved in violets, driving 100 miles to get to meetings. They took classes to become judges and have judged at every opportunity. In late 2016, they started a new club, African Violet Society of East Texas in Tyler, TX.

Dave retired from the computer software industry and noticed there was no African violet related software for Apple products. He developed First Class for Mac, and now First Class for All which has recently been added to the AVSA Store. He is currently an AVSA Director and serves as the AVSA Technology Committee chair. We look forward to learning more about First Class All.