

My Thoughts on Our Birmingham, Alabama, Convention/Show

by Betty Ferguson

Thank you to everyone who helped make our miniconvention/show at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens the success it was. We especially thank Robbie and Becky McMeel, Michael Jackson, and the Birmingham Early Birds club for all their work. Becky was like a little bumble bee running to and fro tending to staging and setting up her own designs. Little mumbles sometimes emanated from her direction, but it all came together beautifully, and she never actually lost her cool.



This convention, although abbreviated, presented us with an opportunity for a warm time of friendship. I love Dixie! Our members are warm, accepting, helpful, sharing, and encouraging. I got to know some of you so much better than at larger, more rushed conventions. Phillis Hinkle, our Judges Chairman, pulled together two panels of judges and allowed each panel portions of horticulture - - both African violets and other gesneriads - - to judge. Thank you, Phillis, fellow judges and clerks. And thanks to all who brought food. The pimiento sandwiches were tops. We didn't have a fridge, so non-refrigerated snacks were necessary. And the raffle! So many pretty and useful things to win. I could hardly keep myself out of the sales room and did a lousy job of adhering to my budgeted allowance. Do I have buyer's remorse? No way! Is it fair to say our vendors were just about our favorite people there?

Our only real disappointment and surprise was the low turn-out of the community, but I learned we were competing with three at-home ball games and Disney on Ice. In our board meeting, we asked Robbie, Becky and Michael if they will be willing to be in charge of next year's convention. They will! And our officers and board of directors are already planning next year's convention again at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. We'll apply to the Gardens for an early September date to try to avoid other society shows. We're planning ways to keep our next convention as economical as possible.