

## **West Tennessee Daylily Society**

Written by Lorene Crone and edited by Carol Sims  
(Editor's Note: West TN Daylily Society was dissolved in 2019)

In early 1990, a group of daylily enthusiasts gathered in Jackson, TN to see what it would take to form a local club in the central west Tennessee area. On August 19, 1990, the first formal meeting of the West Tennessee Daylily Society took place at the Old Country Store in Jackson, TN, with twenty-six founding members. Nadine Avent, Bill Joyner, Juanita Young, Ann Woodall, Paul and Kathryn Giltner, and William "Bill" Reinke, the first club president, were just a few of these founding members. These 7 dedicated daylily enthusiasts, along with 19 others, spent that first year organizing the club. These members compiled the by-laws and planned activities for future meetings.

In 1991, the club members selected Nadine Avent as their president, who served through 1995. During these early years, the members were very busy building the club, participating in regional and local events, and spending time enjoying the company of fellow daylily enthusiasts. The club organized and presented its first flower show in 1991. In 1993, the club took on the task of hosting the regional garden tour. In 1995, still under the leadership of Nadine Avent, the club moved the meeting place to the Harvest Food Bank and came together to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary of founding members Paul & Kathryn Giltner.

In 1996 Paul Giltner was elected president. The 1997 show held in June of that year had over 300 entries. In 1998, David Peoples was elected president. The daylily show was becoming increasingly popular, and the members decided that it was important to have uniform display containers. These display containers were made by Joyce and Troy Felts. The containers were constructed from PVC pipe with a custom wooden base and are still in use in the WTDS shows. In September, the membership voted to move the meeting location to the University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Center Auditorium. Little did these founding members realize that the club would continue to meet at this location for the next twenty years.

In February 1999, the club held a joint meeting with the Memphis club with Jimmy Jordan at the helm. The annual show was held in June as well as a daylily sale in August. Club members also celebrated with a picnic at Jimmy & Glenda Jordan's home and garden. The annual show, the daylily sale, and the club picnic have all become annual events.

In 2001, Bill Reinke was elected president. Again, WTDS hosted the regional garden tour. There were thirteen open gardens and a picnic luncheon at Janene & Joe Tidwell's garden home. WTDS members that contributed guest plants were Bill & Joyce Reinke, Juanita Young, Paul Giltner, and Cecil "Jack" Forrester. The tour gardens were Lauren Lane Gardens (Jimmy & Glenda Jordan), Forked Deer Gardens (Paul & Kathryn Giltner), Felts West Main Garden (Troy & Joyce Felts), and The Shopper Garden (Linda & Alvin Shopper).

In 2002, Marilyn Woods was elected president. Jimmy Jordan & Paul Giltner were co-show-chairs for the June 15<sup>th</sup> show. A plant give-away program was designed to introduce new cultivars into our society, encourage membership and attendance, and have newer plants in our plant sales. Jimmy Jordan was also appointed as AHS publications sales manager in February of this year. In 2004, WTDS gained several new members but lost one of our charter members, Katie Reasons, at the age of 79.

2005 was a busy year for the club. Jack Forrester served as president. On June 13<sup>th</sup>, the Reinkes, Jordans, Giltners, Danny & Robbie Robinson, & Tidwells opened their gardens to the Northwest Mississippi Daylily Society Tour group. Then WTDS visited gardens in the Memphis and Northwest Mississippi area. The show was presented on June 18<sup>th</sup> chaired by Charles Watlington. Joyce Reinke was taken by surprise when she received the AHS Region 10 Virginia Peck Outstanding Hybridizer Award during the region 10 summer meeting. Bill

Reinke received the Region 10 Lee Pickles Outstanding Service Award for developing the "Parts of a Daylily" banner during his tenure on the AHS Board of Directors.

In 2006, Janene Tidwell was elected president. Charles Watlington & Jimmy Jordan chaired the show held on June 10<sup>th</sup>. The spring sale was exceedingly cold but the September sale proved to be much better and more profitable. We lost another founding member, Kathryn Giltner. She had been very active in the club as well as the AHS. It seemed as if anyone that talked to Kathryn joined the club. The membership took a bus tour to gardens in the Columbus, MS area. An article featuring the Richard Burke garden was in this year's Daylily Appeal.

In 2007, there were twenty-five members in the society. Emilee Moore, age 13, won the Christine Erin Stamile Youth Award this year. Janene Tidwell's garden was featured in the Daylily Appeal this year.

Charles Watlington was elected president in 2008. Lorene Robinson served as show chair. The show was held June 21<sup>st</sup> with Best in Show H. "Sweet Naomi" hybridized and presented by Marilyn Woods. The membership toured each other's gardens. Another long-time member, Ruth Wells, passed away this year.

Under Jimmy Jordan's leadership, WTDS again hosted the region meeting in 2010. Margo Reed was the guest speaker and Janene "Paula Deen" Tidwell debuted as auctioneer. Gardens on the tour were Jimmy & Glenda Jordan, Phil & Carol Sims, Danny & Robbie Robinson, Bill & Joyce Reinke, Joe & Janene Tidwell, and the West Tennessee Research and Education Center in Jackson, TN.

Another long-time member died suddenly in 2011. Richard Burke, age 83, was a very active member and hybridizer. He registered such cultivars as H. 'Deloris Burke', 'Jackson Boogie', 'Emily Nicole Burke', 'Ken-Ten Wonder', and 'Samantha Lea Burke'. There are still some of his beautiful seedlings in the gardens of club members that were never registered.

Lorene Robinson Crone was elected president in 2012 and served as such through 2014. We lost Paul Giltner, age 87, in 2012. He was our parliamentarian and an expert in Roberts Rules of Order. In 2013, we held our sale jointly with the Madison County Master Gardeners. In 2014, the club was devastated by the loss of Jack Forrester, Fern Mann, and Joe Tidwell.

Danny Robinson became president in 2015 with Lorene Robinson Crone serving as show chairman. Lorene was elected as Regional President of Region 10 and the club hosted a congratulatory reception in her honor. Local members as well as members from the Memphis club were in attendance.

Carol Sims was elected president in 2016 followed by Lorene Crone in 2017 through the present. Long time members Danny & Robbie Robinson re-located to North Carolina to be near family. They are sorely missed.

As you can see, West Tennessee Daylily Society has contributed much to AHS. Hybridizers, regional officers, national officers, exhibition judges, garden judges, and display garden owners have come from this relatively small club. The club is still small but plans to continue doing activities that will increase the popularity of our favorite flower and hope to make our founders proud. There will still be shows and sales and meetings plus garden tours and picnics and gathering of daylily enthusiasts throughout West Tennessee.



*Cecil 'Jack' Forrester*



*Lorene Crone*



*Lorene Crone and TVDS visitor, Pearline Malone during a Summer Regional Meeting*



*Bill & Joyce Reinke*



*Bill Reinke and Jimmy Jordan*



*Chris Schardein chatting with WTDS member, Janene "Paula Deen" Tidwell during the 2010 Regional Summer Meeting in Janene's garden.*



*Figure 1 Jimmy Jordan*