

San Antonio Daylily Society History

May 19, 1968 - December 31, 2019

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The San Antonio Hemerocallis Society was organized on May 19, 1968. There were 25 charter members. The name was changed to the San Antonio Daylily Society (SADS) on September 4, 1982.

The organization met monthly at first in member homes, later at the San Antonio Botanical Gardens, and published a monthly newsletter, "The Scape." SADS reached peak membership in 2004 with 63 paying members and five lifetime members.

SADS took on the responsibility of caring for several public daylily gardens during its lifetime. The main one being the daylily beds at the San Antonio Botanical Gardens. The group bought the daylily plants, planted them, and weeded the beds during those years. SADS also tried to keep the name tags in place on the plants so that the public would know the names of the blooming daylilies.

SADS sponsored an annual juried daylily show which was held at local malls and at the San Antonio Garden Center. From 1984 to 2004, SADS hosted six Region 6 spring meetings or fall seminars with the attendees enjoying the efforts of the membership. Several club members served as Region 6 officers and several members in the past hybridized daylilies which are registered with our the American Daylily Society. Cora Offer, long-time club member, registered 20 daylilies.

During the past several years, as the membership aged, SADS encountered a loss of members as they moved elsewhere, died, became ill, or lost the ability to garden, as before. Unfortunately, the "doers" of the club became much fewer in number. It became evident that SADS no longer had the membership strength to act as before.

The club tried to recruit new members; unfortunately, any gains were offset by losses. Members gave talks at various clubs about daylilies to encourage interest in the blooms and in possibly joining a our group devoted to its beauty in the garden.

For the past several years, the members sold daylilies whenever and wherever possible, not only as a possible fundraiser, but most importantly, to introduce garden shoppers to the beauty of *Hemerocallis* and to hopefully recruit members. Yearly previous purchasers showed SADS members their blooms in phone photos as they bought new plants to add to their gardens. SADS was at its best and happiest when it introduced and enthused others about the beautiful blooms of the various daylily varieties. Of course, SADS membership was always brought up at the sales.

The club noted that few visitors attended the juried shows, so they decided to have non-juried shows at the annual area garden event known as the San Antonio Festival of Flowers. Visitors were asked to vote for their favorite daylilies in the various categories. It was amazing to see the interest and surprise of attendees when they saw these blooms. Attendees returned yearly to see SADS blooms and marvel at their beauty and to show photos of the daylilies they had bought at club sales. Hundreds of San Antonio gardeners were introduced to daylilies with these shows.

It was the club's greatest joy to fulfill its mission of educating the public about *Hemerocallis*, and our absence at the event will no doubt be noticed.

Unfortunately, membership strength did not increase and only decreased further. Club members found themselves playing "musical chairs" as they rotated through leadership positions. In 2019, the membership accepted that it did not have the membership strength and depth of abilities to continue effectively as a club, so it made the difficult decision to disband. Per the song lyrics, "Know when to fold 'em."

The membership is saddened to no longer meet regularly as a club and that members will not be in close contact as before. But, those members who can will meet on occasion at planned, and organized reunions at a member's home or at a restaurant to greet one another and to talk about, what else but their favorite bloom.

"To everything, there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven."

The friendships made in SADS will hopefully continue. The daylily adventure has been wonderful for SADS! There is one thing for sure, the love for *Hemerocallis* is enduring.