

# The Petal

Monthly publication of the  
Tampa African Violet Society (TAVS)  
[www.tampafricanviolets.com](http://www.tampafricanviolets.com)



October 2025

The Tampa African Violet Society is an affiliate of the African Violet Society of America (AVSA), the Dixie African Violet Society (DAVS), the African Violet Council of Florida (AVCF) and the Gesneriad Society.



A big shout out to the members who contributed to this month's Petal: Celia Howe, Briony Tomalesky and Mary Lou Harden, and a nod to Stu Swayze for his update on planting from seed. This is YOUR newsletter, members; it's your pictures, recipes, stories and tips that makes this publication special!

**Sandy Schultz, Petal Editor**

## A message from our President

I can't believe it's October! Before you know it, the year will be gone, and we'll be oohing and aahing over New Year's Eve fireworks. But first, we have to get through October ...

Don't forget – first thing up is our Zoom night meeting on October 2. Winston Goretsky will present a program on The Gesneriad Society and



**Rob's Loose Noodle** (2001)

05/31/2001 (R. Robinson)

**Photo by Celia Howe**

The Gesneriad Web, two great resources of information on African violets and other gesneriads. You all know I don't grow ANYTHING but African violets, but I absolutely love The Gesneriad Web for African violet info. Check it out when you can.

The USF Fall Plant Sale is coming up fast! We'll set up on Friday, October 10 at 11:00AM, and the early warning system says I need to admit I MAY have to leave before setup is done. My hubster

# A message from our President (cont.)

has a 3:23PM flight out of Tampa and I'll have to have him at the airport by 2:00PM, so hopefully we can get done with setup by 1:00PM and I can hustle out of there!

Saturday the Botanical Gardens will open early for member sales, so we will need to be ready to go by 8:30AM, or as I think of it, midnight! Glenn Shelton and Mary Beth Bryant will pick up our order from Peacock Cottage; if you have been growing any plants to sell, it's time to get your tags ready with the name of the plant, the price, and your sales number. Fingers crossed here that we have a very successful sale so we can add to our coffers!

Friday October 17 is our next day meeting, and unless I lost my memory, King James will be presenting the program. If any of you are having problems with, or have questions about, your project plants, this would be a good time to bring them in for some eyes-on help. If they're doing fine, wait until January for that pre-show check-up.

When that's all over, I have about 9 days before I fly to Springfield, MO, for what I expect will be the last dog show I attend as VP of the Akita Club of America. I'll get home on the Sunday before the Florida African Violet Council (FAVC) show, and have only a few days to get all my show and sale

plants ready for that, so I fully expect to lose my mind that week! Throw in a medical appointment I can't reschedule, and it looks like I'll be a basket case, assuming I wasn't one to begin with.

Just a reminder that since TAVS is a member of FAVC, you can show even if you aren't an individual member of the Council. What you can't do is sell plants, unless you've paid your dues to be a Council member. I'd love to see TAVS member plants or designs in the show, so I hope you're making plans to be there! If you'll be entering the design division, be sure to let Mary Lou know ASAP.

That's it for now, and as usual, I went on far too long!

Sandi



Birthday wishes go out this month to:

✿ Celeste Christman - October 15

✿ Lisa Villabol - October 22

Send us an email and let us know how you are doing if you cannot attend the meetings.

## Our Meetings

Our meetings are held the first Thursday of the month via ZOOM at 7pm and the third Friday of the month at 10am at our **NEW LOCATION:**  
**Hillsborough County Agricultural Extension Service (HCAES)**  
**5339 County Road 579, Seffner, FL 33584-3334**



## ZOOM/Evening Meeting -

**Thursday, October 2 @ 7pm**

Winston Goretsky will present a program on The Gesneriad Society and The Gesneriad Web, two great resources of information on African violets and other gesneriads.

**Join ZOOM Meeting:**

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9324792391?  
pwd=ZzBkTmxZTmRjOFY0SmxZbHNnU1Evdz09&omn=85051536010](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9324792391?pwd=ZzBkTmxZTmRjOFY0SmxZbHNnU1Evdz09&omn=85051536010)

Meeting ID: 932 479 2391

Passcode: TAVS

**Mary Beth Bryant** will be hosting the virtual night meetings via ZOOM! We will have a program to begin and lots of time for any questions. Then we will open it up and do some show and tell. So get your precious blooming babies camera ready; I know we all want to see some flowers! Club business meeting will follow.

What's that you say? You don't know how to ZOOM? No problem. You don't need to have a ZOOM account or download anything permanently to your computer, tablet or phone. Be on the lookout for an email from Mary Beth/ Mary Lou a few days before the meeting with a link to access the meeting. Hope to see you then!

# MEETING

**Day Meeting -**

**Friday, October 17 @ 10am**

**PLEASE NOTE NEW LOCATION**

**Hillsborough County Agricultural Extension Service (HCAES)**

**5339 County Road 579, Seffner, FL 33584**

Jim Boyer will be talking about judging school and what it takes to be a judge.



# MEETING MINUTES

**Tampa African Violet Society**

**September 4, 2025**

**Night meeting via ZOOM**

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 7:36pm by President Sandi Soto. Mary Beth Bryant, Secretary Pro Tem.

**ROLL CALL:** The members attending were Sandi Soto, Mary Beth Bryant, Mary Lou Harden, Jim Matula, Stuart Swayze, Joan Reynolds, Tammi Fitzgerald, Angela Newell, and Briony Tomalesky. There were no guests.

**PROGRAM:** Robbie McMeel, President of Dixie African Violet Society (DAVS), our regional organization, spoke about DAVS and their upcoming show.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The minutes were approved without objection.

No Treasurer's Report.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Happy Birthday to Sheryl Herold on the 13th

Meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

## Tampa African Violet Society

September 19, 2025

### Day Meeting

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 10:12am by President Sandi Soto, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Mary Beth Bryant, Secretary Pro Tem.

**MEMBERS ATTENDING:** Sandi Soto, Mary Beth Bryant, Mary Lou Harden, Celeste Christman, Jean Krauchik, Fern Azarian, Sandy Schultz, Ruth Kanzlemar, Celia Howe, Stuart Swayze, Jim Boyer and Sharon Updike. There were no guests.

**PROGRAM:** Celeste Christman talked about The Care and Cultivation of Episcias.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The minutes were approved without objection.

**MOTIONS:** There were no motions.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Set-up for USF Fall Sale is Friday, October 11 at 11:00 am.

**MEETING ADJOURNED:** at 11:30 am.

**ADDENDUM:** The following members will be heading committees at the February show & sale:

**Show Chair & Schedule** - Sandi Soto

**Awards** - Mary Lou Harden, Tammi Fitzgerald

**Education** - Fern Azarian

**Schedule** - Mary Lou Harden

**Staging** - Celeste Christman, Sandi Soto, Mary Lou Harden

**Classification** - Jim Boyer, Mary Beth Bryant

**Entries** - Sandi Soto

**Focal Point** - Celeste Christman

**Placement** - ???

**Judges** - Jim Boyer

**Hospitality** - Jean Krauchik, Sandy Schultz

**Greeter** - Tammi Fitzgerald

**Publicity/Flyers** - Ruth Kanzlemar

**Novice Administrator** - Jim Boyer

**Design Schedule** - Mary Lou Harden

**Club Supplies** - Mary Lou Harden

**Set Up** - All

**Clean Up** - All



**From Briony Tomalesky, TAVS Member and President Dunedin Garden Club -**

I have been an amateur African violet grower for 40+ years on/off. I have grown minis and standards. I do not use wick watering - always top water and use clay pots. I quickly learned that I couldn't grow them on the pool deck in the summer - too hot/muggy. I was successful growing on the bathroom windowsill (west frosted glass) and east window with a shelf. I purchased grow lights and set them for 8 hours. My story to share is what happened with my Optimara DaVinci "thumb print" (8319). The flowers were beautiful, but the plant grew lopsided (picture A).



Optimara DaVinci  
Picture A



Optimara DaVinci

Picture B



Optimara DaVinci

Picture C



Optimara DaVinci

Picture D



Optimara DaVinci

Picture E



It had a gorgeous flower that "glistened" like it had been spray painted with a soft glitter (picture B). Unfortunately, when I repotted it, I lost the mother plant. I took several leaf cuttings when I repotted - always "in case" - and the first leaves grew! I was so excited! (picture C) To my shock, when the first plant bloomed it was a PINWHEEL! (picture D) Pretty, but nothing like the mother plant. When the second plant bloomed, it was like a Monet watercolor - mottled (picture E).

## Recipe Box



### Toffee Bars - Submitted by Mary Lou Harden

Graham Crackers (about 1/3 pound)

1/2 lb. butter (2 sticks)

1/4 cup brown sugar, packed

1/4 cup white sugar

1 tsp. vanilla

1 cup chopped nuts

Oven Temp: 350 Cook Time: 10-12 minutes

Cover jelly roll pan with aluminum foil. Cover pan with graham crackers, broken into singles.

Place butter and sugars in microwave bowl and cook in microwave for about 4 minutes or until sugars are dissolved. May want to stir and heat another minute or two. Add vanilla.

Drizzle mixture over graham crackers and spread evenly with spoon. Cover generously with chopped nuts. Bake at 350 for 12 minutes. Let cool for a few minutes, then refrigerate for a couple hours (makes it easier to remove from the pan). Remove from pan. Separate or break apart pieces. (Enjoy all the little morsels that fall apart while you're doing this!) Store in tight-covered container. Keeps nicely in refrigerator or freezer.

## WE WANT YOUR INPUT!

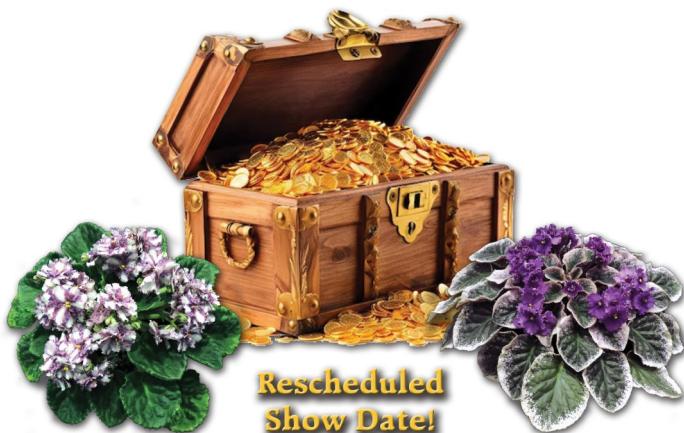
Do you have any growing tips/hints for your favorite gesneriad? Or perhaps a story about your experiences as a grower and lover of African violets? Send your "Show & Tell" to The Petal at [sandylovesviolets@gmail.com](mailto:sandylovesviolets@gmail.com).

# Upcoming Events

THE AFRICAN VIOLET COUNCIL OF FLORIDA  
PROUDLY PRESENTS AN AVSA JUDGED SHOW

## VIOLET TREASURES

October 31-November 1, 2025



Christ Lutheran Church

2715 Lakeland Hills Blvd.  
Lakeland, FL 33805

### Hours

Friday: Sales Room, 11 am - 6 pm  
Show Room, 1 - 6 pm  
Saturday: 9 am - 3 pm

### Information

Mary Jane DiLorenzo  
863-647-1517  
africanvioletcouncilofflorida.club  
Facebook: AVCFL

Free admission and parking



# Become a MEMBER

Tampa African Violet Society (TAVS)

Annual membership (April 1 to March 31)

Current dues are \$15 per year, includes an annual Yearbook and monthly newsletter, **The Petal**.

Send an email to Glenn Shelton if you're interested in becoming a member:

[floridainorchids@gmail.com](mailto:floridainorchids@gmail.com)

Checks payable to Tampa Africa Violet Society can be sent to:

Glenn Shelton, Treasurer

7142 62nd Ave, North  
Pinellas Park, FL 33781

Visit us at:

[www.tampafricanviolets.com](http://www.tampafricanviolets.com)

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**Tampa African Violet Society**

Sandy Schultz

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