

The Petal

Monthly publication of the
Tampa African Violet Society (TAVS)
www.tampaafricanviolets.com



July 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 (AFCF) and the Gesneriad Society.

A message from our President

It was great to see all the smiling faces at the June meeting, including guests Irene and Michael Kilcomons! We hope they'll join us again, but without contact information (email and/or phone), we may have a problem letting them know. In case my mind is absent at future meetings, I hope someone thinks to let guests know we'd love to include them on our mailing list!

Another welcome face was our Treasurer Glenn Shelton. We know Glenn will be AWOL during tax season, but we still miss him when he's away for those months. We especially appreciated him for the excellent presentation on how he grows his miniature and semi-miniature African violets. It was an excellent program, with a bit of hands-on grooming. I enjoyed it, but those minis are just too small for my fingers to groom! Give me a large standard, and I'm a lot more comfortable!



Tête à Tête (6347)

08/26/1986 (Malinich)

Photo by Sandi Soto

I hope we'll see everyone at the July evening ZOOM meeting this Thursday at 7 PM. Mary Beth has or will send out the link, and we'll be joined by AVSA Immediate Past President Mary Corondon, who'll talk about her favorite subject, African violets! On a sad note, those of you who regularly participate in the ZOOM meetings will remember Johnnie Berry, a friend of TAVS who often attended. Johnnie was a constant at AVSA Conventions, who was missed this year due to

A message from our President (cont.)

some medical issues. She passed away on June 20th. We'll miss her for her wonderful smile, her kindness, and her shared love of AVs and other gesneriads.

And speaking of meetings, for the past several months, our meetings at the Seffner-Mango Library have been moved from the large, airy front room to the small computer lab. We were informed that with the post-COVID revival of "Story Time" for the kids, we'll be permanently in the computer lab. With that in mind, make sure you read the "We're Moving" article elsewhere in this issue of The Petal!

That's it for now!

Sandi



Day Meeting -

Friday, July 18 @ 10am

NEW LOCATION

Hillsborough County Agricultural Extension
Service (HCAES)

5339 County Road 579, Seffner, FL 33584

President Sandi Soto will be presenting "A Journey to the Usumbara Mountains - Discovery of The Species".

Zoom Meeting

Zoom/Evening Meeting -

Thursday, July 3 @ 7pm

Our presenter is Mary Corondan of Fairview, TX, Immediate Past AVSA President, Chair of AVSA Judges and Past President LSAVC. Mary will share some of her award-winning AV entries and discuss judging procedures.

Join ZOOM Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9324792391?pwd=ZzBkTmxZTmRJOFY0SmxZbHNnU1Evdz09&omn=86059105773>

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!

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



Remembering Johnnie Berry

(From African Violet Club of Greater Atlanta and AVSA Facebook posts)

It is with deep sadness that the African Violet Club of Greater Atlanta shares the passing of our beloved member and friend, Johnnie Berry. She passed away on June 20, 2025 after a brief illness, surrounded by her loving family.

To say Johnnie was a plant lover would be an understatement. She was a Master Gardener, member of eight plant clubs, plus the Garden Clubs of Georgia. At one time she held the title of Treasurer for four different clubs and also held several other positions within these organizations.

Ultimately, African violets and other gesneriads became Johnnie's passion and in 1981 [she] discovered and joined The African Violet Club of Greater Atlanta (AVCGA). She rarely missed a meeting over these last 40-plus years and twice served as club president. She shared her knowledge with everyone and grew hundreds of plants that she shared in "round robins" with club members and anyone who needed a start. She

was also an African violet and gesneriads judge during all this time.

Johnnie's other memberships included our regional society, the Dixie African Violet Society, attending many of its conventions, having held the titles of Treasurer and Membership Coordinator for many years. She was also a member of our national society, the African Violet Society of America (AVSA), attending national conventions and judging at many of them. She served on several AVSA committees and was a Director in 2016-2017. Just last year she was awarded the AVSA's prestigious Mabel and Glenn Hudson Award for Outstanding Affiliate Leadership. She was also a member of the Gesneriad Society, where she also served as a Director for two years.

Johnnie was a vital and active participant in all the clubs and societies of which she was a member. We know that her loss will leave a void that will be felt by the AVCGA each time we enter our meeting space.

Rest in Peace, sweet Johnnie.



Johnnie Berry receives the Hudson Award from Linda Hall



Birthday wishes go out this month to:

- ✿ Nancy Kast - July 3
- ✿ Pat Rutzke - July 12
- ✿ Sandy Schultz - July 21
- ✿ Roselind Rovinsky - July 22

Send us an email and let us know how you are doing if you cannot attend the meetings.
nybleb@aol.com or mlhard@verizon.net

Meeting Minutes

Tampa African Violet Society

June 21, 2025

Seffner-Mango Public Library

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 10:10am by President Sandi Soto, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

INSPIRATIONAL: Mary Beth Bryant.

MEMBERS ATTENDING: Mary Beth Bryant, Mary Lou Harden, Sandi Soto, Celeste Christman, Stuart Swayze, Jim Boyer, Pat Rutzke, Celia Howe, Tom Schaefer, Glenn Shelton, Ruth Kanzelmar and Sharon Updike.

GUESTS: Irene and Mike Kilcomons.

PROGRAM: Glenn gave an informative program on what works for him growing his miniature and semi-miniature African violets. He brought several specimen plants and had members critique them.

BUSINESS MEETING: The minutes of the May meeting could not be approved as none were taken.

Officers Reports: Nothing to report.

Treasurer's Report: Glenn Shelton read aloud.

Unfinished Business: Sandi reminded us we needed a show theme ASAP. By accord, the show theme for 2026 is "Hats Off to Violets" (pending agreement from Night Meeting attendees).

Sandi prompted the membership for ideas and suggestions for upcoming programs, both in-person and by ZOOM.

Jim Boyer reminded everyone that the Judging School is in Lakeland July 26th from 9-4 and \$15.00 will cover the cost of the course.

New Business: Library staff notified us that the move to the smaller meeting room is permanent. Mary Beth Bryant proposed looking into whether or not the Extension Office on the corner of US 301 and W Old Hillsborough Ave could hold our in-person meetings instead. Tom Schaefer agreed to find out if they could accommodate us.

BIRTHDAYS: Jean Krauchik, Stuart Swayze and Bonnie Smith celebrated birthdays in June

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

TB Gesneriad Society: Next meeting is Saturday, June 22 at 10am at the Mango Seffner Library.

MEETING ADJOURNED: at 11:45am, raffle followed.

Recipe Box



Dot Nelson's Forgotten Cookies

(Sandi's Boss' wife)

2 egg whites

½ tsp salt

2/3 cup sugar

½ cup chopped nuts

6 oz package chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350° degrees. Beat egg whites & salt together until stiff. Gradually beat in sugar. Fold in nuts & chocolate chips. Spoon onto greased cookie sheet. Place in oven. **TURN OVEN OFF AND FORGET ABOUT THE COOKIES. DO NOT OPEN FOR 1 HOUR.**



AE - Little Imp
Photo by Sandi Soto

WE WANT TO SEE YOUR PLANTS!

The Petal is looking for photos of your beautiful plants to share with our readers. So snap a couple



of pics the next time you water and send them to The Petal at sandylovesviolets@gmail.com or text them to **904-955-2947**. NOIDS are fine, but please include the plant name if you have one.



TAVS is Moving!

With the permanent loss of the large meeting space at the Seffner Mango Library, it was decided at the June day meeting to investigate other possible locations, and WOW! We moved fast, thanks to Mary Beth Bryant's suggestion that we check with the Hillsborough County Agricultural Extension Service (HCAES), and Tom Schaefer volunteering to go by the Extension Service office on his way home. It's a done deal!

The meeting dates for the remainder of 2025 are listed below, but it's also easy to remember they're the 3rd Friday of every month. (The night meetings are the 1st Thursday . . .)



- ❁ July 18
- ❁ August 15
- ❁ September 19
- ❁ October 17
- ❁ November 21
- ❁ December 19

Our new meeting space is rated to hold 30 people, and in the event they have to move us due to other commitments, it would be temporary rather than permanent.

For inquiring minds, if you've ever been to Mary Lou Harden's home on Old Hillsborough, the new location is just up (or down) the road. The address is 5339 County Road 579, Seffner, FL 33584-3334. Depending on where you're coming from, your drive may be 5 minutes shorter or 5 minutes longer! There's ample parking, and a ramp available for anyone who needs it.

So, same time, same dates, different location!



Upcoming Events

Judging School will be held on July 26th at 9am:

Christ Lutheran Church
2715 Lakeland Hills Blvd
Lakeland Florida 33805

You will need to register with Jim Boyer before the school. Send him your name, address, phone number, email address & your AVSA membership number.

If taking the test, Jim will need proof of 3 blue ribbons. The cost is \$15. The questions all come from the 2022 Growers', Exhibitors' & Judges' Handbook & any update in the AVSA magazine. If only auditing the cost is \$10. No proof of ribbons is required.

DIXIE AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY
"SHOW"
"Treasures in Grandma's Attic"

September 11, 12 & 13, 2025
Petals From The Past Garden Center
16034 County Road 29
Jemison, Alabama 35085
For more information: DAVS.org

Meeting Minutes

Tampa African Violet Society

July 3, 2025

Night meeting via ZOOM

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by President Sandi Soto.

ROLL CALL: The 9 members attending were Mary Beth Bryant, Mary Lou Harden, Sandi Soto, Celeste Christman, Glenn Shelton, Jim Matula, Angela Newell, Sheryl Herold and Lisa Villabol.

PROGRAM: Mary Corondan, immediate past president of AVSA, gave a presentation showing her award winning entries through the years and insights on how to expertly judge not only plants but designs.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the June Day Meeting were approved as corrected: the location of the Extension Office is CR579 & W Old Hillsborough Ave, not US301 and W Old Hillsborough Ave.

MOTIONS: The motion was made and seconded to accept Hats Off to Violets as the show theme for 2026. The motion passed.

Glenn Shelton moved to make an award to a member. The motion was 2nded & passed and will be presented at the July day meeting.

SHOW BUSINESS: Sandi Soto appointed Mary Lou Harden Design Chair. She will be responsible for writing the design portion of the show schedule.

There will be a project plant. It will be a semi miniature & will come from Sandi Soto's collection.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS: Ideas for upcoming programs either in-person or by ZOOM, included Pest & Diseases, a re-scheduling of Minh Bui's program on lighting, a "how to" demonstration on creating full spectrum lighting with LED strips, and Kathy Lahti on tips and tricks when growing and showing. Mary Lou Harden reminded us that Winston Goretsky is scheduled for the October 2nd ZOOM meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- ☼ Mary Beth Bryant announced that the Judging School will be held in Lakeland on Saturday July 26th from 9-4.
- ☼ The African Violet Council of Florida Show & Sale will be held in Lakeland October 31-November 1. Members who wish to show have 4 months to get their plants ready.
- ☼ Lynn Bandy has been in the hospital, but is now out & doing better.

Meeting adjourned at 8:36 pm.



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

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.tampaafricanviolets.com

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Twitter.com/TAVSviolets

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Tampa African Violet Society

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Deep Purple Dreaming
(Sinningia)

Photo by Mary Lou Harden