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African Violet Society of America

AVSA Weekly Growing Tip



February 13, 2017

Happy Valentine's Day!

Greetings!

Welcome to the African Violet Society of America's Weekly Growing Tip email. We hope you benefit from our experience and expertise! And we hope you will consider becoming a member of AVSA to learn more and to support our educational outreach.

We love those grandparents who first gave us this hobby!

African violets were first described for the western world about [130 years ago by several African explorers](#). In 1926, a company named Armacost and Royston of West Los Angeles, California, imported seeds and soon after introduced violets to growers in the United States. By 1946, there were so many growers, that the [African Violet Society of America](#), was formed. That's how it happened that so many men and women were growing violets before most of us were born. Was one of your grandparents among those early growers?



Terry Stevens' grandmother in her garden, circa 1980.
"Don't leave their feet wet!"

Grandparents learned a lot in those early years. Terry Stevens, a member of [Facebook's AV Buddies](#) group quoted her grandma saying "Take care you don't leave their feet wet." That's great advice if you want to avoid the common problem of [root rot](#).

Other grandmas warned that "you shouldn't get their leaves wet" (important if you don't want spotty leaves or a dead center), and "they'll die if you touch them" (this one isn't true, but maybe it kept curious children from breaking leaves). In a time when most homes lacked air conditioning, many recommended the north window as the best location because it was cooler there in hot months. And similarly, they often chose clay pots, which have a cooling effect

on the roots when it's hot.

We've continued to study African violets since AVSA was formed in 1946. Our homes and our standard of living may have changed, but much of the training we received from our grandparents is still useful. They'd be proud that we listened, and that we've continued to love and grow violets.



Dora Cave, African violet grower and grandmother, circa 1968.
Photo credit Nathan Cave

Won't you [become a member of the African Violet Society of America](#) today? Receive six

issues a year of the beautiful full-color [African Violet Magazine](#) for your own enjoyment, and support AVSA's educational and research goals for new generations of growers.

You may [contact us](#) with your violet questions or comments at any time.

Please share this tip with anyone who might be interested and invite them to [sign up](#) for their own weekly email from the African Violet Society of America.

Sincerely,

Joyce Stork
AVSA Membership & Promotion

[News from the African Violet Society of America](#)

Are you interested in the history of the African Violet Society of America? Take a look at the [50th Anniversary Book](#) written in 1996, with photos of people and violets as well as articles from early issues of the [African Violet Magazine](#). Supplies are limited!



Do you have an interest in historic preservation? The [AVSA Archives Chair](#) is looking for a volunteer assistant who could go to the AVSA office in Beaumont TX occasionally to file documents in the society's archives.

Do you know a student-undergraduate or graduate-who is studying ornamental horticulture, floriculture, plant genetics, botany, or an equivalent program in an accredited college or university? Encourage him/her to apply for an [AVSA scholarship](#). Hurry! Deadline March 1! [Scholarship Application form.](#)

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