

LAST MONTH:

The meeting was called to order by President Teri Watkins at 7:00 p.m. at her home. There were 13 members present. Treasurer Sue Haffner reported that we have \$4,074.75 in our bank account. It was decided to wait until the end of the meeting to have our program, if there was time.

For our Show and Tell / Project Plant / Tip of the Month section of the meeting, Sharon Granicy and Michelle Vandergon brought in plants for the club to look at and help diagnose. Several had stunted centers and one had a dead center. After some discussion we advised the one with the dead center be thrown out and the ones with stunted growth were possible showing a culture problem—perhaps a build-up of trace elements in the soil. Repotting was advised.

Mary Louise Newton brought several starts of 'Violet Trail' to share with members, a plant we looked up on First Class and found to be a 1973 Lyndon Lyon hybrid.

Lola brought last year's Project Plant, 'Summer Comfort', to show. It was a lovely mature plant in full bloom. She attributed the bloom to a drop of about 10 degrees of temperature at night. She also suggested that we get our Project Plants earlier in the year.

Matt Allen and Karen Willoughby described the use of 'sugar water' to revive wilted leaves before putting the, down, something they had seen on the Facebook page of African Violet Nerds.

OLD BUSINESS;

Jennifer Waite discussed some of the changes to the horticulture building along with some new attractions. She also is available to us for entries in our division. We can email her and she will get tags made for our plants before we bring them in on Sunday, September 28th. We will bring our show plants in between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00, with the judging to be done at 1:00 p.m. We will be Section 613 in the Horticulture Division.

Renée Wilson reported on the Delta Gesneriad and African Violet Society Show that she attended on September 13-14. They achieved the Blue SSA Award with a score of 99.1 for their lovely show.

2015 Show "Violets on the Grand Tour": we discussed our violet show during the Fresno Home and Garden Show on March 6-8, 2015. Our theme will be "Violets on the Grand Tour". Committees will be formed shortly.

NEW BUSINESS:

A new meeting place was discussed. We will continue to meet at Teri's house until we can find a public venue for our meetings. In the meantime, Jennifer, Michelle and Matt will check with their churches and places of business to see if there is another place we can meet. We discussed the cost we would be willing to pay for the venues. Jennifer will check with the Friends Community Church; Matt will check with Wesley Methodist, and Michelle will see if her office will be available.

We will not be able to have a member go to the Merced Garden Club for a program since they meet at 1:00 p.m. and none of our members are available at that time.

Lola will attend the Caruthers Garden Club meeting on October 15th to do a program for their last evening meeting of the year.

Our next meeting will be October 20th 6:30 p.m., at Teri's home.

Viktoria Granicy brought up that it would be nice to have a Western hybrid for our next Project Plant. Lola will check with the Violet Barn and Renée will check with Lyndon Lyon to see if they have plants available from a Western hybridizer for this.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 for refreshments.

Members in attendance: Connie Morton, Matt Allen, Lola Sutherland, Jennifer Waite, Michelle Vandergon, Viktoria Granicy, Sharon Granicy, Sue Haffner, Renée Wilson, Teri Watkins, Sue Haffner, Laverne Cottet, Karen Willoughby, Mary Louise Newton; visitor: Morgan Vandergon.

Respectfully submitted,
Renée Wilson, Secretary###

Hello, Violet Friends,

We are at a turning point in our club right now, and all hands are needed. We need to find a meeting place! A few options have opened up and they will be discussed at the next meeting. But if you have something in mind, please check it out and get back to us. I am pleased to have the meetings in my home, but we want non-members to feel comfortable and a public place might be better.

Some other things to think about before the next meeting ... "Violets on the Grand Tour": great things are beginning to happen—Paris, Italy, London ... it will be great! What can you do to help? This is our biggest and only fundraiser; it brings in quite a lot of money and members. Come and be a part of it all!

Lola will have info on a new project plant, and Laverne will talk to us about mobiles.

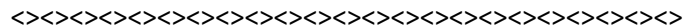
Our next meeting is October 20th. See you then!

Bugs, dis-blooming and fertilizer:

So much to think about.

Good thing we have a club,

To help us sort it all out.



What are growers talking about?

Here's a tip: keep a supply of alcohol disinfectant wipes, the kind found in first aid kits, with your plant supplies. They are useful for cleaning your tools as you are trimming plants. It helps to keep from spreading any nasties. The wipes should have an alcohol content of at least 70%.

Can I use florist's foam (Oasis™) in potted plants to help maintain moisture?

No, this would not be a good idea. The pieces of foam would serve to wick water away from the potting mix and into the foam bits, creating an unevenly wet root zone. And when it gets dried out it's difficult to re-wet, so you would have the opposite problem—air pockets—if you let the containers get too dry.

By the same token, hydrogels, which have been promoted as an additive in pots to hold and slowly release water as they dry, present the same sort of issue. These materials degrade quickly when exposed to sun and fertilizer salts. As they break down, they can bring about an environmental hazard. They can actually wick water away from roots under extremely dry conditions. On the other hand, in very wet conditions, the hydrogels can swell with water and even push a plant out of a pot.

You hear all kinds of advice about how much root disturbance you should have when you repot your violets. Is it a good idea to remove old potting mix and clean off the roots, or should you just do the minimum amount of messing with the roots?

I guess you could say the jury is still out on this. You read experts expound on both sides of this issue. At the same time, such well-known individuals as Dale Martens, the famous grower and hybridizer, say that root disturbance—or even removal—aids in plant growth, as it encourages the production of more roots and is beneficial to the plant. She routinely pots on very small seedlings and gets what can only be described as phenomenal growth when she disrupts their small roots. Some succulent growers, who grow from seeds, do the same thing. We do usually take off the bottom of a violet's root ball when we repot, so we can say that some root removal is beneficial. Certainly if a plant has not been repotted for some time, it would be a good idea to remove as much of the old mix as we can, as the old mix has probably accumulated salts and other chemicals.