

Orchid Society News

April 2010



The Venice Area Orchid Society is an affiliate of the American Orchid Society. It was founded in 1962 to foster and preserve orchid growing, to provide a forum for orchid exhibition, and to share the knowledge and experience of growers and hobbyists.

Its mission is "to encourage, organize, and support educational activities among its members, to develop and extend knowledge of the cultivation and hybridization of orchids, and to promote the conservation and protection of native species."

VAOS is one of the largest orchid societies on the west coast of Florida, and maintains a strong awareness of community responsibilities. In February 2010, the VAOS proudly marked its 44th continuous annual orchid show, attracting nearly 4,000 attendees. These visitors contribute to the local economy in numerous ways, including dining and entertaining.

The VAOS Scholarship Program grants \$3,000 annually to Venice High School students specializing in science.

The Venice Area Orchid Society meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Venice Community Center, 326 South Nokomis Avenue, Venice, Florida.

Orchid Growers Clinics are informal question and answer sessions addressing questions from new orchid growers or growers with problem plants and are held on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Venice Community Center.

Guests are welcome.

Visit the Venice Area Orchid Society on the web at:

www.vaos.org

A Message from Your President:

I am very pleased to be president of the Venice Area Orchid Society – a dynamic club of enthusiastic volunteers, always willing to help with our projects over the year. Our love of orchids and the beauty they bring to our lives make us a joyful community. Ted Kellogg, our past president, recruited Ali Hicks to be our Treasurer who brings much experience to the task. Barbara Wagner, who organized our outstanding orchid show, is committed again for next year. We are a strong organization.



Cynthia Vance

Some of you were curious about the gift we presented to Ted – *The New Encyclopedia of Orchids: 1500 Species in Cultivation*, by Isobyl La Croix. It provides a wealth of information for both the beginner and experienced grower and has fantastic photos.

It's wonderful that the cold weather is passing and all of us have, hopefully, moved our orchids back outside for the very last time. I enjoyed some of the basic tips that Bill Fender shared with us at our March meeting. His advice to place a cinnamon stick inside a sprayer with rubbing alcohol to get to places that need to dry quickly is a cost saver. His insights on fertilizing were very helpful – using potassium nitrate and Epsom salts, and then increasing magnesium and calcium gradually as it gets warmer. Now we can have orchids as glorious as his are!

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Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 7 at 7:00 p.m.

Speaker: Paul Phelps

Topic: Orchid Pests and Diseases



Paul Phelps

Paul and Patricia Phelps started Phelps Farm Orchids Inc., a commercial orchid farm, in 1986. It grew from Patricia's love of orchids and hobby of collecting into a thriving operation. The business began with a growing area of 3,500 square feet and was doubled to 7,000 square feet in 1992. A new 1,600 square foot greenhouse for all of the mounted and basketed plants should be completed this fall.

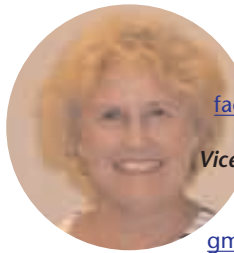
Cattleyas are the specialty of the house but other genera are also grown at Phelps Farm. You can also find Bulbophyllum, Coelogyne, Dendrobium, Oncidium, Paphiopedilum, Phragmipedium, Phalaenopsis, Vandaceous Orchids and assorted species and hybrids of other genera.

Like many growers, the interesting varieties from breeding are what interested Paul. A breeding program was started in the late 1980's with the main focus on the Cattleya alliance. To date, he has created over 800 hybrids.

Phelps Farm Orchids went online (www.phelpsfarm.com) with their catalog in 1994. This website is currently undergoing a renovation, including a shopping cart for online ordering and a link to articles about Orchid culture and other related information. Locally they were featured on NBC's *Daytime* show with Cyndi Edwards and nationally were featured on the PBS series *America's Heartland*. (www.americasheartland.org; click on Stories; Season 5; Episode 503; and then select the story "Petal Pushers").

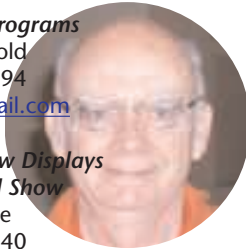
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Officers 2010-2011

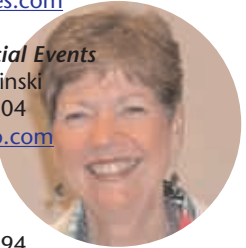


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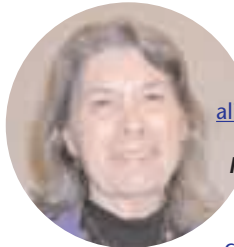
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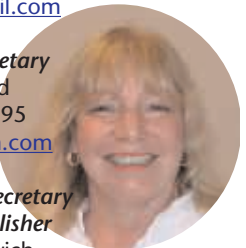
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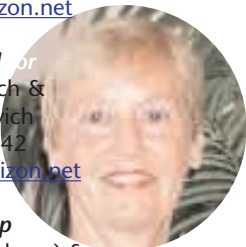
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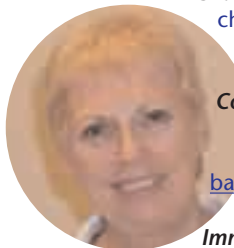
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Assistance needed...

*Do you subscribe to Orchid Digest magazine?
If you do, please contact Jerry Manegold, VP-Programs
(contact info at left). There are group benefits. Thank You.*

Plant Table Awards: March 3, 2010

Monthly meetings include a show table of members' plants. Six ribbons are awarded each month: four awards are selected by an alternating team of VAOS member judges. These awards are: one for Best Species, and a First, Second and Third place award to any plant, a Speaker's Choice, and a Members' Choice (determined by vote of VAOS members). Plants from commercial growers are not eligible for ribbons.

In March, twenty-two plants from 10 exhibitors were shown. Photographs by Richard Amos.

First Place: *Cattleya amethystoglossa*

Grower: Richard Amos

A nicely grown plant of this species typical of the selective breeding found in this species. Probably a tetraploid. The species occurs naturally in Brazil, and coming from low elevations, is very suitable for growing in our area.



Second Place and Members' Choice:

Rlc. Liz Wright x Rlc. Fred Stewart

Grower: Richard Amos

A beautifully presented hybrid typical of the traditional, large, cattleyas. A full, round, good form, intensely colored plant, this hybrid has never been registered.



Third Place: *Alexanderara Tara Venn 'Mauna Kea'*

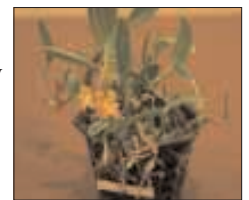
Grower: Barbara Banks

A nicely staked and presented example of this complex hybrid consisting of *Brassia*, *Odontoglossum*, *Cochloida*, and *Oncidium* species.

Species of the Month: *Bulbophyllum ambrosia*

Grower: Bill Timm

Two interesting flowers with violet stripes on nearly translucent sepals. Petals and lip an opaque white. The species is native to China and Vietnam and was first described in 1919.



Speaker's and Members' Choice:

Dendrobium Yellow Song 'Canary'

Grower: Richard Amos

Registered in 2006, *Den. Yellow Song* is a hybrid of *Den. Midas Gold x Den. Santana*. *Den. Santana* combines an intermediate to cool growing species, *Den. moniliforme* with a warm to hot growing species, *Den. fredericksianum*. This diverse background may be one reason that this plant is successful in our area.



Light – Key to Successful Blooming

While there are many factors that can trigger blooming in orchids; a drop in night temperature, increase or decrease in day length and even sharp restriction in water availability, none of these will be successful unless your orchids have been grown with adequate light. For most hobbyists, this factor is almost always at the heart of the question “Why won’t my orchids rebloom?” You can’t work magic or miracles and without adequate light during the growing season, no amount of cajoling with decreased nitrogen, abusive cold nights, dehydration or similar abuse will result in flowering. If you have noticed a general decline in the number of your plants that flower, it’s highly likely that the amount of light you have reaching your growing area has decreased. Don’t forget that trees and landscaping grow as well and can eventually shade windows. I was once asked at a basic orchid culture class why one of the attendee’s vandas no longer flowered. She explained to me that the first year she had amazing results, somewhat less the following year, last season only those on the outside edges bloomed and in the present season virtually none had flowered. My answer was she didn’t have enough light. This prompted her to re-ask the question and insist there was plenty of light as the arbor had been especially constructed for her vandas. The second time she rejected my answer I asked if she’d trimmed the vines growing on the arbor. When she asked me how I knew she had planted vines, I said “you don’t have enough light.”

So what is adequate light? While the actual levels vary with the genus, in general orchid foliage should be a light yellow-green rather than a lush sort of grass green. In addition, the leaves of your plants should be firm and stand upright. Even *Phalaenopsis* which need relatively low light will, depending on the genetic background of the plant, hold their foliage horizontally or somewhat upright and plants that produce very long, floppy leaves are being grown under insufficient light. Think of the leaves being the plant-equivalent of solar collectors. The lower the light, the bigger the leaves need to be to gather the same amount of light; the

heavier the leaves the harder it will be to hold them firm and upright.

There are several ways to gauge the light your plants are receiving and you can’t really trust your eyes. Our eyes are designed to effectively adjust to the light they receive. Your local supermarket may appear to be very brightly lit when, in fact, the actual light level is less than 500 footcandles (*Phalaenopsis* need at least 2-3 times that level for adequate growth and flowering) and your office environment is typically about 1/5 of that level. While the most accurate way to measure light levels is to purchase a light meter you can get a pretty good estimate using just your hand. On a clear day, position yourself so that your hand is between your plants and the light source and about 12 inches from the leaves and observe the shadow, if any, your hand casts. If you can see no shadow, you probably do not have enough light for any orchids with the exception of the jewel orchids which are grown more for their leaves than flowers. If the shadow is fuzzy and faint (below left) to moderate your light level should be sufficient for *Phalaenopsis* and *Paphiopedilum* which require less light than most orchids. If the shadow you see is sharp (below right), you most likely have sufficient light for all but the highest light-requiring orchids like cymbidiums, vandas and ascocendras.



Fuzzy Shadow



Sharp Shadow

Don’t let anyone tell you that you can’t grow a mixed collection of orchids. Hobbyists do it all the time. They just take advantage of the variation in conditions throughout their growing areas. As far as light levels are concerned, direct sunlight entering an unshaded window can be as high as 4,000 to 8,000 footcandles measured directly at the glass while

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Bus Trip to Redland International Orchid Festival

Fruit & Spice Park Homestead, FL

~More than 60 vendors from all over the world*~

Saturday, May 15, 2010

\$34. per person, includes \$7 festival admission

Departure Times and Locations:

- Depart 7:00 a.m. – Sarasota Pavillon (Bank of America).
- Depart 7:30 a.m. – Venice Community Center (south parking lot)
- Depart 8:00 a.m. – Punta Gorda Wal-Mart (3811 Tamiami Trail)

It is suggested that you arrive at least 15 minutes before departure times.

Return Trip:

Bus will leave the festival at 4 p.m. for return home.

Cost includes admission to the festival, bus trip, gratuity for driver, \$5 discount coupon for plants or supplies – and goodies for the bus!

Suggest that you bring a hat, sunscreen, jacket for bus, and small cooler since the bus will not be stopping for dinner on the way home. There is food for sale at the park.

Payment by Monday, May 3rd, please, and no refunds after May 3rd. You may sell your seat, but please notify Barbara Wagner in advance if you do.

Make check payable to VAOS and mail to Barbara Wagner, 6843 Anchor Way, Sarasota, FL 34231

Need more info? Call Barb at 941/923-7706.

* Visit www.redlandsorchidfestival.org to view list of invited vendors.

A Message from Your President:

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An event to mark on your calendar now is the Redlands Orchid Festival, May 14-16. The 1-day Saturday round-trip will be \$34, and great fun and shopping will be had by all. This is a wonderful chance to make new friends and to visit many different growers, but bus space is limited so register soon! See more info on this trip on page 3.

The Englewood Orchid Show, held this past weekend, March 19-20 was another wonderful event. I can proudly report that our VAOS exhibit was another award winner—2nd place. Many thanks to Bob Wallace and his team who created the exhibit and to all our members who brought their blooming orchids to add to the display.

Finally, the refreshment table was a bit sparse last month. Please – if you have enjoyed munching on the snacks over the years – it's your turn to bring some next time. Especially chocolate.

—*Cynthia Vance*



Treasurer's Report February 2010

Checking Account

Starting Balance 12/31/09 .. \$2,009.02
 + receipts.....1,908.21
 - payments.....2,815.61
 Balance 2/28/2010\$1,102.32

Cash Account

Starting Balance 12/31/09\$ 70.00
 + receipts0.00
 - payments0.00
 Balance 2/28/2010\$70.00

Money Market 2/28/2010..\$16,689.77

Savings: CD\$7,175.92

Total Assets 2/28/2010\$25,038.01

—*Ali Hicks*

Minutes of the March 3 VAOS Meeting

- President Ted Kellogg called the Venice Area Orchid Society meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
- Ted announced that the board had completed a revision to the VAOS Bylaws that defines officer terms and responsibilities. He asked for a motion to approve the Bylaws that carried by unanimous vote. Copies of the Bylaws are available upon request from any board member.
- Barbara Wagner thanked the many members who helped with our annual show. The show was a success – Barbara presented Ted with a check for \$10,000. Over 3600 people attended.
- Tony Marie thanked members on Jane Camarota's behalf who worked the boutique at the show, earning about \$2,000.
- Bob Wallace acknowledged and thanked the members who helped with the VAOS exhibit at the show. The VAOS display earned the AOS trophy award.
- Barbara Wagner honored members Mary and Richard Amos by presenting them with the VAOS Traveling Award.
- Ted announced that the annual Fender's Flora and Venice Orchids spring sale will be held April 2-3.
- Ted announced the slate of new VAOS 2010 officers: Cynthia Vance, President; Ali Hicks, Treasurer; Jerry Manegold, VP Programs; and Tony Nacinovich, Corresponding Secretary. There were no additional nominations from the floor. The membership vote was conducted and the new officers were elected.
- Sybil Levien presented rose bouquets to current and past VAOS officers and thanked them for their work. Ted Kellogg was presented with a copy of Encyclopedia of Orchid Species and Barbara Wagner was presented with a gift certificate in appreciation for their contributions to the society.
- Cynthia Vance announced that Jim Clarkson will be our April meeting speaker and that the next VAOS board meeting will be held March 17th at the Masonic Lodge.
- Bob Wallace requested volunteers and member plants for the VAOS exhibit at the Englewood Orchid Show March 19-20. Set up is Thursday, March 18th.
- Bill Fender was the program speaker. His presentation covered general orchid culture.
- The meeting was adjourned following the raffle.

Respectfully submitted, Carol Wood



Fender's Flora & Venice Orchids
Annual Spring Open House & Sale
Friday & Saturday, April 2 and 3, 2010 9 a.m.—3 p.m.

\$5.00 COUPON
 Bring this coupon to receive \$5.00 off any purchase of \$25 or more from Fender's Flora
Valid April 2 and 3, 2010

Thousands of potted orchids, plus bare-root divisions & inventory reductions

Additional Discounts at Fender's Flora, Inc.
 Spent \$50+ and receive a 10% discount
 Spent \$100+ and receive a 20% discount
 Discount applies to all orchids, potted, mounted, and bare-root!

Fender's Flora & Venice Orchids
 254 Keystone Rd., Venice, FL 34292
 Home office: 941-412-1355
 Cells: 323-1587(Susan), 323-1593 (Bill)
 Visit our web site:
www.FendersFlora.com

Visa & MasterCard Accepted

Speaker: Paul Phelps

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At Phelps Farm a special emphasis is placed on "Quality." Only the finest products available are used to grow. Our motto is "Quality Plants at Reasonable Prices."

Phelps Farm is located on five acres in North West Hillsborough County, about 15 minutes north of the Tampa International Airport. Open (by appointment only) Monday through Friday 9-5 and Saturday 9-12. Closed on Sundays. Please call (813) 961.8427 for your appointment.

Paul will be bringing plants to sell.

Tasks for April

- Full speed ahead with re-potting. April is the classic month to catch up with all the re-potting which you meant to do across the winter. New roots form fast in April; don't rot them off by over-potting or break them off by allowing the plant to wiggle in the pot. Tie them up; tie them down!
- Water heavily and well
- Don't forget to fertilize
- Spray for mites and thrips

Source: Florida Orchid Growing: Month by Month by Martin Motes, PhD.

Thank You

Dear VAOS Board and Members,
The gift certificates were greatly appreciated.

A leadership position is only as good as the members who make the show a success. I feel blessed to have wonderful people that care about the society and show.

Bob Wallace was my first class helper and partner. He was an asset, for sure.

I hope, with the Board's blessing, to continue as co-chair as long as I can. I truly love the job.

Sincerely, Barbara Wagner
2010 annual show co-chairman

Light: Key to Successful Blooming *continued from page 3*

it may only be as low as 500 footcandles just inside the shade off to the side of the same window. Lower light plants like *Paphiopedilum* and *Phalaenopsis* can be staged in these shady areas while higher light plants like orchids and cattleyas can be arranged closer to the center and nearer the glass. It just takes a little experimentation.

Quality versus Quantity Plants need red and blue light and they reflect green. Light from the red end of the spectrum is critical for flowering while that from the blue end is used in growth. This is usually not a problem when plants are grown out-of-doors or in a greenhouse unless the greenhouse skin is very old and has yellowed to the point that the spectral quality is poor. However, for plants grown under lights, this can be an important factor and is the reason that many books recommend a mixture of 50:50 cool-white and warm-white fluorescent tubes in the light rack. Spectral quality can also be an issue if you are growing your plants in a sunroom glazed with bronze or other colored glass since these glazing materials may filter out much of the spectrum used by plants.

Duration Longer is not always better. First, plants need a night just as we do. They are adapted to the daily cycle of the sun and different parts of their metabolic cycle are accomplished during light and dark periods. In addition, many orchids, especially species, are adapted to changes in day length. This is called photoperiodicity. Fall-blooming cattleyas flower as day length shortens while spring-blooming ones as day length increases. If these plants are grown under conditions of constant day length they may never flower. The old cattleya cut-flower growers used this knowledge to time flowering for important holidays and it's used today by poinsettia growers for the Christmas market. Why is this important to the hobby grower? It's really quite simple. While a street light outside your greenhouse or living room window will produce such little light that being on all night won't matter that's not the case for lights in your growing area. If your only choice for a growing area is one that is lit late into the night, it would

be best to concentrate on those plants like *Phalaenopsis* that flower without regard to day length.

Too Much Light Unlike too little light whose effects are often insidious, the opposite can be true of too much light. Too much light, especially if it's a sudden change usually results in dramatic damage (read that sunburn) in very little time. The first sign of too much light is often yellow foliage. If left alone, this yellow foliage will eventually turn white and then dark brown and dry as the sunburned area dries out. Plants chronically exposed to too much light but not enough to cause sunburn will be stunted with yellow, hard foliage. If the problem is caught before the chlorophyll has been completely destroyed, it is often possible to reverse the damage. Once white spots or sunken areas have appeared, the damage is irreversible and the best thing one can do is stop further progression with more shade. This is one area of orchid culture where you want to make changes SLOWLY. Orchids are easily sunburned if light levels rise too fast. When moving plants around, especially when bringing them outdoors after winter, err on the side of excess shade. Make changes when you are going to be home and can watch the plants. Feel the leaves. The palm of your hand is about 93F. If they are hot to the touch, the leaf temperature is well above 95F and serious damage can occur in a very little time.

Source: American Orchid Society www.AOS.org; click on Orchid Information; then Orchid Resources.

The Venice Area

Orchid Society News

P.O. Box 443, Venice, FL 34284-0443

Published monthly.

Deadline for submissions is the 15th of the prior month.

Please direct comments to:
Ellen and Tony Nacinovich
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tnacinovich@verizon.net

Written submissions are appreciated.

© E&T Nacinovich March 2010

Next meeting:

Wednesday, April 7, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.
"Orchid Pests and Diseases"

- Speaker: Paul Phelps
- Show table entries welcome
- Raffle Table
- Refreshments

Upcoming Events

March 27-28 – Central Florida Orchid Society Show, Central Florida Fairgrounds, 4603 W. Colonial Dr., Orlando, FL.

April 2-3 – Fender's Flora & Venice Orchids Annual Spring Open House & Sale, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. See coupon p. 4.

April 2-4 – Tampa Bay Orchid Society Show, Egypt Shrine Center, 4050 Dana Shores Dr., Tampa, FL.

April 7 – VAOS monthly meeting, 7 p.m. VCC, 326 S. Nokomis Ave., Venice, FL. Speaker: Paul Phelps.

April 10-11 – Venice Garden Show. VAOS members who would like to show their orchids, contact Linda Kenfield, 412-1620.

April 12 – Englewood Area Orchid Society monthly meeting, 7:30 p.m. Christ Luthern Church, 701 N. Indiana Ave., Englewood, FL.

April 14 – VAOS Orchid Growers Clinic, 7:30 p.m. VCC.

April 17 – Florida West Orchid Society Annual Orchid Auction, Southwest Recreation Complex, 13120 Vonn Road, Largo, FL.

May 5 – VAOS monthly meeting, 7 p.m. VCC, 326 S. Nokomis Ave., Venice, FL. Speaker: George C. Carr "The genus *Catasetum*—Wierd and Wonderful." Silent Auction.

May 8-9 – Volusia County Orchid Society Show, Volusia County Fairgrounds Hester Bldg., 3150 New York Ave., Deland, FL.

May 10 – Englewood Area Orchid Society monthly meeting, 7:30 p.m. Christ Luthern Church, 701 N. Indiana Ave., Englewood, FL.

May 12 – VAOS Orchid Growers Clinic, 7:30 p.m. VCC.

May 14-16 – Redland International Orchid Festival, Redland Fruit and Spice Park, Homestead, FL. (details for VAOS bus trip to festival on p. 3).