

Venice Area Orchid Society News

May 2012



President's Message:

I'm still aglow from the wonderful 50th anniversary event we had April 4th. Everything came off picture perfect and the room was truly beautiful for the evening. Thank you all for your efforts. Besides the tributes given by Mayor Holic and other public officials, we were most inspired by the dedication to our first VAOS president, Dr. Jack Severson who led our society starting in 1962. We gave his wife, Nancy, a beautiful plaque that announced both an annual orchid show award in his name and the naming of a new hybrid by Fenders Flora, "Memoria Jack Severson." Nancy graciously received these honors with heartfelt thanks. Most of all, the crowd gasped when they learned that each member present was to receive a seedling of this orchid that evening! Peggy has written an excellent report of the event in another article and Nancy Severson sent us a lovely thank you note also in this newsletter. Even the Gondolier had a short article and may have a longer one in May to cover this historical event!

Another event, not to be missed is the upcoming "fun" bus ride to Redlands International Orchid Festival, Saturday, May 19. This is where you may purchase exceptional orchids from Taiwan, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, Thailand, Australia, Jamaica, Colombia, Venezuela, Malaysia and also Hawaii. For \$38.00 you will receive round-trip transport, which includes the \$10.00 entrance fee and a wholesome "snack" package for your return trip -- and you don't have to do the driving! This is wonderful chance to add new and unusual plants to your collection and to pick up needed supplies.

New members, mentors and those you coach - here's a wonderful opportunity. During the journey, Jimmy Thomas will be talk about how to "work" the festival, and what types of plants will thrive here in S. Florida. Not to worry! We have plenty of storage on the bus for your plants (bring a large tote bag). On the return trip Jimmy

will give you growing advice on your specific purchases. What a bargain – a lovely trip, an educational seminar, and ways to enhance your collection!!!!

Also the Fruit and Spice Park (site of the event) displays a fine collection of tropical fruit trees and has a delightful gift shop with tropical gourmet goodies, children's books and animals – special gifts for your grandkids. If you plan to go, hurry up and telephone Barbara immediately at 923-7706 to reserve your seat by sending the check to her! Other orchid societies are also reserving seats on “our” bus, so you want to make sure you don't lose out.



Photo above from top to bottom: Peggy Fahrenback reading the letter from Governor Rick Scott; Archives Table dating back to 1962
50th Anniversary Cake; Susan and Bill Fender



Photos above From Top to Bottom:

City of Venice Mayor John Holic and Carol Wood; Anniversary Banner on plant table
Tribute to Dr. Jack Severson; Carol Wood, Barbara Wagner, Nancy Severson,
Cynthia Vance

Ric. Memoria Jack Severson: Those members who attended our April 4th meeting received a gift plant from VAOS in celebration of our 50th anniversary. We're pleased to announce that the Royal Horticulture Society has confirmed the name registration. You can now label your plant "Rlc. Memoria Jack Severson". The plant is a recent Fenders Flora hybrid, a large purple red Cattleya, and is a cross of Rlc. (Pot.) Linda Phelps x C. (Lc.) Royal Emperor. It has been named in honor of our first VAOS President, Dr. Jack Severson.

From Nancy Severson

Dear VAOS Members All,

I can never adequately express my heartfelt thanks to you and the officers and directors of the board for the truly exceptional honors you presented in my husbands' memory on last Wednesday night (April 4, 2012). It would have pleased him immensely. Our family and I will be eternally grateful to you all. With my most sincere appreciation, Nan Severson

VAOS MENTOR PROGRAM

We're excited about our new Mentor Program for beginning orchid growers. Each year, we have members who join VAOS after buying their first orchid. We also have members in their first or second year of orchid growing, who have small orchid collections. We all started that way, and VAOS values all members. If you recognize yourself in this description, this Mentor program is for YOU!

The Mentor Program is intended to assist beginners in learning basic orchid growing skills such as watering, potting, sun exposure, pest control and fertilization. Some Mentors and their Mentees will visit one another's homes to view orchid collections and discuss orchid culture. Mentors will discuss growing techniques; answer questions, provide resources for printed and internet information and offer support and encouragement. The mentoring process is individualized, but short term. Additional orchid information is available at the Grower's Meetings, each second Wednesday. Jim Thomas, one of our best growers, leads small group, interactive instruction and demonstrations.

We need more Mentors. Some of our best growers are now serving as Mentors and are having fun helping others. We give a hearty thanks to our current Mentors: Carol Wood, Anna Sibille, Jim Thomas, Sybil Levien Bushell, Carol Liddy and Cynthia Vance. If you have several years of orchid growing experience, have won an award at the plant table or a show, and enjoy growing orchids, please sign up to help others. We need YOU.

Applications to be a Mentor or to receive Mentoring are at the membership table during each meeting. Forms are also available from Jim Thomas at the Growers Meeting. Please see Peg Fahrenback, Jim Thomas, or Cynthia Vance if you have any questions.

Mentors and Mentees will each receive a free Cattleya orchid, which may be picked up at the May Meeting, May 2nd or Growers Meeting, May 9th.

Plant Table Awards, April 2012

First Place: *Cattleya* Drumbeat x Time Finney



Grower: Peg Thompson

Another large *Cattleya* caught the attention of the judges. The breeding of this plant was done in the 1970's - and the pollen parent, Time Finney (Time-Life x Irene Finney), was not named until 2004 when Li Juan Orchids registered it and offspring from two hybrids they had made with this plant. The hybrid on the show table has not been named - but presents a large, well-formed, showy plant.

Second Place and Members Choice: *Phalaenopsis* Scott Eugene X Winter Haven



Grower: Jane Camarota

The mass of bloom and the yellow coloring of the flower caught the attention of members. The parent Scott Eugene represents spotted yellow breeding in phals while Winter Haven is from a white breeding line. The flower is slightly peloric - many of the petals showed influence of the lip in their shape and markings.

Third Place: *Dendrobium lindleyi* (*aggregatum*)



Grower: Margaret Bustamante

A very nice display of this bright yellow species. The species is correctly known as *Den. lindleyi* - it had once been defined as *Den. aggregatum*, but that name was not appropriate because the name had been used for another species years before. Both the *Den. aggregatum* and *Den. lindleyi* names referring to the orchid displayed have been around for more than 170 years. Name changes come slowly!

Species of the Month: *Dendrobium spectabile*



Grower: Bill Timm

An orchid that makes it clear to all that there is no such thing as a standard form to orchid flowers. This twisted, curled, dull colored flower is so unique that it takes on a charm of its own. It grows well in warm bright conditions. It should be watered well and allowed to dry out. It can grow into huge specimen size, far bigger than what could be transported to our plant table.

Speakers Choice: *Cattlianthe* Sunspot Baby



Grower: Carol Wood

A cross *C. Pradit Spot* by *Ctt. Loog Tone* registered in Fender's Flora in 2009. *Ctt. Loog Tone* is a waxy dark red flower. Used in this cross, the waxy flower parts remain, but the color is the background color of *Pradit Spot*. Fine spots appear on *Sunspot Baby*, but not the large, dark spotting of the parent. Probably not what Bill predicted when he made the cross - but a very attractive flower in its own right. Part of the fun of hybridizing orchids is that the offspring are often unpredictable.

Upcoming Events

May 2 - VAOS Monthly Meeting. 7 p.m. Jim Roberts speaking on "What's Wrong with this Orchid?", Venice Community Center

May 9 - VAOS Growers Meeting "Tips and Tricks from Experienced Growers" How to water, fertilize, and treat problems; what products to use; what media and pots are preferable. Jimmy Thomas and Carol Wood, Venice Community Center, 7 p.m. All members welcome

May 19 (Sat) Redlands International Orchid Festival - Bus Trip \$38 pre-registration payment required. Mail check to VAOS, c/o Barbara Wagner, 6834 Anchor Way Sarasota, FL 34231 Info: 941-923-7706

June 2 - BYRD'S ORCHIDS ANNUAL SPRING SALE 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM Guest orchid growers will be: B & D Orchids and Featherstone Orchids. Also, the Lakeland African Violet Club will be set up under the trees selling their beautiful African violets. Members of the Ridge Orchid Society will be grilling hotdogs and hamburgers which non-members can purchase for a small fee. Address: 6302 Green Road, Lakeland 33810. E-mail: orchidswb@aol.com. Phone: 863-859-5060.

NOTE: Orchid Judging takes place at the Tampa Garden Center, 2629 Bayshore Blvd., Tampa, FL at 7:30 pm on the fourth Wednesday of every month.

Our Speaker (Jim Roberts) BIO



It was in the college days of 1979 when I first encountered orchids during a routine doctor's visit. While there, I noticed a large cattleya orchid on his desk. I asked the fateful question: "What kind of flower is that?" To which the physician laughingly replied, "You do NOT want to know!" A short story by the doctor about his all-consuming hobby ensued and within two days I had gotten two orchids of my own.

During those college years in Northfield, Minnesota, I was put in charge of the St. Olaf greenhouse and its repository of orchids. I knew little about the plants but read everything I could get my hands on. After graduating, I moved to St. Croix in the U.S. Virgin Islands where I happened upon a sidewalk sale by the local orchid society. I joined the group, learned much about growing in a tropical arid environment, the native orchid species, and won my first AOS award for *Encyclia bifida* 'Loves Favor' AM/AOS.

Leaving the island three years later, I found myself trying to take 10 boxes of plants through customs back to Minnesota. Little did I know that the customs encounter would be easiest part. It was a totally new experience trying to grow plants in a cold Midwestern state. Many plants did not survive. Many did, and I learned that orchids actually could be grown quite successfully in the stifling environment of a house surrounded by ice and snow.

During those return years in Minnesota, I worked in the horticulture industry, served in various capacities with orchid organizations and lectured to many garden clubs. I also had the privilege of traveling extensively around the United States, Europe and Hawaii for my career, visiting all of the major orchid nurseries. It was during this time that I started to turn my avid hobby into a small business.

In 2001 we moved to Florida with a small collection of plants and the dream of operating an orchid nursery became a reality. We currently grow our beauties in

three gutter connected greenhouses encompassing 10,000 square feet of growing space. As always, I strive to grow and sell the best quality orchid plants for all our customers, and to build a lasting reputation in the industry as one of the very best. My deepest thanks to my wife Mary, my kids, and all those who patronize our business.

Minutes of the April 4, 2012 Meeting -- 50th Anniversary Event

President Cynthia Vance opened the meeting by having the members applaud the Society for attaining its 50th Anniversary. A celebratory décor filled the room, including red tablecloths, a beautiful decorated cake, a large red and white banner on the plant table and large bouquets of balloons that drew attention to a display of Society artifacts. These artifacts, dating back to 1962, included the original, framed "Certificate of Affiliation" from the American Orchid Society to VAOS. There were also lists of charter members, show programs, pictures and extensive scrapbooks.

Cynthia directed members' attention to two printed sheets of announcements that had been placed on chairs. One listed all upcoming VAOS events through May, 2012. The second posted a meeting agenda and a brief history of the Society, which included a list of all past presidents.

Cynthia offered a special tribute to the Orchid Boutique volunteers who brought in a record amount of \$1740 at the Feb. Show. She then asked for a show of hands, signaling members who have been in VAOS for 10, 20 and 30 years respectively. Members applauded them. Citing the dozens of members who contribute extensively to the Society, Cynthia asked for a show of hands for those who have: brought in award winning orchids; served on a Board position; volunteered to work at the Show; and been a show patron. Most of the members raised their hands in response to the questions. Cynthia said all of these contributions make VAOS a great society and expressed pride in being our President.

A number of tributes were given to the Society in celebration of our 50th Anniversary. Peg Fahrenback read a congratulatory letter from Gov. Rick Scott. Cynthia read a letter from Sarasota Commissioner Jon Thaxton. Bill and Sue Fender, owners of Fender's Flora, presented a tribute that referred to the VAOS Annual Show as the "Premier Show" on the West Coast of FL. Carol Wood introduced the Mayor of Venice, John Holic. Mayor Holic called the celebration a "landmark event" and presented a congratulatory letter that will go into the archives. Cynthia introduced Nancy Severson, wife of Dr. Jack Severson, the first president of VAOS. Barbara Wagner presented Mrs. Severson with a framed certificate announcing the Dr. Jack Severson Award, which will be given at each annual VAOS orchid show in memory of Dr. Severson. Carol Wood announced that orchid seedlings, named "Memoria Jack Severson," are ready and waiting for each attending member to take them home that night. Carol then presented a beautiful framed picture of the newly named blooming orchid.

Refreshments were a delicious cake and ice cream that were perfect for the special occasion. After intermission, Cynthia announced that the speaker would be Paul Storm. Jerry Manegold then introduced Paul who calls VAOS his "home society," where he first fell in love with orchids, which he refers to as "Schombo Love." He presented a program about growing Schomburkias, complete with over 150 pictures.

Bill Fender and Ted Kellogg presented orchids from the Plant Table and cited awards.

The meeting was adjourned following the raffle.

Respectfully submitted,
Peg Fahrenback

Image description: The U.S. Botanic Garden's annual orchid exhibit. . .



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Photo by the Architect of the Capitol

Image description: The U.S. Botanic Garden's annual orchid exhibit features orchids from around the globe. This year's exhibit observes the 100th anniversary of Japan's gift of the cherry blossom trees to Washington, D.C. [Learn more about the U.S. Botanic Garden.](#)

Special Reminder: Raffle Table!

Many people are currently dividing and repotting plants during this spring. If you are doing so, kindly bring a division (potted or bare root) to the Raffle Table. Proceeds from the Raffle Table support VAOS activities especially our quality speakers. We always need donations for the raffle table.

Orchid Society News
P.O. Box 443
Venice, FL 34284-0443

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday May 4th @ 7PM

Speaker: Jim Roberts

SHOW TABLE ENTRIES WELCOME

Tasteful Reminder

Don't forget to bring in your favorite cookies or snacks to the next meeting for our Refreshments Table.

VAOS Board of Directors

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