

VENICE AREA Orchid Society

Newsletter

Visit us on the web at www.vaos.org

April 2020

Stay Home
Stay Safe
Check on Your Neighbors
Spend Time With Your Orchids



An unimaginable pandemic has upended our lives. Do your part to stop the spread by staying at home. We are more fortunate than many as we are stuck at home in a tropical paradise. We are also more fortunate than many as we cannot possibly become bored. Why? Because we grow orchids! Use this time to catch up on your repotting and other chores and enjoy your blooming plants. Post photos to our Face Book page to share with us. Spend some time on the American Orchid Society website and the St. Augustine Orchid Society website – two of the best – to learn more about your orchids. Immerse yourself in a good read. Two of our favorites are Orchid Fever by Eric Hansen and The Scent of Scandal by Craig Pittman. Check out the virtual tour of the New York Botanical Garden Orchid Show on their website.

Stay safe. Do what you can to help others. Take respite and joy in your orchids.

April 2020 Events

All meetings and events have been canceled for April and May.

Newsletter Quick Links

[VAOS 2020 - 2021 Officers](#)

[Orchid Resources](#)

Share photos of your blooming orchids on our Face Book page

[https://
www.facebook.com/
veniceareaorchidsociety/](https://www.facebook.com/veniceareaorchidsociety/)

MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

This spring brings very strange and unusual times for our Orchid Society. I hope this message finds you all well and healthy during this difficult time. As the pandemic goes on, we find so many of our spring orchid activities have been cancelled. Thank you all for your patience with our cancellations, especially the March Growers Clinic which was very last minute. Keep in mind also that many of our local orchid vendors have lost a significant portion of their yearly income because orchid shows throughout the state of Florida were cancelled. I hope you will take any and all opportunity to support our local vendors over the next few months.

As new cases of virus gradually increase, it's not at all clear when we will be able to resume our normal VAOS activities. The April meeting and Grower's Clinic has been cancelled and it is possible that we will have to cancel our May activities as well. The Redland International Orchid Show has been cancelled, and the spring house tours are postponed.

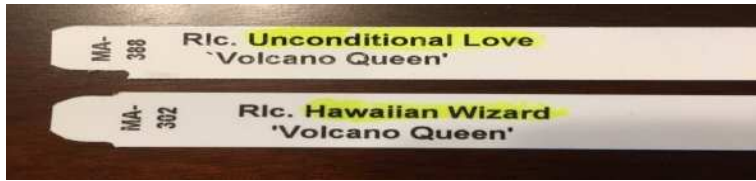
In the mean time, we can all catch up on spring repotting and tidying up our growing areas. The cold weather appears to be behind us and our plants are starting to burst into their growth period. The humidity will stay fairly low until rainy season begins so a little extra water and fertilizer will be appreciated during these next few weeks. This is prime growing weather for our plants before the stifling heat sets in. Normally we would encourage you to share any divisions of your plants with our raffle table but that is not an option this spring. There are several online sales groups on Facebook, and you are always welcome to post divisions to sell or share on our Facebook page.

I am honored to be starting my term as president despite the strange times. I would like to thank our Board of Directors and especially Carol Wood, our Immediate Past President. As most of you know, Carol has been the heart and soul of the Orchid Society for some time and her dedication and generosity of time is unmatched. Carol continues to be the Co-chair of our yearly show with Judy Loeffler, so we can be secure in the knowledge that she is still very involved and great things are still happening with our society. In addition, Jay and Judy Loeffler provide tireless input and work above and beyond their respective board roles to keep our society running happily and smoothly. I am grateful for their support. We are fortunate to have so many dedicated individuals to make this society the wonderful group that it is. By the way, we always welcome others to get involved as well. Think about it!

Until we meet again, I wish you many lovely orchid blooms and hope you have plenty of toilet paper and hand sanitizer!!

Joanna Shaw, President

What's In A Tag?



So, you've bought an orchid (or three), and you're wondering what all that gibberish on the tag really means, I'm going to try to explain it here.

Generally the tag has at least two words, the first of which is often abbreviated. This is the genus, ex. *Brassavola*, *Phalaenopsis*, *Cattleya*, etc. This tells you what type of orchid you have. In the case of hybrids between two genera, the first is often abbreviated. I won't go into all the abbreviations, as it takes up about 8 pages on some of the websites I've looked at. The easiest way to discover what the abbreviations mean is a simple google search.

Which brings me to part two of your tag. If your orchid is a species, or as it may occur in nature, the next part will begin with a lowercase letter. For example, *Brassavola nodosa*, or *Cattleya violacea*. If it's a hybrid, each part will be capitalized. For example, *Phalaenopsis Jennifer Palermo*, or *Cattleya Horace*. If it is an unnamed hybrid, you will see the names of the two parent plants.

And sometimes, there is a part three, which is the cultivar name, capitalized with single quotation marks. Any clone or division of this plant carries the cultivar name. For example, *Bc. Yellow Bird* 'FLSO'.

And now to the reason I decided to write this in the first place. What are all the letters after some of those orchid names? Awards, generally from the American Orchid Society. The American Orchid Society awards are given to plants and flowers of exceptional quality. The one I see most often is AM/AOS, awarded to orchid species or hybrids scoring 80 to 89 points inclusive on a 100-point scale.

Others are HCC (Highly Commended Certificate), awarded to orchid species or hybrids scoring 75 to 79 points inclusive on a 100-point scale.

FCC (First Class Certificate), the highest flower-quality award, awarded to orchid species or hybrids scoring 90 points or more on a 100-point scale.

CCM (Certificate of Cultural Merit), awarded to the exhibitor of a well-flowered specimen plant of robust health. The plant must have been in the care of the exhibitor at least 12 months immediately prior to the award and must score between 80 and 89 points inclusive on a 100-point scale.

CCE (Certificate of Cultural Excellence), awarded to the exhibitor of a well-flowered specimen plant of robust health. The plant must have been in the care of the exhibitor at least 12 months immediately prior to the award and must score at least 90 points on a 100-point scale. Plants receiving this award represent the highest level of orchid culture.

I hope this clears some things up. It sure would have been nice to have this when I was starting out. But what I did have was the Venice Area Orchid Society, and all the collective knowledge. So if you are a new member: welcome and enjoy!

Submitted by Kristin Shaw

Repotting Your Orchid

Now is the perfect time to catch up on your repotting. Here are some general guidelines from our Growers Clinic Team.

When Should I Repot?

A frequent question at the Growers Clinic is “When Should I Repot?” Our standard reply is when the media breaks down or when the plant is overgrowing the pot. Here are some other recommendations from the Growers Clinic Team:

- ♦ Orchids will become more quickly established if repotted when the new roots are about 1” long on the newest growth.
- ♦ Paphiopedilums can be repotted at any time and should be repotted each year.
- ♦ Phalaenopsis can be repotted at any time (even when in bloom) and should be repotted about every two years if potted in sphagnum moss.
- ♦ Most cattleya alliance plants can be repotted after blooming but must be well secured in the new pot as new roots may not break out until spring.
- ♦ Bi-foliate cattleyas (two leaves) should only be repotted when the roots are at least 1” long; otherwise, it can set them back for years.

Eleven Steps to Repotting Your Cattleya

- 1) Soak the plant in a bucket of water for several hours or overnight. Remove the plant from the pot using a knife to run around the edge of the pot to loosen the roots and media. If the roots are terribly overgrown, you may need to break the pot (careful!) in order to free the plant.
- 2) Remove the old media gently from the roots. - "tickle" it out. Remove dry sheaths. Remove “deadheads” – leafless pseudo-bulbs and older yellow leaves.
- 3) Trim all dead and spongy roots with sterile shears.
- 4) Spray the whole plants and roots with fungicide and set out to dry overnight. Be sure the keep the tag with the plant.
- 5) Select the new pot that allows no more room than 2 years growth (2-3 fingers wide).
- 6) Place a small amount of media in bottom of pot such as lava rock or clay pellets that will facilitate drainage
- 7) Place the plant in the pot with the oldest growth side of plant against the side of pot, about 1 1/2" below the pot rim. Secure the plant with one or two pot clips to ensure the plant and roots are secure.
- 8) Fill in and tap down the media. Do not cover the rhizome
- 9) Insert the plant tag. Stake the plant or use a plant ring if needed to hold the plant upright.

Repotting Your Orchid, continued from previous page.

10) Water in and spray with fungicide

11) Keep in dry, low light area for 2 weeks then resume normal watering.

Here are some other tips for repotting.

- * **Inverted net pots** - When repotting in a 10" or larger pot, place a small 2" net pot over the center pothole and add media to hold in place. This will increase air circulation and reduce the chance of root rot.
- * **Sphagnum over those new roots** - Add a thin layer of sphagnum moss over the tips of delicate new roots to encourage new root growth and to protect them from snails.
- * **Remove Dry Sheaths** - Remove dry sheaths when repotting to expose pseudo-bulbs to the sun. It will double your photosynthesis! As you soak your pot to loosen roots, shoot a hard stream of water down the sides of pseudo-bulbs and easily peel off the dry sheaths.
- * **Do not Bury Aerial Roots** - Do not bury the aerial roots when repotting - they will die. You can pot them but do not cover with media. When you see new branching developing on the roots start to add media slowly - the roots will survive.
- * **Repotting rootless plants** - Add sphagnum moss and then slowly add other media after the new roots develop.
- * **Do not repot - Pot Up!** Sometimes a plant is so content in its pot you might decide to "pot-up" - place it in a larger pot and fill in media around it. This approach eliminates damaging the roots and subsequent plant set back as many orchids just hate to have their roots disturbed. This approach is perfect for those Brazilian species that grow so tall. Set the small pot they grew in as a seedling into a basket and let it take off! Potting-Up is also a good approach for plants you wish to grow into specimen size plants. Dendrobiums prefer tight small pots and resent repotting so they are also perfect candidates for Pot-Up. This approach works best if you use primarily non-organic media such as clay pellets, lava rock, charcoal, sponge rock, etc. It will not deteriorate, as bark will do after a few years.

Lost a Plant Label? Need Culture Info or Parentage?

If you've lost the label from your orchid, we may be able to help you identify it. Email a photo of the bloom and the plant to Pastpres@vaos.org. I'll share it with the Growers Clinic team and we'll try to ID it for you. Wondering what your plant's parentage is or looking for culture advice for a special orchid? Send an email to me with your plant name and question and our group of experts will help.



March 2020 Meeting Plant Table Awards

Narrative and photos by Cynthia Vance

We had an explosion of more than 40+ plants on our VAOS table this March!



First Place and Blue Ribbon was captured by Jo Davis and Wolf Bruckner for their gorgeous Rhyncholaeliocattleya (Rlc.) Memoria Grant Eichler 'Lenette' HCC/AOS -- a hybrid originated by Hausermann in 1974. It is a cross of Rlc. James Hausermann x C. Irene Finney (1964). Jo and Wolf's plant had 10+ lush dark lavender 7" flowers with a deep fuchsia lip that hobbyists so desire. Their plant also emitted a lovely fragrance. Members who must have this gorgeous plant in their collection

may contact Odom's Nursery, Florida, a vendor at our annual VAOS Orchid Show. Congratulations, Wolf and Jo for growing such beauties!

Both Second Place and Speaker's Choice Ribbons were won by Natasha Contreras Romero for her huge Lysudamuloa (Lys.) 'Red Jewel' plant with 18 dreamy orange-pink triangular waxy flowers. Natasha was especially thrilled to receive her first 'Speaker's Choice' ribbon. She beautifully staked many of the blooms so they stood up straight in its basket making her presentation exquisite! This plant is a hybrid of **Lycamerlycaste** Geyser Gold x Angulocaste Red Jade. It's very special because it often blooms twice per year, in winter and summer and also exudes a pleasing watermelon aroma – making it a most enchanting orchid to have. Kudos to Natasha for cultivating such a specimen plant!



Third Place and Yellow Ribbon was awarded to Gunther Lobisch for the biggest Dendrobium Nobile, with almost 1000 flowers, ever shown on our VAOS Plant Table! (The camera could not catch all the long draping inflorescences.) This plant is a NOID, or having a 'No Identification' label. Gunther has been growing it for 20+ years and since it's so big and heavy, he doesn't repot it, so the official name tag is buried in the media. However, it does look similar to the delicate pink and white Den. Memory Love. Den. Nobile is an epiphytic or lithophytic plant native to southern China, the Himalayan countries and the

nations of Indochina. It's also a major herb used in traditional Chinese medicine. When Den. Nobile's cultural needs are met, especially a winter rest, it produces a profusion of sweet-scented, long-lasting flowers. Congratulations Gunther for growing such a magnificent specimen!

March Plant Table Awards, Continued...



Both Best Species and Member's Choice Ribbons were presented to Joanna Shaw for her delightful Brazilian bi-foliate, Cattleya (C.) amethystoglossa, having 12 beautiful pink speckled flowers. It is native to [Brazil](#) where it is found growing on rock outcrops near the Atlantic Ocean and on palms in full sun. It was originally discovered in 1862 by M. Gardner who, while traveling in Brazil, encountered the plant growing "on the stem of a tree overhanging a small stream which falls into the Rio San Francisco". Unfortunately, its native range has been

greatly reduced due to habitat destruction, logging, and agriculture. However, because its natural habitat is so similar to ours in Venice, C amethystoglossa, is a perfect choice for the new orchid hobbyist! Congrats to Johanna for inspiring us with her beautiful plant which becomes bigger every year!

The New Member Grower Pink Ribbon was awarded to Irene Bozogan for her bright yellow Oncidesa (Oncsa.) Sweet Sugar, one of the most popular oncidiums that our VAOS members cultivate, for we just love this orchid. It's a hybrid of Oncidesa Aloha Iwanaga x Gomesa varicosa and was registered by M. Sato in 1990 in Japan. The sub-tribe Oncidiinae of the orchid family has 330 species distributed across much of South and Central America, Mexico, the West Indies, with one species extending into Florida (Oncidium ensatum). Oncidiums are also known as 'dancing ladies' – and when bees see the plant's flowers swaying, they mistake the flowers for swarms of a different bee species – and rush to the blooms where the pollen attaches to their heads which are then transferred to another flower in a subsequent 'attack'! Congratulations, Irene, for your lovely plant!



Thank you to everyone who brought their orchids to share!

Don't forget our monthly Raffle Table when dividing your plants. Many new members start their collections from our raffle table. Share your plants and support our society.

Venice Area Orchid Society Meeting Minutes

Date: March 4, 2020

Carol Wood called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Carol greeted new members and guests. Carol went over the meeting format for the evening and told members about the Election taking place tonight.

Announcements

- ♦ Carol thanked Courtney Hackney for coming to speak to our members.
- ♦ Carol went over the March 12th Grower's Clinic on Hands on Orchid Basics Part 2 (Pots, Media, Repotting, Tools) and Hands On Repotting Clinic. Guests are welcome.
- ♦ Our 3rd and final Society Show, The Englewood Orchid Society Show is Friday and Saturday, March 13 and 14. Set up is on Thursday March 12. Bring in your blooming plants for a great show. Plant registration is via email. See newsletter for details.
- ♦ Please check the March Newsletter to see the 5 Area Orchid Shows this month.
- ♦ Tonight is the last night to renew your membership. Your name will be dropped from our membership and correspondence if you do not renew. The membership directory will be published and sent to members within the next 2 months. Members who do not want to be included in the directory should see Sue Grimmer to opt out.
- ♦ Concerning the coronavirus, members are encouraged to stay home if ill.
- ♦ March is our Annual Election for New Officers for the Board of Directors. Judy Loeffler is the Nominations Chair. Judy stated that the Board of Directors is made up of 9 officers with 2-4 year terms. The Directors at Large and Show Chairs do not have terms. We have 3 Board Members completing their terms. They include Janet Keown- VP Social, Carol Wood- President, and Natasha Contreras Romero - VP Programs. The nominations are as follows: Joanna Shaw for President, Stephanie Luburger for VP Social and Jay Loeffler for VP Programs. All other Board Members have agreed to complete their terms. Judy conducted the vote and members voted unanimously to approve the three new officers.
- ♦ Judy stated that we are looking for volunteers to check and set-up the tech equipment for the monthly meetings. We are also looking for volunteers for refreshments at our monthly meetings, for show set-up, Display Team, and help loading and unloading the trucks for the shows. In addition we are always looking for newsletter article writers. Contact Carol Wood or Judy Loeffler if you are interested in any of these opportunities to volunteer and help our wonderful orchid society.
- ♦ Carol Wood, Janet Keown and Natasha Contreras Romero were called to the front of the room. Joanna Shaw, our new President, thanked them for their service telling them that the Society was lucky to have such great volunteers. Members responded with a round of applause.

Venice Area Orchid Society Meeting Minutes, continued

- ♦ Janet Keown said thank you to members for their help with the VP Social tasks. She asked that we please help support Stephanie with delicious treats for the refreshment table at meetings. Also acknowledged were Cynthia Vance for photography of plants on the plant table, Kristin Shaw for her work with the plant table, Don Smart for the tech support, and John and Sharon Kahnoski for their tireless work presenting the raffle table. Applause again filled the room in thanks.
- ♦ Orchid Envy is having a huge sale this weekend. Please support them and enjoy their beautiful orchids.
- ♦ Joanna introduced Dr. Courtney Hackney, our speaker for the evening. Please see his impressive bio in the March newsletter. He will be speaking on the "Wonderful World of Cattleyas". Excited members clapped in appreciation. Dr. Hackney thanked us for the invitation and commented that we were his favorite orchid society to visit.

Two teams worked to present the Plant Table. Joanna Shaw and Stephanie Luburger at one end and Kristin Shaw and Vicki Fisher worked the other end to make quick work of the impressive Plant Table. Great job members!

John and Sharon Kahnoski presented the Raffle Table.

Submitted by Kathryn Jeske, Recording Secretary



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MEET YOUR VAOS BOARD MEMBERS

Your VAOS Board of Directors is composed of nine officers who serve two to four year terms, expiring on alternating years. Other board members are appointed by the President and serve with no term limits. They include Show Chair Directors and Directors At Large. Elections are held annually at our March meeting.

We would like to introduce you to our current officers. They include four new officers and five officers who are completing their terms.



Joanna Shaw – President

Joanna has been a member of VAOS since 2011 and served as Recording Secretary from 2014 – 2019. She has been part of our monthly meeting plant table team and Growers Clinic Team since 2014. She was elected President at our March meeting. Joanna lives in Venice and works full time as a Physical Therapist. Her spare time is dedicated to caring for 200 orchids in her pool cage and shade house. She also creates terracotta clay orchid pots and mounts as Joanna's Orchid Pottery, a vendor at our show.

Jay Loeffler – Vice President, Programs

Jay has been a member of VAOS since 2012 and has previously served as Director At Large, Membership Co-Chair and VP Displays where he led our society to 12 First Place awards and 6 AOS trophies. As VP Programs Jay is responsible for scheduling and coordinating our speakers for monthly meetings. He also continues to be an integral part of our Display team and serves as Coordinator for our Grower Clinics. Jay and his wife Judy grow 300+ orchids in their greenhouse and shade house in Venice.



Bruce Weaver – Vice President, Displays

Bruce Weaver has been a member of VAOS since 2011 and has been serving in his current position since 2019. He previously served as President, Immediate Past President, and VP Programs. He also directs the Venice Orchid Project, placing orchids in city parks and city hall, and is part of our Grower Clinic Team. He grows 150+ orchids in his shade house and trees in Venice.

MEET YOUR VAOS BOARD MEMBERS, continued

Stephanie Luberger – Vice President, Social

Stephanie has been a member of VAOS since 2017 and was elected to her current position in March. She previously served as Director, Communications and has been a valuable contributor to our board. She redesigned our newsletter in 2018 and has been producing it since then. In her role as VP, Social, Stephanie is responsible for organizing and coordinating all society social events including our monthly meeting refreshments. She works full time as a Registered Nurse. Stephanie grows 400+ orchids in her shade house and yard in Port Charlotte.



Kathryn Jeske – Recording Secretary

Kathryn joined VAOS in 2018 and has served as Recording Secretary since 2019. She records and publishes the meeting minutes for both our monthly meetings and board meetings. Kathryn and her Mom, Judy grow 50+ orchids in Venice.

Judy Loeffler – Treasurer

Judy joined VAOS in 2012 and is currently completing her four-year term as Treasurer. She previously served as Membership Co-Chair and has served as Show Co-chair since 2013. She is also a member of our Growers Clinic Team. Judy and her husband Jay grow 300+ orchids in their green house and shade house in Venice.



Carol Wood – Immediate Past President



Carol joined VAOS in 2003 and has just completed her four-year term as President. She previously served as Membership Chair and Recording Secretary and continues to serve as Show Co-chair with Judy Loeffler. She is also a member of the Growers Clinic Team. Carol grows 300 orchids in her pool cage in Venice.

Sue Grimmer – Membership Chair

Sue joined VAOS in 2013. She has served as Membership Chair since 2019 and has been a member of our Show Team for several years, coordinating show sponsors and producing our annual Growers Guide distributed to show attendees. Sue grows 50+ orchids in her pool cage and Magnolia tree in Venice.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR MEETING TECH SUPPORT

VAOS needs two members to volunteer to help set up and take down our tech equipment at our 10 monthly meetings. Basic knowledgeable of computers and projection systems with microphones. Training will be given for “plug and play” of equipment. Set up starts at 6:15 pm prior to the meeting and take down immediately following meeting. It involves setting up our laptop and projection system and mics, and assisting speaker as needed. We also need website maintenance help. Keeping our website secure. Keeping a regular backup schedule. Keeping our website current and updated.

Basic WordPress Knowledge is helpful, but not necessary for right person with interest. See link below for basic information:

<https://www.teamwpsekure.com/top-website-maintenance-tips-beginners/>

Please contact Jay Loeffler at programs@VAOS.org if you can help.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR MEETING REFRESHMENT TABLE

We need 2-3 members to help with our monthly meeting refreshment table. Set up coffee, soft drinks, and treats brought in by members. Take down and clean up at end of meeting.

Please contact Stephanie Luburger at Social@vaos.org if you can help.

DIRECTOR, COMMUNICATIONS

We have a board position open for Director, Communications, responsible for compiling and producing our monthly VAOS newsletter. Board members and other members contribute their newsletter input, saved to our Dropbox files. Our newsletter is produced in Microsoft Publisher and distributed to members using Mail Chimp. It takes about three hours a month,

Please contact Carol Wood at csec@vaos.org if you can help.

Why Won't My Orchid Bloom?



If the orchid has leaves and a good root system, the answer is almost always “light”.

Light is what orchids use to grow and flower. If there is too little light, the orchid will use its energy to grow and will not flower. Dark leaves usually confirm low light as the cause.

Understanding the sun's motion is an important factor of a good growing area. Plants depend on sun for their functionality. The availability is essential for best plant productivity, harnessing the most energy.

For proper growing areas, orchids should be placed at specific locations based on amount of light needed for that type of orchid. The summers are hotter and the sun's path is higher in the sky. This will make the days sun longer and make the sun more intense.

Like the hours of daylight, shadows will also fluctuate with the seasons. A change in the angle of the sun causes shadow space to change. You may have more or less shadow space with the change of seasons

Watch the sun and shadow space to choose orchid placement. The right place is key to good growing. If your orchids have been doing well, do not change positions.

Being aware of the sun's path may help with those healthy but non-blooming orchids. Never move orchids from low sunlight to intense sunlight all at once (summer time). A gradual change will keep your orchid leaves from burning (springtime)

Caution, if the plant is in spike and you change its position, the flowers will not present as well as they would if you had left it alone. They will face in all different directions.

When growing cattleyas try to keep the growing tip of the rhizome toward the light.

Submitted by Jay Loeffler

2020 Membership Directory

If you do not wish to be included in the 2020 Membership Directory please contact Suzanne Gimmer at Memb@vaos.org

Treasurer's Report February 28, 2020

Operating Fund Starting Feb. 1, 2020	\$20,650.07
+ Income	\$30,225.00
- Payments	\$ 8,470.63
Closing Balance February 1, 2020	\$42,404.44

	+		+
Petty Cash	\$	75.00	

Total Operating Fund Feb. 28, 2020	\$42,479.44
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Reserve Fund

Starting Balance February 1, 2020	\$24,886.88
+Interest Income February 1, 2020	\$ 0.18
Closing Balance Feb. 28, 2020	\$24,887.06

Submitted by Judy Loeffler, Treasurer

CULTURAL NOTE - Focus on Mechanical Stability

A question that comes up every now and then is why some plants seem to need to be "pot bound" or "root bound" to grow and bloom best, when their roots wander all over the surface of host trees in nature, with no restriction whatsoever. Lots of explanations are proffered about water and nutrient gathering or air exposure, but an area that is often overlooked is that of mechanical stability.

Blooming is the plant's purpose in life - to attract a suitable pollinator, develop a capsule and scatter the seed, spreading its genes to future generations. Living precariously on the branch of a tree, a gust of wind or sudden downpour could knock it to the forest floor to die, preventing that from being fulfilled. Being certain of a firm footing is a must.

That "firm footing" comes from the extension of many long roots into the nooks and crannies of the host tree. In a pot, epiphytes "reach out" to make contact with the pot wall, rather than relying on the potting medium for stability. As an aside - you'll note that a terrestrial plant fills the entire pot with roots before extending them around the root mass along the pot wall; orchids do just the opposite, and it is common to unpot a plant and find the center of the root system completely devoid of roots.

Keeping a plant stable is important when repotting or mounting it, as well. Even the tiniest movement can damage growing root tips, stopping their progress until they can form branches or be replaced by other roots. Having the medium packed firmly in the pot and/or staking the plant to prevent motion, allows those roots to steadily advance to the wall of the container and giving the plant the "sure footing" it needs to bloom freely.

Ray Barkalow, First Rays

SETTING UP WORK ZONES AND STAGING AREAS

As your collection grows, it can become overwhelming, especially when it comes to repotting. A good approach, proposed by Roy Klinger, Past President of VAOS, is to break your collection down into "Zones". Tackle one zone at a time - pick up each plant - examine, clean, treat, stake and repot the plants as needed in that zone. You will feel a sense of accomplishment, no longer overwhelmed, and ready to tackle the next zone.

Another approach recommended by Sue Bottom from the St. Augustine Orchid Society, is to set up a "staging area". As you identify a plant that requires repotting, move it to your staging area. The rule is, it cannot sit there for more than two weeks – helps you to keep up with your repotting!

Orchids and Hurricanes CAN Co-exist!

The fact that we are in Florida, and are thus subject to the occasional threat of a hurricane, can present real challenges to we “orcaholics”. Additionally, those of us residing in planned communities have HOAs with various rules, covenants and by-laws, that dictate the “what”, “where” and “how many” plants, displays, etc. we are allowed. And, of course, to further complicate matters, there are those of us who spend our summers “Up North”.

So, how do we deal with satisfying our plant addictions and still comply with all of the realities of “Living in Paradise”? One way is to create portable plant stands that can be moved under a protected over-hang or lanai should the need arise, are simple to build with no special tools, can hold multiple plants, and are quite attractive in that they can be painted, or left “natural”, to match almost any décor.

Having first heard of the concept that “Form follows Function” many years ago, I had this in my mind as I wrestled with the question of: “How do I add and display my plants in my screened pool area, yet still be able to protect them should a hurricane get too close for comfort?” By chance, my wife and I took in the Sarasota Orchid Society Show and Sale a few years ago and saw a plant stand that caught my eye. Not quite as sturdy as I would have liked, nor as functional, it did give me some ideas for what would solve my issues.

Taking a pencil to paper I started sketching what I would like and how it would be different and better suit my needs, than the stand we viewed. It also had to be something I could build, in keeping with my mantra “cheaper, better, and easier”. The result is a plant stand that is “cheaper”, i.e. less than half the price of the stands I’ve seen at shows, “better”, in that it’s sturdier and more versatile than other stands, and “easier” because I can build one in about 4 hours, with just the tools that I have in my limited arsenal.

I’ve built 5 of these stands for myself, and a few for friends and neighbors. I’ve had the occasion to move them under my overhang for a hurricane, a thorough cleaning and re-sealing of the pavers surrounding my pool, and for various parties enjoyed during the year. They truly do “Function to the Form”. Construction directions on the following page.



Submitted by Rick Belisle

8 ft. Orchid Tower

8-Plant Orchid Tower Instructions

Materials:

- 1 - 8' 4x4 Pressure Treated post (Home Depot; Have HD cut in ½) TIP: Each 4x4 makes 2 stands!
- 2x6x8 Treated Plank (Home Depot) (Have HD cut at 64")
- 8 Plant Hangers (Hang-a-Pot...Hangapot.com or "Sumnacon Flower Pot Clips" from Amazon)
- 4 Swivel Casters (Home Depot #49344, 2-Pack)
- 20 - 2 ½" Wood Screws
- Wood glue
- Optional: Paint

Equipment:

Power Saw Electric Drill & Bits Level Pencil

Directions:

From the 64" plank, cut 4 legs, each 16" long,
Then, on each leg:

- Mark a leg 3 ½" along the length, then
- Mark the leg 2" up from the diagonal corner, then
- Draw a line between the 2 marks, then
- Repeat for each of the other 3 legs.
- Cut along the lines, thus making a "wedge"
- Drill pilot hole and attach Swivel Casters to the bottom of each leg.

Glue/screw legs to bottom of post. Assure all is "square"/

Optional: Paint stand desired color before applying casters and hangers

Optional: Add a 9th plant by fastening a 6" clay pot to the very top, using a 1 ½" stainless steel screw and 1 ¼" washer. Place a potted plant in this pot.

Add hangers to post as follows:

On 2 opposite sides: 1/2" from top of post and 21" from the top of the post.

On the adjacent 2 sides: ½" from bottom of the post/leg intersection and 11.5" from the top of the post.

Where to Buy:

Swivel Casters: Home Depot: Model # 49344, Store SKU # 837440 (2-Pack)

4x4 Pressure Treated Post: Home Depot.com Model # 4220254 Internet # 257974

Legs: Home Depot: 2x6x8 Pressure Treated Lumber Model #2311253 sku # 168355

Support Our Local Growers and Vendors!

As mentioned previously in the newsletter the pandemic has affected many of our local growers. As shows have been cancelled and nurseries have closed or reduced hours many local vendors and growers will suffer financial loss. Please support our local growers and vendors! Many of them have websites and purchases are available online. Website addresses have been included below.

Honey Bee Nursery

2383 Englewood Road (Rt. 776)
Englewood, FL (941-474-6866)

Palmer Orchids

22700 Taylor Dr.,
Myakka City, FL 34251(941-322-1644)
<https://www.palmerorchids.com/>

Plantio La Orquidea

3480 Tallevast Rd,
Sarasota (941-504-7737)
<https://plantiolaorquidea.com/>

Orchid Envy

339 Venice Ave. West,
Venice, FL (941-266-6351)

Florida SunCoast Orchids

8211 Verna Bethany Rd.,
Myakka City, FL (941-322-8777)
<http://www.floridasuncoastorchids.com/>

Just One More Orchid

www.justonemoreorchid.com

Joanna's Orchid Pottery

www.orchidpottery.com
orchidpottery@gmail.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 1 (1st Wednesday) – **Monthly Meeting.**
Canceled.

April 9 (2nd Thursday) – **Growers Clinic.**
Canceled.

May 6 (1st Wednesday) - **Monthly Meeting.**
Canceled

May 14 (2nd Thursday) - **Growers Clinic.**
Canceled.

May 15 – Redlands Bus Trip. Canceled.

All VAOS events through May 31st have been canceled.

Ongoing

Mentor Program: help for beginning growers,
contact Rick Belisle Mentor@vaos.org

Orchid Judging takes place at Christ the King
Catholic Church, McLoughlin Center – Room C,
821 S. Dale Mabry Hwy., Tampa, FL 33609. at
6:30pm on the fourth Wednesday of every month.

Info: <http://www.fncjc.shutterfly.com/>

CANCELED THROUGH APRIL 30TH 2020

Next Meeting To Be Announced

Bring a friend

Bring a treat to share

Donate plants for the Raffle Table

Contact Us

Venice Area Orchid Society

PO BOX 443

Venice, FL 34284-0443

President

Joanna Shaw pres@vaos.org

Membership

Sue Grimmer memb@vaos.org

Visit us on the web at

www.vaos.org



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