

VENICE AREA Orchid Society

Newsletter

Visit us on the web at www.vaos.org

October 2020

October General Meeting on Zoom

Wednesday October 7th at 6:45pm

Speaker: Tim Culbertson

Topic: *Laelia purpurata*

Although I teach middle school kids for a living, one of my passions has always been plants. I began growing orchids as an offshoot from working at Longwood Gardens in Philadelphia just after college. From the very beginning it was all about Paphs, particularly awarded and select clones of historic importance, of which my collection numbers nearly 3000.



While I love finding old, rare stepping stones in paph breeding, I also do a little hybridizing of my own, and growing up my own babies is a blast. I am an accredited judge with the American Orchid Society, and have served in various capacities with various orchid societies in California and on the East Coast. I love meeting other people who like orchids too, and doing so often finds me traveling to shows, vendors, and peoples' greenhouses to see the latest and greatest in new hybrids and to get the best orchid gossip.

I like to be involved in plants as much as possible: in addition to Longwood, I've worked at the Smithsonian Institution tending to their orchids, and for years for the United States National Arboretum, collecting rare plants and documenting cultivated species and hybrids for their herbarium. In short, I really like plants.

October 2020 Events

**All public meetings
have been canceled
at this time.
Please join us on
Zoom for our
October 7th
meeting**

Newsletter Quick Links

[VAOS 2020 - 2021 Officers](#)

[Orchid Resources](#)

**Share photos of your
blooming orchids on
our Face Book Group**

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

Speaker Bio Continued from Front Page

For your meeting, I'll be sharing a presentation on *Laelia purpurata*, the Queen of the Cattleyas. Although large, these spectacular cattleyas grow well outside in subtropical climates, and with their myriad colors and a relatively unique blooming time, these are great plants for every collection, extending the blooming times in the Cattleya Alliance through July. With more and more *Laelia purpurata* clones and seedlings coming in from Brazil, and large grexes being bred in the United States, these stately, magnificent plants have seen a resurgence in popularity of late, and with good reason! By the end of this presentation, you will have a new appreciation of the range of color forms of *Laelia purpurata* and its hybrids, as well as an appreciation of their beautiful flowers and ease-of-growth. In addition, I can provide blooming size seedling plants of *Laelia purpurata* and its hybrids.

An email will be sent with a list of available plants/divisions.



IN MEMORIAM

Our long time member and friend, Sybil Levien-Bushell, lost her husband, Richard (Jay), on September 8th when he passed away after a long illness. Jay frequently joined Sybil at our meetings - a tall, handsome man always with a smile. Our thoughts and prayers are with Sybil and her family.

MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT



Hi Everyone,

Hope you are enjoying the hint of cooler weather this fall, I know my plants are breathing a small sigh of relief.

Our first few Virtual Zoom meetings have gone very well, we hope you will join us for the next ones. If you have any questions or concerns about how to use Zoom, please feel free to contact us. Jay Loeffler is the host of the meeting and Judy Loeffler is always there available to help people troubleshoot any issues they might have getting into the meeting. You don't need to have a camera or a microphone (we won't

be able to see or hear you, though) but you can still watch and hear the meeting if you have a computer/phone screen and a speaker.

We did our first virtual growers clinic as well. Jay had a short presentation planned if needed, but we had enough questions and comments from the participants that we didn't need to use the presentation. Plus it was actually a nice opportunity for the participants to "see" each other and chat a little after no live get-togethers for the past few months. If you have any constructive feedback for the Grower's Clinic, feel free to offer either during the event or by email.

Also don't forget the Facebook Group, we would like to see pictures of your blooming plants as well as answer any questions you might have about your orchids. Feel free to post both successes and failures. Somebody can help!

Hope to see you at some of the outside live events happening locally this fall - the next one being SunCoast Orchids/Jim Rpberts' open house on October 10th. We will let you know of any others as we hear of them.

Thanks and enjoy the fall, hope to see you virtually at the next meeting!

Joanna Shaw, President

CONGRATULATIONS TO COURTNEY MILES!

Congratulations to VAOS member Courtney Miles! Her article was published in the September 2020 issue of AOS Magazine!

Well done Courtney! Read Courtney's article on the following page.

Published with permission, Courtney L. Miles and the AOS

The Ingenuity of a Visually Impaired Orchid Grower: The Healing Power of Orchids

By Courtney Lynn Miles

ORCHIDS ARE NOT just beautiful and exotic flowers to be admired. To me, orchids have been both healers and teachers. Several years ago I lost the majority of my sight. I had slipped into a bit of depression. I was thinking I would never enjoy or be able to do things anymore. I was no longer the social person I once was. Because I was not handling the new circumstances well, my mother, an avid orchid grower for years, began bringing me to her monthly society meetings. After six months, the wonderful members of my society broke through. I began wanting to feel the enjoyment that they received through orchids. I have never been one to be described as having a green thumb. Put a fern, mum, or ficus in my care for any time period longer than a breath and I would be sure to either drown, burn, or starve it. So the idea of ME ever attempting to actually grow one had never crossed my mind. I began to wonder if I could possibly keep one of these beautiful plants alive. With the help of my supportive society, I learned the correct way of potting and mounting by feeling and detecting the growth of the new pseudobulbs. It took six more months before I was comfortable and confident enough to purchase my first orchid. I started as every beginner does with the basics. I learned the culture and chose the one that would work best with my growing situation.

Even though I live on two acres with over 30 oak trees, it only took one snake mistaken for a hose to rule out the outdoors. I decided to begin my adventure with phalaenopsis. With its light requirements being so low, I could grow them indoors. It was not until the first watering when my mother's voice called, "Watch the crown!" that my first issue occurred. After many failed watering cans and hose nozzles, I was still unable to keep the crown dry during watering. I had to go back after with cotton swabs and paper towels with my mother's assistance. I was determined to devise a solution to be able to water them on my own. With some thought I had a plan. I potted my 'chids in plastic pots and put those into clay pots without drain holes. At watering

time I take the plastic pot out and fill the clay pot partially with water and place the plastic pot back in it to absorb the water. My only problem now was my air roots were drying out and shriveling. I needed a way to get to those above the pot. I solved that problem last Thanksgiving while buying a new turkey baster. The light bulb came on and I shrieked in excitement, causing several strange looks. With the baster I am able to control the amount and direction of the water.

With that solved, I faced insects, heat and the Florida sun. My most important tool to successful growing has been my hands. I use them to detect how much sun the leaves are receiving by the heat's intensity. By using touch, I become aware if the plant is getting too much or not enough water by the texture and turgidity of the leaves. When lightly running my fingertips up the flower spike, I am able

to determine where to clip the spike to the stake. I feel for any raised or ragged areas when checking for insect damage. I also use them for my least favorite insect detection test: the bite test. I have learned that when things begin to crawl up your arm and bite while you are inspecting your orchid, there is a good chance you have bugs.

After two years of growing orchids, I am still learning new ways to adapt and improve my growing techniques. I have learned through orchids that I may face different challenges than others, but by adapting I can accomplish almost anything. My mother may still hide the razor blades and the blow torch, but I now grow and love over 40 orchids.

— Courtney Lynn Miles, 8011 SW Sunny Oaks Drive, Arcadia, Florida 34269 (email: courtneymiles@centurylink.net).

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American Orchid Society
Member Since 1906

Venice Area Orchid Society

Meeting Minutes

Zoom Meeting

Date: September 2, 2020

Joanna Shaw called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Joanna welcomed everyone to our second Zoom Meeting for the Venice Area Orchid Society. She expressed her excitement over our speaker for the evening, Dr. Kristen Uthus.

Announcements

There will be a Zoom Grower's Clinic on September 10 at 7:00 pm. We will have no planned program. Members are encouraged to show their problem plants and to ask questions. We will run the Clinic in this informal format to see how it meets Member's needs. Also questions can be addressed on our Facebook page.

An announcement was made about a Member Plant Sale. The sale was to take place on Saturday September 12 but was postponed due to weather issues. The new date for the Member Plant Sale is Saturday, September 26 from 9-1:00pm. The event is outside under the Oak Trees at Honey Bee Nursery. It is a beautiful location, fully shaded and should prove to be safe during the pandemic. Allen Black, a previous VAOS speaker has graciously sent seedlings that will be sold to help raise money for our society. Natasha and Joanna will have pottery for sale also. There are 12 tables with an 8' spacing between them. We encourage masks and social distancing. If you want a table contact Joanna Shaw.

October 7 will be our next Zoom Meeting at 7:00 pm. Tim Culbertson will present the topic: *Laelia purpurata*. You can start logging on at 6:30 and get caught up with other members. On November 4th Alan Kock, Gold Country Orchids, will be our Zoom Presenter. The topic is *Angraecums* and Their Relatives for the Home Grower. There will be no December Zoom Meeting. Currently our Holiday Brunch is tentatively scheduled for December 13.

Jay Loeffler introduced our speaker for tonight's Zoom Meeting Dr. Kristen Uthus who admits that miniatures are her passion—The weirder the better! Dr. Uthus owns and operates New World Orchids.

Submitted by Kathryn Jeske, Recording Secretary

October in Your Orchid Collection

October is a month of change in South Florida. If the Romans had lived here where we do, they would have named this month for their two faced god Janus. Usually around the middle of the month, and certainly by the end of the month, the first strong cold front pushes into South Florida bringing to a close the monolithic heat and damp of summer and ushering in weather as most of the continent knows it, alternating periods of warmer and cooler. Although warm temperatures will persist for another month or so until the technical end of the hurricane season, the tropics are in retreat and the temperate zone in the ascendancy. Each successive cold front foreshadowed by ever lessening rain storms will progressively cool our temperatures and dry our air. But days are shortening too, providing less hours of sunlight to heat the air and slowing the drying process. Nights are longer and cooler which produces the same effect, slower drying. Now we must start to move into the consciousness of winter and take greater care to insure that our plants are thoroughly dry before we water them again. The shorter days of October dictate that we rise even earlier to water if necessary. Each extra hour of daylight is to be cherished by us as well as our plants.

Most of our orchids are well aware of this sea change. The shortening days of late summer have told many genera to finish their growth and prepare to rest. We need to listen too. And look! The last smallest leaves of these highly seasonal plants will have unfolded at the tips of their new growths telling us that their growth cycle is finished for this year. Himalayan dendrobiums of the nobile type and of the section *Callista* (*D. aggregatum* et al.) now begin their five months of care-free existence in South Florida. They should be put in a bright spot and given no more water and above all, no more fertilizer until after they have bloomed in Spring. Catasetums, mormodes, *Cycnoches*, calanthes and other deciduous types should be treated the same way. Whatever moisture nature provides in the increasingly heavy dew and the passing rains that usher in most cold fronts will be adequate for these plants whose native environment is a seasonally monsoon one like ours. Benign neglect suits these genera just fine and what a relief to the conscience of the ever busy orchidist! The truly devoted will group these genera together, preferably at the edge of the growing area and high up where they will receive the maximum of light and air circulation. Grouped thus, the chance of an accidental watering of these while taking care of the more thirsty genera is minimized. Another strategy is to tip the pots of these dormant genera on their sides thus eliminating much natural rainfall and avoiding a misdirected hose spray. Some growers even remove plants that have finished both growing and flowering from their pots entirely. When new growth begins in the Spring they will receive a fresh start in new medium.

Many cattleyas, laelias, oncidiums and phalaenopsis-type dendrobiums will be finishing their growths and should be hardened off with reduced water and fertilizer but not the Spartan regime of the deciduous type. Lower nitrogen fertilizer applied at a lower rate and with less frequency will make these genera happy and prevent them from breaking into unwanted off-season growth that frequently hampers flowering as well. Many growers tend to use higher phosphorus, lower nitrogen fertilizers of the "Bloom Booster" type during the cooler weather. But less frequent applications of the recommended 15-5-15 is a better strategy.

October in Your Orchid Collection, continued

These applications should be spaced further apart as well, at ten to twelve day intervals. Less frequent watering will also do for these genera. When the frontal rains pass through, check to see that the pots are thoroughly wet by giving them the “heft” test and if they are not heavy enough “top them up.” Let them dry ‘hard’ before watering again. In cool weather especially, less is more.

Monopodial orchids like *Vanda* and *Phalaenopsis* which want to grow continuously, feel the change too. The broad swing of day to night temperature stimulates flower spike initiation in these genera. You can spur them on to greater excitement by giving them a shot of high Phosphorus ‘Bloom Booster’ fertilizer just before or just after the sudden drop in night temperatures precipitated by the passing of a cold front. For most of the year “Bloom Booster” fertilizer appears to be in fact “Bloom Blocker” but (perhaps from faith rather than science) high phosphorus seems to have the desired effect (perhaps from shock) when the first cold snaps are also halting vegetative growth. We like Miller’s *Solugro* (12-48-8) because it contains none of the ugly blue flower, clothes and hand staining dye. Other brands (with or without dye) are equally effective. Look for a very high middle number and a relatively low first number or ask at your garden center for a ‘starter solution’ which is the moniker for these fertilizers when used in planting out vegetable or annual seedlings. Because the nitrogen level is lower, you can use a full tablespoon of these or more, per gallon.

Cooler weather calls our attention to our plants’ needs for trace elements. Chief among these is magnesium, often described as the ‘major’ minor element. Magnesium deficiency shows up in orchids as a reddening of the foliage particularly when the plant is stressed. This color change is frequently attributed to cold as it occurs following spells of cooler weather. This observation is the fallacy of *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*; cold is merely the efficient cause: the material cause is lack of magnesium. Hopefully the new fertilizer regimen outlined in the July chapter will minimize or eliminate the reddening by keeping the magnesium level up in the plants. But... Epsom salts (MgS) is the best and most readily available source of magnesium. This can be applied with Potassium Nitrate (KNO₃) at the rate of one tablespoon each per gallon. Potassium Nitrate has the formula 14-0-44. The missing number in the middle is Phosphorus. In combination with our highly alkaline water phosphorus tends to react with magnesium and the other metals of the trace element group. Never apply magnesium and the other trace elements in combination with fertilizers containing phosphorus. A general purpose trace element mixture can be added to the mix of magnesium sulfate and potassium nitrate at the rate recommended on the label.. (Concentrations vary). Goodbye red, Hello green!

Excerpted from [*Florida Orchid Growing: Month by Month*](#) by Martin Motes. *All rights reserved*



JOIN THE VAOS FACEBOOK GROUP TODAY!

Join our VAOS Facebook Group at:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/VAOS.org/>

- ♦ Provides an interactive environment for members
 - ♦ Ask questions, solve plant problems
 - ♦ Share your ideas and techniques
 - ♦ Show us how you grow
- ♦ Sell, swap or give away plants and divisions

Post your orchid plant photo to our Virtual Plant Table – once a month the member photo that receives the most “likes” receives a \$50 gift certificate to one of our local vendors



DIRECTOR OF 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.

NEW TO Zoom?

Like many organizations, the VAOS is moving to Zoom meetings until we can all safely meet together again. We hosted our first monthly meeting on Zoom on August 5th with Fred Clarke presenting from California. We had 85 participants. We are working to produce monthly Growers Clinics on Zoom as well.

If you are new to Zoom, here are some instructions to set up to view our monthly meetings and growers clinics.

- ♦ Download Zoom and become familiar with it. Simply go to www.Zoom.com and follow the instructions to download to your computer. Once downloaded, you will see the icon on your desktop.
- ♦ VAOS will send you a link to our meeting by email. It will also be available through our Facebook Group page or our website.
- ♦ Log on early for our October 7th meeting so that you can learn your way around. Click to test Audio and Video prior to the meeting start. Our host, Jay Loeffler, will mute all participants during the presentation. You may submit questions for the speaker at the end. During the meeting, if you need to step away, you can click Mute at the left bottom corner of your screen.
- ♦ Download Zoom and get familiar with it. It is a great tool and will allow us to continue our meetings and stay in contact until we can get together again.
- ♦ Here is a tip from Jay Loeffler if you experience connection problems during our Zoom meetings:
 - Rebooting your Router/modem can help with internet connections
 - First, unplug your router and broadband modem from power. (If combo just unplug the one)
 - Then wait about 30 seconds, and plug them back in: first the modem, then the router.
 - Wait a few minutes for them to completely power back on. If your equipment had encountered an error, the restart should fix it and your internet should be back up.

October Culture Tip

All Seasons Horticultural & Dormant Spray Oil



- **USE YEAR ROUND** - Provides year-round protection against insects, mites, and diseases. .
- **INSECT KILLER** - Product envelops and smothers a variety of insects including aphids, scale insects, mites, mealybugs, and certain species of moth. Contact pesticide, not systemic.
- **DISEASE PREVENTION** - Helps to control powdery mildew, rust, greasy spot, botrytis, and other listed diseases.
- **ORGANIC GARDENING** - The active ingredient of All Seasons Spray Oil is mineral oil. Unlike harsh chemicals, mineral oil leaves no toxic residues. This natural product is approved for organic gardening and is safe to use around people and pets.

- **DOSAGE**—2 Tbs. per gallon water
- **PRECAUTIONS**—Do not use when temperature is above 90* or 74% humidity. Can be combined with fertilizer. Do not combine with fungicide spray.
- **AVAILABLE** - Walmart, big box stores \$10 for 32 oz.

VAOS GROWERS CLINIC ON ZOOM

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8TH, 7PM

The VAOS October Zoom Growers Clinic will be held on October 8th, 2nd Thursday of the month. Growers Clinic Team members will be available to answer your questions.

This will be a general meeting to discuss problem plants, culture issues and Fall orchid culture guidelines and advice. Have your questions ready and your problem plants to show the group for advice.

Watch for Zoom log on instructions for this meeting on our Facebook Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/VAOS.org> or in an email that will be sent prior to meeting.

Jay Loeffler, Growers Clinic Coordinator

VAOS MEMBERSHIP EXTENDED THROUGH 2021!

The pandemic has disrupted our meetings and activities since March 2020, and it is still unknown when we will be able to get back to normal. Therefore, VAOS will extend membership to all active members through 2021. If your 2020 dues were paid on or after October 1, 2020, we will automatically renew your membership through next year.

Please contact Sue Grimmer, Membership Director, if you have questions regarding your membership status. memb@vaos.org

Treasurer's Report August 01, 2020

Operating Fund Starting August 01, 2020	\$	2,182.28
+ Income	\$	2,479.00
- Payments	\$	1,338.37
Closing Balance August 31, 2020	\$	3,322.91

Petty Cash	\$	75.00
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Total Operating Fund August 31, 2020	\$	3,397.91
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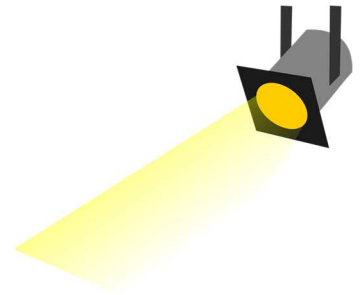
Reserve Fund

Starting Balance August 01, 2020	\$	48,172.48
+Interest Income August 31, 2020	\$	0.40
- Transfer to Checking		\$2,000.00
Closing Balance August 31, 2020		\$46,172.88

Submitted by Judy Loeffler, Treasurer

Show Vendor Spotlight

Palmer Orchids



22700 Taylor Dr, Bradenton, FL 34211

<https://www.palmerorchids.com/>



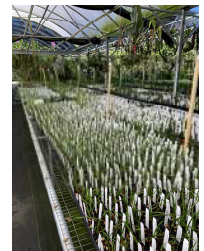
Offering a variety of orchid species and hybrids, including those from Cattleya, Dendrobium, Oncidium, Vanda and other genera. Open to the public Tuesday-Saturday.

Happening Now:

End of Summer Sale An assortment of non-blooming plants, starting at \$20 each. Click here for more information: <https://www.palmerorchids.com/summer-sale>

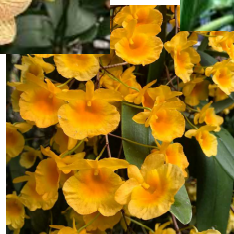
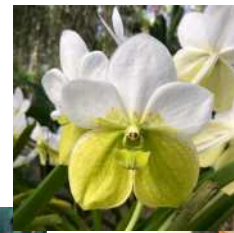
Seedling Sale Growers Choice of an assortment seedlings in 2 in pots, 6 for \$36 or 12 for \$72. Click here for more information:

https://www.palmerorchids.com/summer-sale/2-inch-orchid-assortment?fbclid=IwAR31qf1CyJCY_pzY_CzNCoEUsgObxxMDCGSRuMTh3fzOcUHCv75-nY6XjY



Save the Date!

Fall Open House November 21-23, 2020



Upcoming Events

2020 Fall Tent Sale

Florida SunCoast Orchids

8227 Verna Bethany Road
Myakka City, FL 34251

Guest Vendors:

Bredren Orchids
Miranda Orchids
Joanna's Orchid Pottery
Just One More Orchid
Accent Orchids
OFE Orchid Supplies

One Day Only !!
Saturday October 10, 2020
Open: 9-4

Member Plant Sale

Thank you to everyone that participated in our recent Member Plant Sale! It was a huge success! A special thank you goes out to Janet of Honey Bee Nursery for allowing us to set up under the oak trees. Please go by and support Honey Bee!



Support Our Local Growers and Vendors!

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)

Plantio La Orquidea
3480 Tallevast Rd,
Sarasota (941-504-7737)

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

Florida SunCoast Orchids
8211 Verna Bethany Rd.,
Myakka City, FL (941-322-8777)

Just One More Orchid/Few Of My Favorite Things
www.justonemoreorchid.com

Joanna's Orchid Pottery
www.orchidpottery.com
orchidpottery@gmail.com



UPCOMING EVENTS

October 7 (2st Wednesday) - Monthly Meeting via Zoom. Tim Culbertson Topic: Laelia purpurata

October 8 (2nd Thursday) - Growers Clinic via Zoom

October 10 (Saturday) - Florida SunCoast Orchids Open House. See flyer in this newsletter

November 4 (1st Wednesday) - Monthly Meeting via Zoom. Alan Koch, Gold Country Orchids. Topic: Angraecums and Their Relatives for the Home Grower

November 12 (2nd Thursday) - Growers Clinic via Zoom

November 21—23 — Palmer Orchids Fall Open House. See flyer in this newsletter

December—No Monthly Meeting or Growers Clinic

December 13 (Sunday) - Annual Holiday Brunch, Boca Royale Country Club, Englewood. Tentatively scheduled.

ONGOING

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

AOS Orchid Judging—Check Website for Schedule.

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

Next Meeting
October 7th
via Zoom

Contact Us

Venice Area Orchid Society
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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

Visit our new Facebook Group
at
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/VAOS.org/>

