

# VENICE AREA Orchid Society

Newsletter

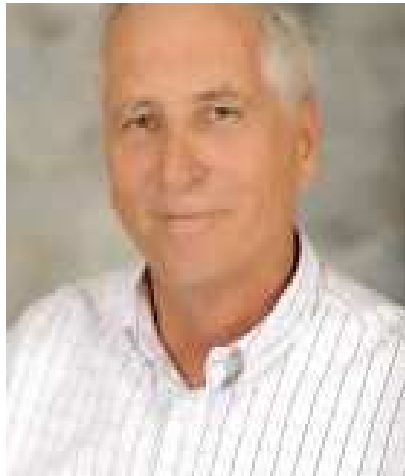
Visit us on the web at [www.vaos.org](http://www.vaos.org)

September 2021

## October General Meeting

**Wednesday  
October 6th 6:45pm**

**Speaker: Courtney Hackney  
Topic: Unappreciated  
Cattleya Species in Modern  
Hybrids**



Our October meeting will feature Courtney Hackney, Ph.D. from Jacksonville, Florida. Courtney is going to talk about different cattleya species, including some of the unappreciated ones, that are in the background of modern hybrids. He will give us insights into how the characteristics of different cattleyas are expressed in their offspring. Should be a great help to us when we look at the plant tags of seedlings we'd like to bring home, letting us conjure up an image of how the blooms might look!

Dr. Hackney is Emeritus Professor of Biology at North Florida University, and is a prolific author. Recently, he has been researching coerulea Cattleyas, culminating in an excellent article in the November 2018 issue of ORCHIDS. Other useful columns on breeding and culture can be found on his website.

Courtney grows a variety of hybrids and species in Jacksonville, Florida, but his favorites are the great Cattleya hybrids. He has about 500 mature Cattleyas in his shade house, including some classic clones which appeared in collections over 100 years ago.

He makes 10 to 15 hybrids as well as sibling species crosses per year and periodically offers them for sale.

## September Events

**All public meetings  
at the Venice  
Community Center  
and on Zoom are  
canceled through  
September 2021.**

**October meetings  
are tentative based  
on Covid. Watch for  
email updates**

### Newsletter Quick Links

[VAOS 2021 - 2023 Officers](#)

[Orchid Resources](#)

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

[https://  
www.facebook.com/  
groups/VAOS.org](https://www.facebook.com/groups/VAOS.org)

# MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT



Hi All, I know we are all sharing some disappointment about the canceling of some of the fall activities. This is a difficult time for all of us and we are really missing our in-person friendships and orchid conversations. We will continue to watch the situation closely and take it month by month as we plan our reopening. As I write this today, my zip code has one of the highest covid positive rates in the county and Venice Hospital has more covid patients than they have ever had. Hang in there with us a little longer, and stay safe. All of us have covid fatigue and we don't really want to hear about it any more. But it's real and I urge you to be careful. When the day finally comes for live events, I want to see each and every one of your smiling faces again!

Thanks for your patience!

Joanna Shaw, President

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## RETURN TO REGULAR MEETINGS DELAYED

Our September 1st monthly meeting at the Venice Community Center has been canceled due to Covid. We had then planned a Zoom meeting that date but our speaker is no longer available. We were unable to find a replacement speaker, therefore, there will be no meeting in September. We have also canceled our September 9th Growers Clinic at the Venice Community Center due to Covid.

We hope to resume regular meetings at the community center in October but we will take it month by month as we monitor the Covid risk level in our area. Several of our members have tested positive and become ill from the highly contagious Covid Delta variant. Our primary concern is the safety and health of our members.

Please be patience—we will get through this and be back together soon!

## Venice Area Orchid Society

Meeting Minutes

Zoom Meeting

Date: August 4, 2021

Joanna Shaw called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

The board has cancelled all in person meetings until October due to the pandemic. Stephani will put out an email blast.

The August 12<sup>th</sup> Growers Clinic has also been canceled.

September 1<sup>st</sup> we will welcome Jim Roberts for a Zoom Meeting.

There will be no September Gower's Clinic.

Jay Loeffler introduced Peter Lin of Diamond Orchids. The topic for tonight's meeting is Dendrobiums—A Family Portrait of Dendrobium Species. Members can buy his quality orchids online at [www.diamondorchids.com](http://www.diamondorchids.com).

*Submitted by Kathryn Jeske, Recording Secretary*

### Treasurer's Report July 2021

<b>Operating Fund</b> Starting July 1, 2021	\$ 2,515.87
+ Income transfer from reserve fund	\$ 2,000.00
- Payments	\$ 977.99
Closing Balance July 30, 2021	<b>\$ 3,537.88</b>

	+
<b>Petty Cash</b>	\$ 75.00

**Total Operating Fund July 30, 2021**    \$ 3,612.88

### Reserve Fund

Starting Balance July1, 2021	\$37,176.45
+Interest Income July 30, 2021	\$ 0.30
-Transfer to checking Account	\$ 2,000.00
Closing Balance July 30, 2021	<b>\$35,176.75</b>

Submitted by Judy Loeffler, Treasurer

## Ian's Corner

As we were approaching the Holiday season one year in Connecticut, a friend of ours took us to a friend of his who owned a large nursery, Michael's Greenhouses. We were getting poinsettias. We couldn't believe the greenhouses, each the size of a football field. There were five with more under construction. The number of poinsettias was staggering, row on row on row, but, so few people. Everything was computerized and automated, the water, the nutrients, the disease preventatives, the light, the temperature, the humidity. The investment required to be in the business of supplying plants to retailers and big box stores, Walmart, Home Depot, Lowe's and Target is huge and margins, slim. To be profitable, virtually 100% of the plants grown have to go to store and they have to be in bloom. There is little room for waste. The growing environment has to be perfect. The big nurseries in Florida that supply the commonly seen plants including orchids to the retail outlets have to be run the same way, perfectly, the exact amount of water, the exact temperature, the exact humidity, the exact amount of light. At the retail end, less than perfect takes over when we buy them, us gardeners and hobbyists with our backyards, lanais, cages, shade houses, and living rooms.

So, here's the challenge. That beautiful Phal. comes out of a perfect environment and is brought into our imperfect environments. We give it too much water or too little. It is too bright, too sunny or too dark. The temperatures might get really high or pretty low, 50's, 40's, even 30's. How much fertilizer and when? Is the water, OK? Ph high? Low? A leaf gradually turns yellow and drops or it develops spots. Should I worry? Will my orchid be, OK? We join the VAOS, AOS, Selby, we go to the clinics and meetings to try to get a handle on these variables so that we might, if we are really lucky, despite ourselves, have our orchids rebloom. But as we worry and fuss over them, remember, they have been around and have survived a lot worse than we can dish out for a long time.

We'll talk about the variables in the months ahead, from my layman's perspective, but for now, this from the **North of England Orchid Society...**

*Around 120 million years ago, when the dinosaurs ruled the land, much of the world was covered by primordial forest, and plant life was rapidly becoming diverse, flowering plants were evolving and one of the first of these was the orchid.*

*As the world underwent many changes, species of both plant and animal life died out or were replaced, but the orchid family expanded, populating every corner of the world except Antarctica, living on trees, rocks, in the ground or under it, tropical rainforest or lush grassland, high mountain or bog, they thrived; nothing seems capable of upsetting their evolutionary process, indeed it is generally accepted that in the world today, there are over 35,000 different species of orchid in existence.*

*Cheers, Ian Kennedy  
VAOS Newsletter Team*

## Membership Grows through the Summer!



Through the first six months of this year, our membership went to 425. This is a net gain of 4 new members (we actually gained 8 members in June), which is great news considering we are still not able to hold our monthly Meetings and Grower's Clinics in person.

Considering we also had a few members leave the area, all in all we are still reaching those that are Orchid Lovers....such as ourselves! We found each other through Facebook and Zoom, and also the Snook Haven get-together when things were progressing toward normalcy.

The good news is that during July we gained another 4 New Members... Bringing us up to 429! Please join me in Welcoming Our New Members for July 2021:

**William Casey**

**Kathy Renko**

**Kitty Saddler**

**Helen Volonakis**

We look forward to meeting & getting to know each of them, and are hoping this will be able to happen at our October Monthly Meeting!

***Suzanne Grimmer – VAOS Membership Chair***

# 2022 ORCHID SHOW SCHEDULE

Save the dates! Here is the 2022 Orchid Show Schedule

## Sarasota Orchid Society (January 2022)

Friday Set Up January 7<sup>th</sup> – 9am – 4pm

Saturday Show January 8<sup>th</sup> – 9am – 5pm

Sunday Show January 9<sup>th</sup> – 10am – 5pm

Sunday Take Down January 9<sup>th</sup> – 5pm

Location: Sarasota Municipal Auditorium, 801 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota

Theme: **Orchids In Paradise**

Show Chair: Larry Desiano [larrydesiano@gmail.com](mailto:larrydesiano@gmail.com)

## Venice Area Orchid Society (February 2022)

Friday Set Up February 4<sup>th</sup> - 1pm – 8pm

Saturday Show Feb 5th - 10am - 5pm

Sunday Show Feb 6th - 10am - 4pm

Sunday Take Down Feb 6<sup>th</sup><sup>d</sup> – 4pm

Location: Venice Community Center: 326 So. Nokomis Ave., Venice

Theme: **Happy Days Are Here Again**

Show Chairs: Carol Wood & Judy Loeffler [ShowChair@vaos.org](mailto:ShowChair@vaos.org)

## Englewood Area Orchid Society (March 2022)

Thursday Set Up March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 10am – 5pm

Friday Show March 4th - 10am - 5pm

Saturday Show March 5th - 10am - 5pm

Saturday Take Down March 5<sup>th</sup> – 5pm

Location: Tringali Center, 3460 North Access Rd., Englewood, FL 34224

Theme: **Orchids to the Rescue**

Show Chair: Mary Anne DiGrazia [tommaryanne@centurylink.net](mailto:tommaryanne@centurylink.net)



**New edition released and  
now available!**

**Dr. Martin Motes -  
Florida Orchid Growing  
Month by Month**

VAOS has just received our shipment of the new edition.  
They are available to members for \$20 and may be ordered  
and picked up from:

Judy Loeffler—On Venice Island. 941-485-9569 Email:  
judyvaos@gmail.com

833 Guild Dr. Venice, FL 34285

Carol Wood—South Venice. 941-497-4995 Email:  
cwood12@msn.com

4941 Bella Terra Dr., Venice, FL 34293

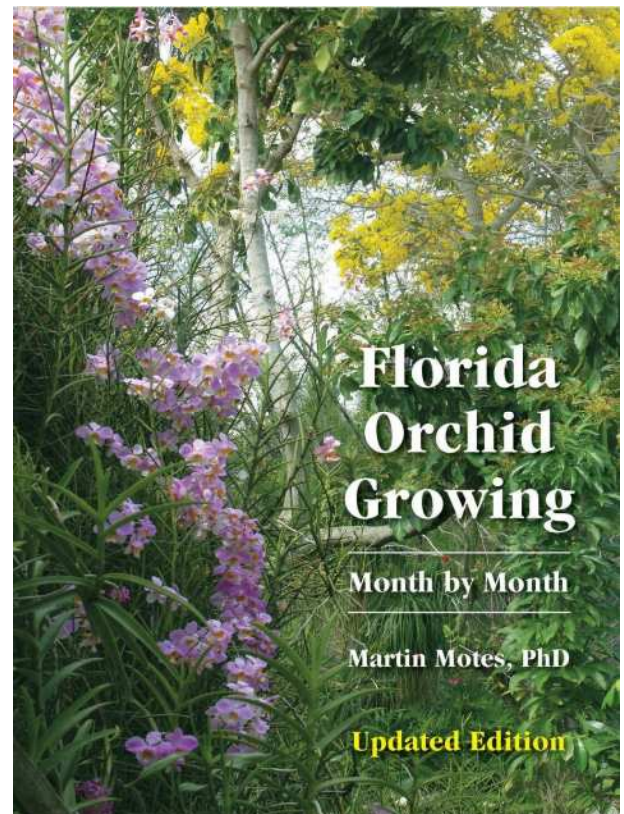
Call or email Judy or Carol to order and pick up your copy at  
one of their homes.

The BEST and Best Selling Book on growing orchids in Florida!

Martin Motes, a native Floridian, has been growing orchids south of Miami for over fifty years, man and boy. His guidance and advice come from a deep knowledge and practical experience of the local, subtropical world. Monthly guides lead the aspiring orchidist through the intricacies of the changing climate and growing conditions of the Florida year: its benefits and its dangers. Practical solutions to problems and to control and prevention of pests and diseases are offered. Growing materials and tools are suggested and their local sources are provided.

Written in a humorous and easily accessible style, *Florida Orchid Growing* will make everyone an expert. This Florida-specific guide will prove invaluable to subtropical and tropical growers everywhere.

In addition to updates on the latest in disease and pest control, the new edition contains an extensive chapter on control of *Thrips* giving growers the tools needed to control this ubiquitous pest. Over sixty years' experience has shown that controlling *Thrips* consistently yields control of scale, mealy bugs and all other insect pests, including the wily cucaracha. A new chapter on "Advice for Snowbirds" helps our winter visitors leave their beloved orchids behind with more confidence that they will be fine upon their return. Finally, in the 12 years that have passed since the first edition of *Florida Orchid Growing* was published, molecular research has led to numerous name changes in genera. The new and proper nomenclature for many plants is incorporated in the new book.





The 2021  
**TAMIAMI  
INTERNATIONAL  
ORCHID FESTIVAL**  
at  
**THE FRUIT & SPICE PARK  
REDLAND, FL**

**3 DAYS  
OF PEACE  
& ORCHIDS**

**OCTOBER  
1, 2 & 3**

**ORCHIDFESTIVAL.COM  
THE FRUIT & SPICE PARK**





# Root Rot – Causes & Cures

As a new orchid grower, one of the first pieces of cultural information we are given is that we should make sure to let the potting medium dry out between waterings, as the plants will otherwise get root rot. Some will even include the explanation that the constant moisture favors the growth of fungus, and that is what attacks and rots the roots.

Unfortunately, that is simply untrue.

If the mere presence of water was the cause of root rot, then there would be no possibility of growing orchids in hydroponic-, semi-hydroponic-, or water culture, all of which are quite viable techniques, or of wild plants surviving during the many months some experience in monsoon seasons, which is often when they thrive. If we take a different approach and blame it on fungi, then how would we expect orchids to grow in the wild, in natural environments that are no doubt overrun with all sorts of fungi, bacteria, and the like?

Instead, we should blame it on suffocation and poisoning, and consider what happens when we water a potted plant.

When we water, some (most) of the liquid simply runs through the pot, some of it is immediately absorbed by the plant and potting medium, while more of it is held by surface tension in between the medium particles. Referring to the articles on [Air Management](#) and [Particle Packing](#) (see [FirstRays.com](#) for these articles), we understand that the smaller the spaces between the particles, the more easily that so-called “bridging water” is maintained, allowing it to more completely cut off the air flow pathways.

If the air flow to the root system is stifled long enough, the gas exchange is compromised, and the roots die due to a combination of suffocation from the lack of oxygen, and poisoning by its own waste gases.

Once the root tissue dies, the natural resistance to pathogens is eliminated, and the roots will rot.

If you think about it, that mechanism is likely the misinterpreted basis for the “let the medium dry out” myth: as the plant absorbs moisture, and more of the liquid evaporates, those bridging water droplets go away, opening up the air flow pathways and allowing the root system to “breathe” again.

Rather than suffocating our plants at each watering, the better approach is to prevent the extensive occurrence of bridging water in our potting media, and keeping the spaces larger is the key:

- ✦ Avoid mixing particles sizes. The smaller pieces fill the gaps between the larger ones, reducing the sizes of the void space.
- ✦ Do not pack the potting medium too tightly. That is particularly important with sphagnum moss.
- ◆ Repot into fresh medium on a regular, timely basis. As organic medium components age and decompose, they break down into smaller and smaller pieces, creating a dense and suffocating root environment.

OK, so we have root rot. Now what do we do?

Usually we let it happen by waiting too long to repot, letting a poor plant suffocate its roots in a dense, mucky mess. Of course, it's often our most valuable or favorite plant, so how do we get the plant to recover?

## Continued from previous page....

First, keep in mind that as a “natural creature”, the plant has a survival mechanism, so it wants to recover. Then, with that in mind, consider that our job is give it the highest likelihood of doing so.

The keys to recovery are high humidity, warm temperature, and subdued light. Consider the following scenario:

- ♦ A plant with no roots has no way to take up water, but can lose water through leaf stomata and cell wall permeation. As the plant dries, it gets weaker and weaker, making it less likely to have the energy to recover. That drying rate is directly related to the relative humidity, so high humidity sustains the plant while it tries to grow new roots.
- ♦ Plant growth rates are directly related to the temperature, and warmer equals faster. You want the plants' metabolism to be faster, in hope that it will recover before the negative effects of desiccation kick in. Low light levels seems counter-intuitive, as plants need light to create the sugars they “burn” to function, but doing so requires water as well, further depleting the plants' internal supplies. By keeping the plant in subdued light (not dark), you minimize that loss, again, extending the time that the plant can grow those new roots.

It may be difficult to maintain those conditions, so one thing to consider is the “Sphag-n-Bag” treatment to create a good, controlled environment (see below).

Another option – one that adds to the probability of survival, but is not a substitute for providing the conditions above – is the application of a root growth stimulant. We recommend KelpMax™ growth stimulant, as it is the safest and most effective product available. The most effective treatment method for a root-free plant is a soak:

1. Fill a container with water at about 80°F (~27°C)
2. Add about a tablespoon of KelpMax™ growth stimulant per gallon of water (4 ml/L)

Totally immerse the plant for an hour or two.

It is not necessary to repeat that, but you may begin adding KelpMax to your irrigating solution once root growth has begun. Do not fertilize until the plant is established in its new pot and fresh medium.

### “Sphag -n-Bag”

OK, you've managed to rot the roots off of your plant, but you don't want to lose it. What can you do? Many orchid growers resort to the old “sphag-n-bag” technique. By the way, this is good for getting new imports established, too.

First, let's consider the needs of the plant: It needs water to survive – water is the life's blood of the plant. It provides turgidity to the tissues and cells, it is a chemical component used in the production of the sugars during photosynthesis, and it is used by the plant to control the osmotic pressure of ions inside- and outside of the cells. So if you have no roots, how does the plant get water?

## Continued from previous page....

Misting is of little value, as the plant cannot take up a substantial amount of liquid water through its leaves, and the brief period that the humidity is raised by periodic misting is likely insufficient to be of much benefit. The key is maintaining high humidity, not so much because of the easier absorption of water vapor (which is the case), but because a saturated environment prevents further loss of water from the plant tissues while it attempts to grow new roots. Basically, the “sphag -n-bag” concept uses a small bit of damp sphagnum as a moisture supply, and a plastic bag as a “micro-greenhouse” in which the elevated humidity can be easily maintained.

That’s simple enough, but a big mistake that many folks make is placing the plant in direct contact with moss that’s too wet.

The technique I use involves preparing the plant, then setting up the “rescue” environment:

### Plant Preparation

- ◆ Remove any old organic media that may be sticking to the roots. If it’s difficult to remove, just wait. Using a sterile blade, trim off any dead or damaged roots. Add about one tablespoon of KelpMax root stimulant to a gallon of 80°F water. Do not add fertilizer to the soaking solution, as that will tend to draw water out of the plant. Soak the plant for about an hour or more. Remove any remaining organic media – it’s bound to come off after the soaking.

Setting up the Environment (this is the easy part).

- ◆ Get a clear plastic bag large enough to comfortably hold the plant. Place a small amount of damp sphagnum moss in one corner of the bag. You may substitute a piece of folded-up paper towel for the moss, or just add a teaspoon of water to the bag.
- ◆ Place the plant in the bag, oriented as if growing normally, and not in direct contact with the moss or any free liquid. Seal the bag. If it’s a Zip-Lock, that’s easy, if not, fold over the top several times and hold it with a paper clip.
- ◆ Place it in a warm, shady location and walk away. Placing the plant in that warm, shady location (not dark) is important: The warmth will induce some growth activity, but the shade serves to moderate the vegetative growth while the plant develops new roots. Furthermore, warmth results in a higher moisture content of the air in the bag, and the shade prevents the bag from becoming a broiler, as it would become if direct sun hits it.

In a few weeks, the plant is likely to have developed a new root system, at which point it can be repotted.

Another idea for those of you who grow your plants in Semi-Hydroponic™ culture: Pot up your suffering plant and then place the plant – pot and all – in the bag. It will get all of the benefits of the “sphag-n-bag” environment, ut has the bonus of growing its roots into the medium without the need for repotting afterward.

Ray Barkalow

First Rays

[www.FirstRays.com](http://www.FirstRays.com)



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**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



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[www.AOS.org](http://www.AOS.org)

# NOTICE

## American Orchid Society

### Monthly Flower Judging

### Tampa, Florida Location

Open to the Public - Guests Are Always Welcome

#### NEW SCHEDULE

### The Florida North Central Judging Center Meets Here:

### Christ the King Campus

717 S. Dale Mabry Hwy.

Tampa, FL 33609

### Fourth Week of each month

*(Check our Website Calendar Page for Day & Date)*

Orchids are reviewed for flower quality and culture awards.

**Flowers must arrive thirty minutes prior to judging for registration.**

**Wednesday** Judging begins 7 p.m.

**Saturday** Judging begins at 10:30 a.m.

Entry Forms are available on our Home page and on site. Membership in the AOS is not required to enter your orchids for review.

<https://fncjc.shutterfly.com/>



# Show Vendor Spotlight

## *Florida SunCoast Orchids*



Florida SunCoast Orchids stands for orchid quality, variety and commitment. We have an active hybridizing program and offer many exciting intergeneric crosses. We specialize in growing Cattleya and Encyclia hybrids and we also grow a large number of Cymbidium, Dendrobium, Vanda and Phalaenopsis orchids.

Ebay seller name: FLOrchidsOnline

Greenhouse open by appointment only

8227 Verna Bethany Rd, Myakka City, FL 34251



<http://www.floridasuncoastorchids.com/>



# 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)

## **Joanna's Orchid Pottery**

[www.orchidpottery.com](http://www.orchidpottery.com)  
[orchidpottery@gmail.com](mailto:orchidpottery@gmail.com)



## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**September 1st** (1st Wednesday) - Monthly Meeting via Zoom. CANCELED

**September 9th** (2nd Thursday) - Growers Clinic via Zoom. CANCELED

**September 21st**— FNCJC Zoom presentation, AOS Judging System. 7:30pm. New topics each month. Info/RSVP : j.hector@verizon.net. <https://fncjc.shutterfly.com>

**September 25th—26th** - Tampa Orchid Club Expo. USF Botanical Gardens, 4202 E. Fowler Ave., Tampa, FL Info: cents4me@aol.com

**October 1st -3rd** - Tamiami International Orchid Festival at Fruit & Spice Park, Redland, FL Info: orchidfestival.com

**October 6th** (1st Wednesday) - Monthly Meeting, Venice Community Center, 7pm, Speaker: Courtney Hackney (Tentatively scheduled)

**October 14th**-Octoberfest Party CANCELED

**October 14th** (2nd Thursday) - Growers Clinic, Venice Community Center, 7pm. Topic: TBD (Tentatively scheduled)

**November 5th-7th** - Vanda & Slipper Orchid Symposium, Apopka FL. Info: [www.slippersymposium.com](http://www.slippersymposium.com)

### **ONGOING**

**Mentor Program**: help for beginning growers, contact Rick Belisle [Mentor@vaos.org](mailto:Mentor@vaos.org)

**AOS Orchid Judging—Florida North Central Judging Center**. Takes place at Christ the King Campus, 717 S. Dale Mabry Hwy., Tampa, FL 33609. Fourth week of each month.

**Check Website for Schedule:**

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

**September meetings  
have been canceled.**

**Next meeting: October  
6th, Venice Community  
Center, 7pm**

## **Contact Us**

**Venice Area Orchid Society**

**PO BOX 443**

**Venice, FL 34284-0443**

## **President**

**Joanna Shaw** [pres@vaos.org](mailto:pres@vaos.org)

## **Membership**

**Sue Grimmer** [memb@vaos.org](mailto:memb@vaos.org)

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