

VENICE AREA Orchid Society

Newsletter

Visit us on the web at www.vaos.org

June 2025

June 2025 General Meeting

Wednesday June 11

Doors Open: 6:30pm

Venice Community Center

Speaker: Allen Black

Topic: Brassavolas



Allen Black was exposed to the pleasures of horticulture at a very young age in central Pennsylvania. Early exposure to houseplants, flower beds, and vegetable gardening was common for Allen in his formative years. He is hobbyist orchid grower and breeder (i.e., non-commercial) living in Richmond, VA. He has been growing and breeding orchids for over 25 years.

His main breeding efforts have been directed at Brassavola-Cattleya alliance novelty hybrids.

He has just registered his 80th orchid hybrid! He performs his own orchid laboratory work, including flask media preparation, seed sowing, & replating. He has traveled throughout Central and South America to see orchids growing in the "wild".

Are you growing weary of the meristem, more-of-the-same, big, round, beautiful, Cattleya alliance hybrids? Do you want something "different, unique, or exciting"? This presentation is for you! There's still hope in the orchid breeding world! Explore the breeding results of hobbyist orchid breeder, Allen Black. His breeding efforts have been directed at developing novelty flowers, something different, beautiful, & unusual.

He approaches breeding as an art form. Breeding Brassavola/Cattleya alliance is his specialty.

Continued on next page

June Events

June 11
General Meeting

June 12
Growers Clinic

Quick Links:

[VAOS Officers](#)

[Orchid Resources](#)

Face Book Group

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



Allen Black Bio continued from previous page

The presentation includes lots of beautiful pictures and covers the following topics:

- Breeding goals.
- Brassavola species - My favorite parents.
- Brassavola primary hybrids.
- Brassokeria (Brassavola X Barkeria hybrids).
- Other wild & wonderful Brassavola/Cattleya alliance hybrids.

Allen will have plants for sale - **Sorry, no credit card sales.**



Treasurer’s Report

April 30th 2025



OPERATING FUND March 31, 2025	\$11,709.81
+ Inflows	338.00
+/- Transfers to/from Reserve Account	0
- Outflows	(2,248.31)
OPERATING FUND April 30, 2025	\$9,799.50

Reserve Account April 30, 2025 - \$32,540.71

Petty Cash on hand \$75.00

Submitted by Ian Kennedy, Treasurer



We had a busy start to spring this year. Our annual member plant sale was held on April 26th with perfect weather and so many great plants for sale. Steve Baker was our instructor during mini potting and mounting clinics. Job Well Done Steve!!! Shout out to all those who took the time to set up their plants and supplies as well as those who attended to purchase. See photos of this event to follow..

Only a week later May 3rd we held the annual "Show Them Where You Grow Them" featuring three amazing growers Joanna Shaw, Rick Belisle and Jennie Brandt. See article for more information.

The dog days of summer are approaching or are they already here??? Remember to check out our monthly meetings and grower's clinics for your bi-monthly orchid fix.

Below are a few upcoming events we would like to share so you can mark your calendars.

Save the Dates:

August 6, 2025 Monthly Meeting Ice Cream Social Joint VAOS/EAOS Meeting

October 9, 2025 Orctoberfest Annual Pot-Luck Dinner 5:00pm-9:00pm Dinner and Orchid Bingo with great prizes.

October 17, 2025 Redlands International Orchid Festival Bus Trip Fruit & Spice Park. 7:00am-7:00pm Flyer & Sign-up information coming soon.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise M. Langman

VP Social VAOS

**Member Plant
Sale April 26th**





Musings from the Show 'Em Where You Grow 'Em – 5/3/2025

In a word, ok, make that 4 words...we had a blast! A gorgeous, mostly sunny day, gentle breezes, good friends talking about and viewing orchids made for a fun time for the showers and the viewers. To borrow a phrase, "it didn't get much better than that!". Joanna Shaw, our Past-President, Rick Belisle, our Director of Training & Education, and Jennie Brandt, a newer member but very experienced grower, opened their homes on Saturday, May 3, for our Show 'em Where You Grow 'Em orchid collection tours. Lots of great questions, "ohh's and "ahh's" and idea exchanges occurred.

Later in the afternoon, while sitting on my lanai, enjoying an adult beverage and reflecting on the day, a few thoughts occurred to me. After reading and re-reading the various posts, and scrolling through the photos on our Facebook group Venice Area Orchid Society, it occurred to me that the three, call them "exhibits", represented three entirely different types of "orchi-scapes".

One, Rick Belisle's, portrayed an exhibit where the display is limited by the rules and regulations of an HOA in a suburban setting with "developer-sized" lots. Another, Joanna Shaw's, also in a suburban setting, also with similarly-sized lots, but without the limitations imposed by an HOA. And, the third, Jennie Brandt's, showed what is possible in a more rural setting, without the encumbrances of an HOA and with much more available space. Three very different exhibits, all showing the beauty of growing, displaying and enjoying orchids. One is not better or more beautiful than another. They're just different!

Thinking that, "if I had these thoughts, what thoughts and feelings might the other hosts have, if any?" Here are Joanna's thoughts. "I totally agree with Rick about the variety of growing areas. I hope the overall takeaway is that you can work with just about any space, use your creativity, and create a haven for both you and your orchids. Just go back to your basics of light and water and deciding what growing media works best for you and take it from there. It's ok to use the trial and error method, sometimes you will lose some plants that don't like your space but that's the way it is. Eventually the plants will teach you which ones will survive and which ones will complain. Remember, this is supposed to be fun and not stressful so make it whatever makes you happy.

A few people asked about my shade house which is actually a set of hoops 4' apart. It is a "High Tunnel Frame Only" kit from Shelter Logic. Mine is 10'x24' and the frame cost \$1084, but the kits are customizable by length and width. Then I added aluminet 50% shade cloth. Each of the 12 hoop legs reach 2 feet down into the dirt so it's very sturdy and have survived 3 major hurricanes so far. Only the shade cloth was damaged after the 3rd storm. I was able to put the kit up by myself, when I was 63, so if you've always wanted your own greenhouse, it's very doable."

One of the items that generated many questions and comments was Rick's Plant Stands, photo below. Each holds up to 9 plants and has wheels for moving them to safety, under the lanai overhang, etc., should a severe storm threaten. Interestingly, the Hang-a-Pot company offers a very similar item...for \$275 plus shipping! You can make it for approximately \$70! For those of you who are interested, the plans, including materials list and step-by-step directions, have been placed on our VAOS.ORG website under the VAOS Publications tab. The file name is [8-Plant OrchidTower directions.pdf](#).

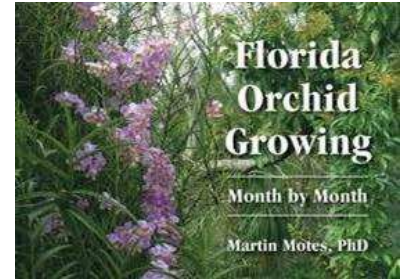


by Rick Belisle



JUNE

- Water well, as needed, when dry.
- Be aware of air circulation during the coming rainy months.
- Watch for pests and diseases, treat as needed.
- Sun is at highest point, watch for sun burn on leaves.



And, of course, cleaning up your growing area and plants by removing dead leaves helps to keep your plants healthy. This should be done throughout the year as needed.

For more detailed information consult the Florida Orchid Growing: Month-by-Month book by Martin Motes For sale at our Monthly Meeting at our Membership Table.

June Growers Clinic - Tips from Experienced Growers

The June Growers Clinic will of course have with our Orchid ER, as usual. Members and guests can bring in their problem plants and the team will diagnose and make suggestions as to how you should proceed. Attendees always hear new and important information for their own knowledge! If you've noticed, since our February meeting, we've been through a gradual building of the knowledge base. From Basic Orchids – 101 and – 201 to Dividing and Repotting to Pests and Diseases, this month we'll put it all together with an amalgamation of Tips from Experienced Growers. We've compiled a host of ideas, suggestions, and tips, from current and past members, that are designed to "fill in the blanks" in your quest to successfully grow these wonderful plants. Members should remember to wear their VAOS Name Tags, please. There will be a Sign-in Sheet for guests. The meeting starts at 7:00PM and is held in Room F of the Venice Community Center. Come early, 6pm, for our GC social hour. Bring treats to share. Park on the left (south) side of the building and enter through the side door.

Submitted by Rick Belisle, Director, Training & Education



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

General Meeting Minutes May 7, 2025

7:00 Judy called the meeting to order.

Welcome all new members.

We had a very successful “Show them where you grow them” event. Thank you to Rick Belise, Joanna Shaw and Jennie Brandt for opening their homes and letting our members come see how they are growing their collections.

Reminder, we have another grower’s clinic coming up on May 15th. This month’s topic is Orchid Pests & Diseases. This presentation is always very informative, and we encourage everyone to attend. Our social hour is still going on, if you would like to come early, 6pm, and bring snacks you are welcome to do so.

May 18th is the 7 Culture Day presentative by AOS, check the AOS website for further information.

We are excited to announce that our next general meeting will be held on June 11th our dear friend Allen Black will be speaking.

Remember we are asking that prior to asking a question to the speakers that you raise your hand and wait for microphone to be brought around to you before you begin to ask your question.

Tonight’s speaker caused a stir last year when they spoke on the true miniature orchids and so we had to have them back again. Please welcome Thomas from “The Tarzan Group”

7:15 Thomas took the floor to give his presentation.

8:09 We are taking a 15 minute break. Please vote on the plans on the plant table. Also Thomas has plants for sale in the back.

8:33 Joanna, Vicki and Kristin presented the plants from the plant table and announced the nights winners.

8:45 Raffle table.

9:04 Meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Michele Baker, VAOS Secretary



UPCOMING EVENTS

June 11 General Meeting, Venice Community Center. Speaker: Allen Black Topic: Beauty & Intrigue of Brassavola—Cattleya Alliance Hybrids

June 12 Growers Clinic, Venice Community Center, 7pm. Topic: Tips from Experienced Growers

No July meeting at VAOS. Joint EAOS/VAOS Meeting in Englewood July 21st

July 1-6 Krull-Smith 4th of July sale, onsite and online. www.krullsmith.com

July 10 Growers Clinic, Venice Community Center, 7pm. Topic: Mounting Orchids

July 21 Joint Meeting at EAOS. St. David's Episcopal Church, 400 Broadway, Englewood. 6pm. Speaker: Brett Ullery, Accent Orchids

ONGOING

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

AOS JUDGING

AOS Orchid Judging—Florida North Central Judging Center. Check Website for Schedule: Info:

<https://aosfncjc.wixsite.com/aos-florida-north-ce>

Next meeting:

June 11

Contact Us

Venice Area Orchid Society

PO BOX 443

Venice, FL 34284-0443

President

Judy Loeffler pres@vaos.org

Membership

Ian & Karen Kennedy

memb@vaos.org

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www.vaos.org

Visit our Facebook Group at

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

