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In This Newsletter: Note from the President, Review of EIOS Orchid Show 2023, Special Awards from the orchid show, Vanilla exposé by Laynez, Holiday Party planning.

The Spike
Winter 2023-24
Dec, Jan, Feb.

EIOS is Now on Facebook! At [easterniowaorchidsociety](https://www.facebook.com/easterniowaorchidsociety)
 And on the web at [easterniowaorchidsociety.org](https://www.easterniowaorchidsociety.org)



Holiday Party Time

EIOS Holiday Party will be held Dec 7th at the Shueyville Church, appetizers at 6:30, dinner at 7. The club will provide the main entrée and members are requested to bring a dish to share. Of course, the best part of the evening is picking out your free orchid plant for all paid members! Julie Farmer looks at last year's plants, left. ***IF YOU HAVEN'T RSVPed to JON LORENCE, please do so promptly.***

PRESIDENT'S BLURB:

The Show Season has begun and I think we made a pretty big splash getting started. Again, Thank You to all that were able to help make our Show a big success. It takes a village to make it happen.

Our Show Season continues with the Minnesota Orchid Society Show January 27th and 28th (Possibly), the Orchid Quest in Madison, WI Feb. 3-4, and the Batavia Orchid Society Show February 17th and 18th. Please help to provide plants for the shows. It doesn't matter how big or small the plants may be, or how many flowers there are. Every plant helps to create a beautiful display. Please consider sending your blooming babies to the shows.

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Calendar of Events

EIOS Holiday Party 6:30 - 9PM Shueyville Church	Dec. 7th, 2023
NO JANUARY MEETING	2024
Minnesota Orchid Show at Como Park conservatory, St Paul, MN	Jan.27-28, 2024
EIOS Feb. Meeting: Masdevallias by Mary Gerritson. Shueyville Church	Feb. 1, 2024
Orchid Quest Orchid Show, Olbricht Gardens, Madison, WI	Feb, 3-4, 2024
Batavia Orchid Show, Cantigny, Wheaton, Illinois	Feb. 17-18, 2024
EIOS March Meeting: Orchid Muse by Erica Hannickel, Shuey- ville Church	Mar. 7 , 2024

What A Show IT WAS! *10th Anniversary Orchids Are a Scream!*



Eastern Iowa Orchid Society Show at the Elks Lodge hall on Oct 28-29, 2023 was our *'best ever'* with over 480 judging entries and 20 exhibits from the orchid societies in our region plus several individual exhibits. *Here is a summary:* EIOS did a crescent shaped display with oriental screens as a backdrop and witches and skeletons for thematic flavor. We received the 84 point **Show Trophy** for the Best Display in the show. Doc Bannister got **Best of Class Phalaenopsis** for his Sogo Yukidian and Marcia Whitmore **Best of Class Msc Gen-**



era *Bulbo cocoinum*. Our display had a wonderful rainbow color flow with an oval shape rising to the height of the backdrop with large white phalaenopsis. EIOS was voted **People's Choice Award** by attendees.

Our sister society from the Quad Cities, **Illowa Orchid Society**, had a great display across from ours with a Rest-In-Peace tombstone at the base and the flag above! Spiders with webs was the theme of the **Orchid Growers Guild** eerie display that also had the **Best of Classes *Phrag* (Acker's Meredith)**



and Species (*Paph lowii*)

Our friends to the north, **Orchid Society of Minnesota** out did themselves with 3 exhibits: (below left) their

'Spooktacular' society display for best thematic presentation, Jim Vlasic and Steve Gonzalez round table amateur display and Katherine and Brian Weiss antique greeting orchid cards The society won **Best of Class for *Oncidium Sharry Baby*** at the base of the exhibit,



Steve and Jim **Best of Class** for their amateur exhibit and complex **Paph Doll's Kobold**. **Central Iowa** came over from Des Moines and walked away with an AOS award for a **Phal *bellina*** cross and **Best of Class *Dendrobium* Ardang Green**.





MORE ORCHID SHOW SUMMARY:

Wisconsin Orchid Society featured a wide variety of genera - many really tiny flowers as that is their specialty. They won the **Best of Class vandaceous** for *Schonorchis buddleiflora* and the

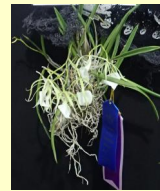
Baby Boo Award for Best small flowered orchid,

Oberonia rufilabris. **Big is not always better!** The



Illinois Society, always a competitor with EIOS for displays, received **Best of Class for society exhibits** plus the **Grand Screamer** (Best orchid in Show) *Cattleya Brad Carter* (Also **Best Cattleya in Show**) They also

had some spooky skeletons. The final orchid society was Batavia with a spider web fea-



tured presentation. They won **Best of Class for Brassavola nodosa** (right). Then we had four vendor tables, **Friday's Embroidery**, **Natts Orchids**, **Orchid Trading Company**, and **Anything Orchids** pictured in order

below L to R. All of Mrs. Friday's flowers were embroidered and looked so real! She won **Best of Class for the white Cattleya**. Terry Partin' *Bulb. Microbulbon* received the **Weird and Wonderful Prize** (just don't get too close to smell it) and Anything Or-

chids got **Best of Class** for open exhibits. **Bill Englert and Jon Lorence** shared an amateur display featuring or-



chids and Bonsai. Jon's **Sharry Baby** was the **Reserve Grand Screamer** and Bill's 50+ year old bonsai tree was **Igor's Choice Award**. (Show



Chairman's favorite plant) **Marcia Whitmore** showed five of her amazing water-



tercolors, **Lois Dusdieker** featured some crafts and Nile's photos, **Andy Coghill-Behrends** had potpourri crafts, and **Dorothy Hampton** outdid herself with her quilt and **the not so subtle body in the box below it**. Every Blooming Thing dropped off an orchid bird house. Alto-



gether this was an amazing show for our 10th anniversary! Around 500 attended the show.



Our Show was not possible without Your Help

Here are some cameo photos taken during setup at the Elk's Hall on Friday before the show opened: Denise, Sharon and Andy are organizing the information table. Carmen brought in a load of Skulls! Jeff, Samantha, and Bill preparing for our display, Lois and Kathy decorate the welcome arch. Finally other societies arrive and work on their displays. Special Thanks to all our club members who volunteered for setup and take down and working during the show. *Super Duper Thanks to Joan Lorence for shepharding the hospitality.* Great job everyone!



Five AOS awards were given to very special plants!

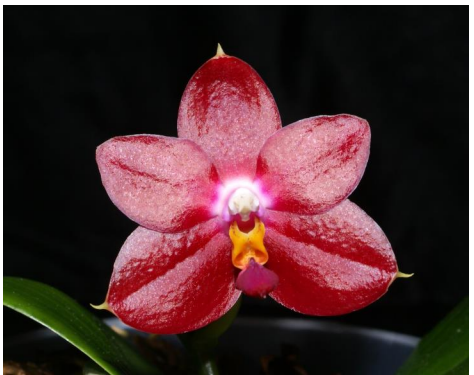
Restrepia escobariana 'Aidan' CBR, left, given to John Stuckert from Milwaukee to recognize a potential new species to AOS judging.

Den. mariae 'Silas' HCC 79 pts to Walter Crawford also of Milwaukee for an interesting, very brown Dendrobium, right.

Phal KS Super Zebra 'Spicy Girl' HCC 76 pts to Brian Johnson from Central Iowa, right.

Phrag Margo's Pinky 'Acker's Treat' HCC 78 pts to Chuck Acker from Madison, left.

The last award on back page.

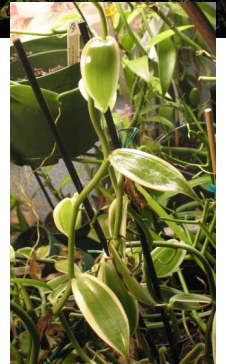
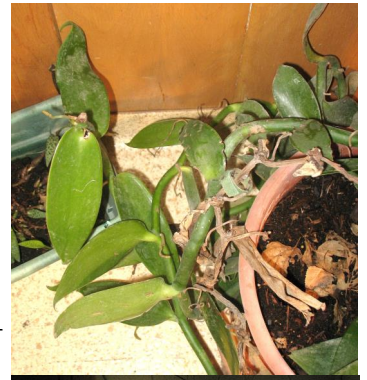




Vanillas are orchids. By Laynez Ackerman. Vanilla is the most popular spice in the world and it comes from an orchid. Like other orchids, vanillas, for the most part, have plain leaves but beautiful (short lived) flowers. There are ~110 species of vanillas but only 3 (*planifolia*, *tahitensis*, and *pompona*) are used in the production of vanilla spice. Vanilla is one of the most expensive spices mainly due to the process of curing and making it. All vanillas are vines and in their native habitat have natural pollinators, but when people moved the vines to grow for spice they all needed to be pollinated by hand increasing the cost of making vanilla. Getting hooked on the 'vanilla disease' is similar to getting the 'orchid bug' just not as contagious. I got my infection 20-25 years ago and still have it. Growing vanilla in Iowa without a greenhouse is a challenge. I have a small unheated greenhouse I use for orchids in the summer but I found my plants did better just grown outside in the summer rather than in the greenhouse. Then it was just a matter of nursing them through the winter until next summer came. This year I accidentally discovered an artificial light set up in my kitchen the vanillas loved. They grew under these lights happily, one even grew up the wall. In their preferred outdoor habitat they can grow 15-20 feet a year. My usual Iowa growth has been 1-2 feet a year. I now have plants that have grown that much since May. At the moment I am getting just a mass of intertwined vines and soon I will have another problem to figure out! Flowers are still something I have yet to achieve. Last year I got my first buds. They came in late August and never opened just died. It was very sad.

I am wondering if more orchid growers are getting into vanilla. Since flowers are rare. Hausermanns has a big one in their display area. When they redid the panels on the roof and more light came in, they were getting more growth and flowers too. They are now selling cuttings. Another thing that is gaining popularity is leaf color. *Vanilla planifolia* has some variation in leaf color. They grow variegated leaves and the orchid growers find them more popular. Two main varieties are called white-and-green variegated or yellow-and-green; now growers can influence variations on the striping and amounts of color in the leaves.

The other thing you can get into with Vanillas is collecting different species of plants. This is a list of what I am growing: *planifolia* -the common one, I have a number as too many times in moving a healthy growing plant I break it and sometimes can get 2 plants from one; *dillioniana*- this is a neat one. It is leafless and native to Florida. It is on the endangered species list; *pompona*- another plant that beans are harvested from. Looks almost identical to *planifolia*; *tahitensis*- used in vanilla bean production this is a hybrid between *Vanilla odorata* and *Vanilla planifolia*. It is said to be self fertilizing. *Vanilla odorata* is a very thin plant (Ecuagenera used to sell it but every plant I got didn't survive the trip up here) so this plant grows thinner elongated leaves; *imperialis*- a big African plant with beautiful flowers (from pics I have seen) plant looks similar to *planifolia* and *pompona*; *aphylla* another leafless one, ask Jon about the big one in his greenhouse; and *phaeantha*- another native to Florida this one with leaves.



Editor's Note: Pictured here is the vanilla flower and buds which tend to last only one day. Commercially, they are hand pollinated and form vanilla beans picture on the right. These then dry till they are dark brown. Occasionally one can buy whole beans at the grocery store or an orchid show.

YOU TOO can make real vanilla extract by placing the bean (plus or minus small cuts along the bean) in a small bottle of vodka and in 6 months you will have the real thing! NILE



Eastern Iowa Orchid Society

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The Eastern Iowa Orchid Society

*A small group of people with a big love of
growing orchids*

www.easterniowaorchidsociety.org



SPECIAL AWARD!

This beautiful 'blue' cattlianthe was exhibited by Terry Partin of Orchid Trading Company and received an 85 pt AM/AOS. This was the first award to the cross which was made by **Carson Whitlow** several years ago. Carson was thrilled when he heard the news and named the cross **Whitlow's Blue Delight**. Terry added the clonal name **'Twin Sisters'** AM/AOS. Carson has been breeding blue cattleyas since the 1960s and will be talking to us at our April meeting on 'The History of Blue Cattleyas.'

(Continued from page 1)

Imagine the stories they'll have to tell when they get home. You probably won't be able to keep them quiet.

December 7th is our Holiday Dinner and is just around the corner. I hope you will be able to attend. Remember, each attending paid member will receive a free orchid in addition to great food! Please remember to RSVP to Jon Lorence lorence5@aol.com

Have you noticed that when your orchids are growing well, not necessarily blooming, but nice foliage and color, you feel better about yourself and your ability to grow orchids? Have you noticed that your plants condition affects your mood and energy? Your health is affected by how well your plants are growing. Sometimes when your plants are struggling, your energy level is low as is your mood because you think that you can't grow that plant. So, moral of the story is, pitch your struggling near death orchid and get a new one to brighten your day, mood and life. (Ha-ha!) Oh, and *don't get a baby*, get something blooming size!

Mark your calendar, and I hope to see you at the Dinner.

Jon

Directions to the Shueyville Church in Shueyville, Iowa

This is half way between Cedar Rapids and Iowa City, The church is located 1 mile EAST of Exit 10 (Swisher-Shueyville) off Interstate 380. Our meetings begin with a social time at 6:30 pm; followed by the official meeting and program at 7:00 pm. Meetings are free and open to anyone interested in orchids! Our club displays orchids at regional orchid shows and participates in American Orchid Society orchid judging. Meeting programs include beginning orchid growing, discussions about various types of orchids and orchid conservation, plus plant sales and a holiday party just for fun. Enjoy our website, easterniowaorchidsociety.org read our newsletters, attend our Fall Orchid Show in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and come join us at our next meeting!