Greater Akron Orchid Society

An Affiliate of the American Orchid Society & the Mid-American Orchid Congress

October 2026

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Previous Meeting Minutes

In our September meeting, we had Kim Feddersen discus 'Orchid Culture 101' and have plants for sale

Meeting summary below (Page 4):



Announcements

In 2026, we will have hybrid meetings (both In-Person & Zoom). In-Person meeting details below and Zoom details will be included in each newsletter and on our Facebook page

Meetings start at 6:30pm, doors open at 6:00pm

Zoom details below (Page 3):

Next Meeting

October 12, 2026
Monday, 6:30pm

Portage Lakes Kiwanis Center
725 Portage Lakes Dr., Akron, Ohio 44319
Start Time: 6:30pm Doors Open: 6:00pm

Topic

Program: **Orchid Expedition on the Rio Negro**
Speaker: **Deborah Boersma**

Each meeting will have a show table, everyone is invited to bring in their blooming orchids to show off. This is a great way to see what other members are growing and how they do so

New members and visitors are also invited to bring any plants they wish to show or have questions about

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Meeting details below (Page 3):

Website: www.thegaos.com

***Facebook*:** www.facebook.com/theGAOS

Email: greaterakronorchidsociety@gmail.com

Letter from the Editor



Greetings,

We are pleased to be providing these newsletters to GAOS members and the public alike! If you'd like to access our current and past issues please visit our website for PDF downloads.

https://thegaos.com/newsletters

For access to our most current club news, information and our direct newsletter emails please join our email list by sending us your email address to be added.

Thanks,

Brandon Spannbauer greaterakronorchidsociety@gmail.com

Greater Cleveland Orchid Society

www.facebook.com/GreaterClevelandOrchidSociety/

www.gcos.org

West Shore Orchid Society

www.facebook.com/WestShoreOrchidSociety/

westshoreorchidsociety.org/

Meeting Schedule

GAOS has hybrid meetings (both In-Person and Virtual) and meets the 2nd Monday of each month (except December) at 6:30pm, at the Portage Lakes Kiwanis Center, 725 Portage Lakes Dr., Akron, Ohio 44319

Members are encouraged to bring blooming orchids from their collection for exhibit. **All are welcome; you do not have to be a member to attend**

Virtual meeting invites will be sent out via email the week before the meeting along with the monthly newsletter

Oct 12	Orchid Expedition on the Rio Negro – Deborah Boersma
Nov 9	Holiday Banquet / Election of Officers
December	No Meeting
Jan 11	TBD / Preparing Plants for Orchid Shows



2026 GAOS Meeting Information

In 2026, we will continue with our Hybrid Meetings (both In-Person and Virtual.) You can join us either at our normal meeting location or via Zoom where the live meeting will be broadcasted online. Zoom meeting details will be included in the Newsletter before each meeting.

Meeting Location:

Portage Lakes Kiwanis Center
725 Portage Lakes Dr., Akron, Ohio 44319

Doors open:	6:00pm
Main Meeting:	6:30pm

- Remember to bring any orchids in bloom for our Show Table. This is a great way to see what other members are growing and how they do so. New members and visitors are also invited to bring any plants they wish to show or have questions about.

- Virtual portion of the meetings will be conducted via Zoom. It is free to download and use. An email with the invite link will be provided the week before the meeting along with the newsletter for that month. After Zoom is installed on your computer, tablet or phone, all you have to do is click the link to join in.

Please feel free to email any questions or to be added to the email list to receive our newsletter and Zoom meeting links send us a message:

Email: greaterakronorchidsociety@gmail.com
Website: www.thegaos.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/theGAOS

Thanks,

Brandon Spannbauer, Editor

GAOS October 12 Meeting Info

This month we will be having guest speaker Deborah Boersma, Orchid Judge from the Windsor Orchid Society, who will be discussing her trip to Rio Negro, Brazil. Full bio next page.

Orchid Expedition on the Rio Negro, Brazil: A fascinating journey in the jungles of the Amazon. A journal of my orchid expedition on the Rio Negro on the Otter Houseboat chronicling my adventures. Starting in Manaus and travelling on the Rio Negro and into the small contributories spotting monkeys, sloths, parrots, macaws and of course orchids. A trip organized by the Orchid Conservation Alliance.

Topic

Program: **Orchid Expedition on the Rio Negro**
Speaker**:** **Deborah Boersma**

Zoom Meeting Details

Join Zoom Meeting

Topic: GAOS October Monthly Meeting

Time: Oct 12, 2026 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81798148732?pwd=7ANcnkNuS2zu6b2Ymcd8HdZbrGblgh.1

Deborah Boersma



Deborah's interest in orchids was sparked by a trip to Hawaii and has been under their spell for over 30 years. She started with a few plants and her mixed orchid collection expanded exponentially with the construction of a greenhouse in 2014. She joined the Windsor Orchid Society in 2013 to gain more orchid knowledge and found herself in the Presidents position six months later. She is very active member of the WOS, involved in fundraising and publicity and has recently taken on the role as Show Chair.

She is an Accredited judge in the AOS judging program at the Great Lakes Judging Center, Ann Arbor, Michigan and enjoys presenting and educating audiences about orchids. She was the recipient of the Orchid Digest Diamond Award in 2016 and invited speaker to the WOC Tainan in 2024.

Academically, Deborah has a degree in Chemistry and spent her first years of work as a researcher in medical microbiology and infectious diseases at both the University of Calgary and Foothills Hospital in Calgary, Alberta. She recently retired from St. Clair College in Windsor, Ontario, Canada, where she taught chemistry for over 28 years. She now has time to enjoy her passion for orchids, gardening, photography and travel.

Orchid Exhibition in Korea





Greater Akron Orchid Society



2026 GAOS Program Calendar

Jan 12	**Prepping Your Plants for Show – Dave Miller (short presentation)**
Feb 9	**Native Orchids in Ohio – Ken Mettler**
Mar 7-8	GAOS Orchid Show @ Petitti Garden Center – Tallmadge location
Mar 9	**How to Grow Orchids / Welcome to New Members – Edgar Stehli**
Mar 14-15	GCOS Orchid Show @ Cleveland Botanical Gardens
Apr 13	**Cattleya Relatives – Kristen Uthus, owner of New World Orchids**
Apr 25-26	WSOS Orchid Show @ Erhnfelt Recreation Center
May 11	**Repotting workshop with new members –No speaker**
June 8	**Latest Breeding Trends in Phrags – Jim France**
July 13	**Summer Picnic & Member Plant Auction**
Aug 10	**How We Grow Our Orchids – Members**
Aug 22-23	Ohio Valley Orchid Fest @ Kettering, Ohio
Sept 14	**Orchid Culture 101 – Kim Feddersen**
Oct 12	**Orchid Expedition on the Rio Negro, Brazil – Deborah Boersma**
Nov 9	**Holiday Banquet / Election of Officers**
December	**No meeting, Happy Holidays!**



IS THIS FOR YOU?

The American Orchid Society Judging Program

is seeking highly motivated orchid enthusiasts to join the judging ranks.

Work with other such people and help maintain our awards programs and educational efforts.

For more information contact us at judges@aos.org

Why You Should NOT Just Add Ice

By Carter and Holmes

By now, many orchid growers, beginners and experienced alike, have heard the theory about watering orchids with ice cubes. In case you haven't, it goes something like this.

"Water your Orchid with three ice cubes a week and it will be happy as can be!"

Sadly, though it may be given with the best of intentions, this advice is problematic and has caused a lot of misinformation to be spread online and through social media. The kernel of truth in the "Just Add Ice" myth/marketing gimmick is that most people who kill orchids do so by over-watering them. But it's not the amount of water people use when watering orchids that leads to over-watering, it's how long the roots stay wet.

Remember where your orchid is from. Plants known as "Ice Orchids" are simply Phalaenopsis Orchids or 'Moth Orchids' that originated in tropical Southeast Asia. They are intermediate to warm growing, which means their native environment is usually a minimum of 60 degrees any time of year. Not really 'ice cube' type weather.

Phalaenopsis in nature grow attached to trees, shrubs or outcroppings with their roots exposed, They are watered frequently by rainfall, but because their roots don't have much around them to hold water, they dry out between waterings. Their roots need humidity but should not stay soggy.

We always suggest watering potted orchids thoroughly from the top of the pot, with room temperature or tepid water. Water well enough to saturate the media so that is stays damp for a minimum of 4-5 days or as long as 7-10 days.

This number won't be exact because it varies with the amount of light, humidity and airflow and with the temperature where they are grown. If your plant is staying wet for longer than 10-14 days, then additional airflow may be needed. If your potted orchid needs water more than twice per week, then not enough water is being given or it's time to consider repotting (see our Repotting Information here). If the mix is very dry on watering day, water well and come back twenty minutes later and water again. This helps the outer layer of bark, mulch or moss absorb the moisture better. Plus, it flushes free any water impurities or fertilizer salts that collect in the pot.

This wet-dry cycle is needed in one form or another for many of the most commonly found orchids. Adding a few cubes to the top of the media does not address the need to thoroughly water the roots and potting media. As the ice melts, some water trickles into the pots, but not enough to really provide humidity or flush the potting mix of any water impurities or fertilizer salts. Also, remember, these are tropical plants. The ice is likely to cause damage to the roots and foliage it comes in contact with.

Ice cubes may work for some growers for a while, but they are not what your Phalaenopsis needs long term. "Ice Orchids" fit with the marketing strategy of box stores, grocery stores and hardware stores today that sell orchids as a 'disposable' alternative to cut flowers. The flowers last longer than a bouquet of cut flowers, and since they are usually very cost friendly, if they die in 6-12 months many people are okay with replacing them. We teach our visitors and new customers how to care for Orchids with an eye to the future. Orchids can be a long-term investment that produce a lot of joy. Bringing your well-grown orchid into bloom year after year can be extremely rewarding.

So just remember, your orchid doesn't like taking an ice bath any more than you do!

Some Observations of Epiphytic Orchids

By Fred Clark, SVO

There are many kinds of orchids, but epiphytic orchids are my favorites and Cattleyas top the list. An epiphyte is a plant that grows on another plant. In nature, epiphytic orchids mostly grow on the sides of trees. Many epiphytic orchids have been growing this way for 15 or so million years. To put this into perspective, *Homo sapiens* (that's us) appeared around 300,000 years ago, and the most modern human evolution state is now the *Orchid hobbyist* which appeared about 125 years ago.

Thus, epiphytic orchids have been here for over 14 million years before the first humans even appeared on the planet! Humbling to say the least. Due to their millions of years growing on the sides of trees, orchids have evolved to grow well in these conditions. Even with climatic changes and seasonal weather variances, they continue to prosper and thrive on the sides of trees.

Understanding why orchids grow the way they do will help us make better decisions about how to care for them and allow us to be more successful in our passion, our orchids! Every orchid species has a set of environmental conditions it grows in. Learning about their environmental habitats, including the seasonal rain fall, temperature, and light, and then applying a similar practice in the cultivation of your own plants will help you achieve good plant growth and the better flowering you desire.

For example, I have observed the following about orchids growing on trees:

- Epiphytic orchids live on the sides of trees
- The sides of trees are well drained
- Orchids roots are well drained
- Orchid roots evolved in the presence of organic matter
- The leaves and roots of the orchid plants get a lot of air circulation
- The tree surface dries out quickly, as do the leaves and roots of the orchids
- There is not a lot of nutrients on the side of a tree: it's a low nutrient location
- Orchid roots have become good at capturing moisture and nutrients.

These observations about life on a tree, coupled with acknowledging their long and successful lifespan on this planet, have inspired me to try and implement this same environment for my own plants' root systems to the greatest extent possible.

That is why for epiphytic orchids using organic potting media is a good approach, in my case a bark and Perlite mix. A freely draining bark mix can simulate the well-drained nature of the sides of trees. The potting media must allow for air movement around the roots, so the roots dry out quickly. The roots need to dry out like they do on the sides of trees.

Orchids in nature live in a low nutrient environment. The few nutrients that are available are brought to the root system by each rain event. Because of this scarcity and the necessity of water and nutrients to survive, orchid roots have become excellent at absorbing both. Thus, using just a small amount of fertilizer, equivalent to ½ tsp fertilizer per gallon water at every watering will duplicate what happens in nature.

There is something else about orchids and trees. Although the orchid plants themselves are stationary, their roots can extend many feet from the plant in their quest to acquire resources like water and nutrients. The job of the roots is to absorb water and nutrients for the plant. Since the plant is stationary, the roots must find what they need where they are growing, and they have gotten exceptionally good at doing so. I have noticed that roots favor the environment and location they formed in.

You may have observed this phenomenon for yourself. Have you taken a plant with healthy air-roots and potted them? How well did those air-roots survive the change? What about transitioning a well-rooted potted orchid plant to a mount? How did those roots that formed in the growing media do when tied to a mount and exposed to the air? Did they thrive? Or decline? Likely, they declined, because an orchid plant has evolved for its roots to stay in the environment they formed in (they don't move from the location they are in). For the roots to do well in a new location (being re-potted), the orchid plant must form a new set of roots in the new conditions (new pot and media).

But what does all this mean? It boils down to the main goal of all of us orchid lovers – raising healthy plants that produce beautiful blooms. Here are some important guidelines based on how plants grow in nature that you can use for when to re-pot your epiphytes. Remember, when you re-pot, you are changing the root zone environment, and we have established that the roots do not like the change.

Therefore, we need to find a time when the plant is best able to adapt to re-potting. That time is when new roots are starting to emerge from the rhizome. This is not to be confused with new pseudobulb growth. While some orchids form new roots as the new pseudobulb develops, many orchids grow their new roots after the most recent growth has matured. **This requires that you look for new roots rather than new growths.** As soon as you see new roots developing from the rhizome, this is the time to re-pot. The newly developing roots will re-establish the plant in the new potting media, enabling it to adapt and taking over from the roots that developed in the previous potting media.

Understanding the timing of when your plants make new roots is important information, it allows you to make good decisions on when is the right time to re-pot.
*A valuable tip: on the pot tag, write the date when new roots start to emerge. After a while you will have a list of dates on the tag indicating when is the best time to re-pot.

After you start this practice of “when roots emerge awareness” it becomes indispensable, and you will soon realize it enables you to predict and make informed decisions on when new or unknown plants will most likely root so they can have the best opportunity to thrive under your care.

A healthy root system is a key component of abundant growth and flowering. Epiphytic orchids are survivors. They can tolerate many harsh conditions, and they are surprisingly adaptable, yet they will fare better and reward you more with their beauty if they are not subjected to a “survivalist challenge.” The stability of root zone environment is important to your orchid’s health, and you support its health by only repotting with the onset of new roots. When choosing a potting media, be sure that the media has an organic component, has a stable pH over the life of the potting cycle, is well drained, and dries out quickly. As much as possible it should mirror the orchid’s favored environment.

It only taken me 30 years to develop this understanding of why epiphyte orchids grow the way they do. I believe sharing this natural process can only result in making you a better grower.

Good Growing!
Fred Clarke

Orchid Competition in Vietnam 2026





Stubborn Orchids

By Brandon Spannbauer

This series is dedicated to showing off blooms that never make it to a meeting. If you have any stubborn orchids, send photos to be included in a future newsletter: greaterakronorchidsociety@gmail.com



Den. Swiss Mountain Palace 'Pepe'

This is a first bloom from Ecuagenera. I am still learning about the cutherbertsonii dendrobium hybrids, which have a reputation of being finicky to bloom. They require cool to cold, moist conditions and good air flow, a combination that can be tricky to achieve indoors. But they reward you with colorful, long lasting blooms on a very tiny plant.



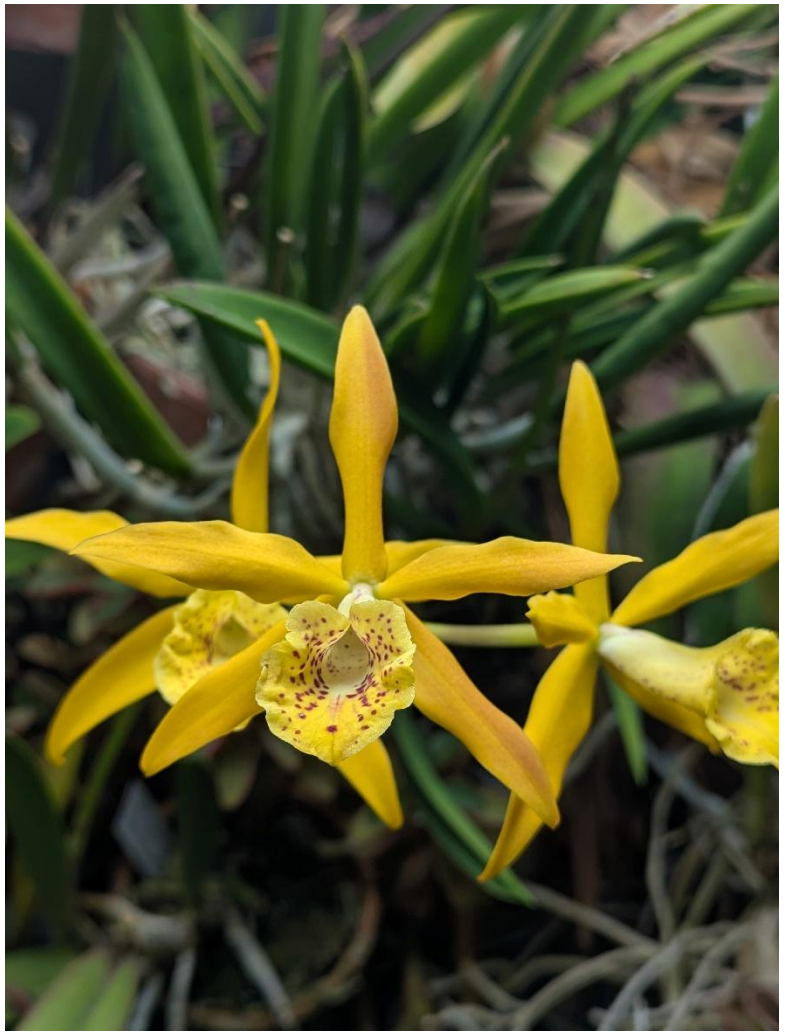
Blc. Copper Queen (Rlc. Toshi Aoki x Bl. Richard Mueller 4N)

This cross is from H&R and blooms reliably twice a year and has 6 large flowers. I'm very happy with the size and shape and the deep, rich yellow color. Like some Richard Mueller crosses, it has a very slight color change from a pastel orange to yellow as the flowers age.



Phal. Charming Warszawa

An interesting orchid that I received from Kat Martz from our summer member plant sale. It is known as a ‘big lip’ variety which is a mutation where the lip lays flat and open.



Blc. Golden Glory (Bl. Richard Mueller x L. tenebrosa)

Another great Richard Mueller hybrid that opens a soft orange and ages to a bright almost metallic yellow. This is the first to bloom from a community pot from H&R Orchids.

If you have any stubborn orchids that bloom in between meetings, send in photos to have them included in the newsletter:
greaterakronorchidsociety@gmail.com

New Orchids to Science

A new species, Taeniophyllum wrightmyoensis (Orchidaceae) is described from the #Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India. The new species resembles T. hasseltii and T. pusillum, but is distinct from both in having mostly terete free hanging roots (versus roots flat, appressed to the substratum), bracts lax (versus bracts close in T. pusillum), lip without any cushions (versus lip with convex cushions in T. hasseltii) and a conical spur (versus globose spur in T. pusillum).– Novataxa 2026



NEWS from the Great Lakes Judging Center

AOS plant judging takes place the 3rd Saturday each month. Judging is always open to the public and anyone is invited to bring plants for the AOS judges to look at them. AOS awards given are the responsibility of the exhibitor. Please note we are asking plants brought in for judging to arrive by 12:30.

Our meeting has reverted back to 11:00 AM Eastern Time with any judging center business and then an educational talk by judges or other featured speakers. AOS judging begins no later than 12:30 PM Eastern Time. The Great Lakes Judging Center is responsible for AOS judging in the region spanning Michigan, Northern Indiana, and Northern Ohio. Room 130 will be our default room for the remainder of 2026.

Judging sessions are held at Washtenaw Community College located at 4800 E. Huron River Dr. Ann Arbor, Michigan 48105. Activities take place in the Morris Lawrence building. Parking is ample and free. Dress is casual and all are welcome to bring lunch or snacks for themselves as no food is provided.

Find more information dates and locations for other Judging Centers at www.aos.org under *Awards and Judging*.

PLEASE NOTE: *Washtenaw CC has become very busy with seminars and events. Some months our meetings have moved to other rooms in the Morris Lawrence Center. The best way to find our room for the month is to check the event listings near the front desk as you enter the building.*

Upcoming Schedule:

October 17 Jill Wood from GLJC will speak on "Current Development of Mini-Phrag Hybrids". AOS Judging will begin no later than 12:30 PM EDT.

November 21 There is no AOS judging at Washtenaw. AOS Judging will take place at the Ann Arbor OS Show at Matthei Botanic Garden located at 1800 N. Dixboro Rd. Ann Arbor, Michigan 48105; AOS judging will begin no later than 12:30 PM EDT.

December 19 There is no educational topic planned. AOS Judging will begin no later than 12:30 PM EDT.

For more information contact Dave Miller at dcmjpasmil@aol.com, especially if you are not familiar with the location or process.

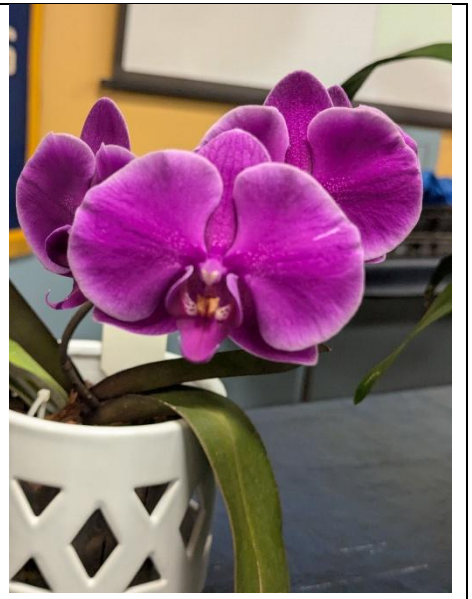
Photo Gallery

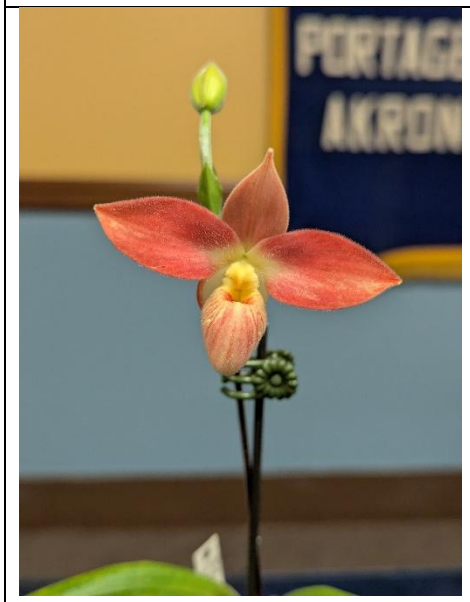
Meeting Show Table

September 2026

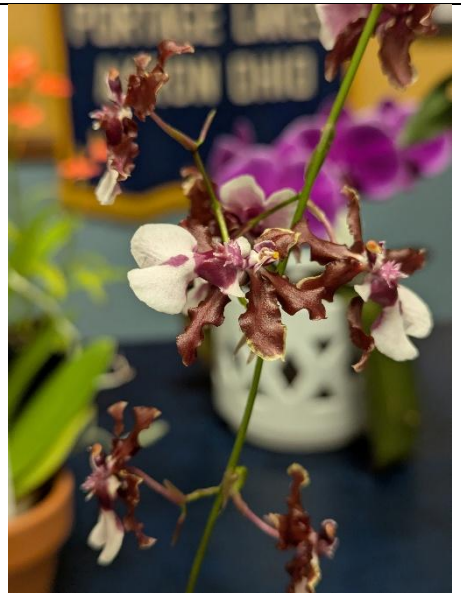


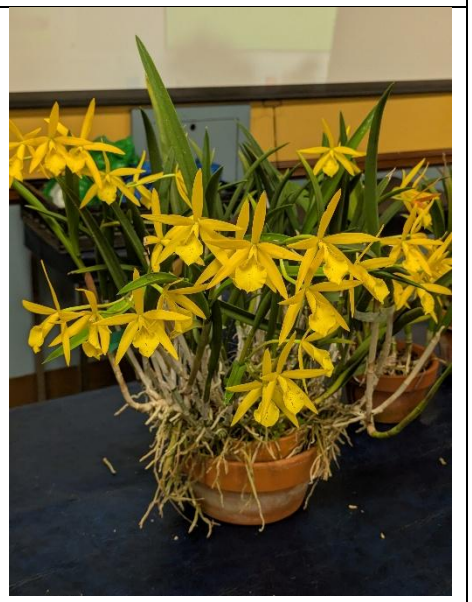


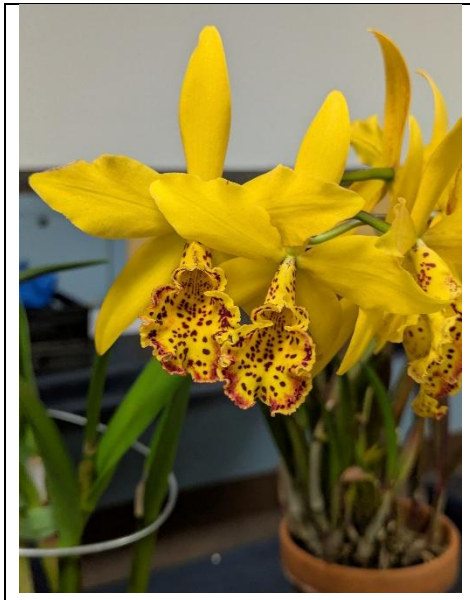
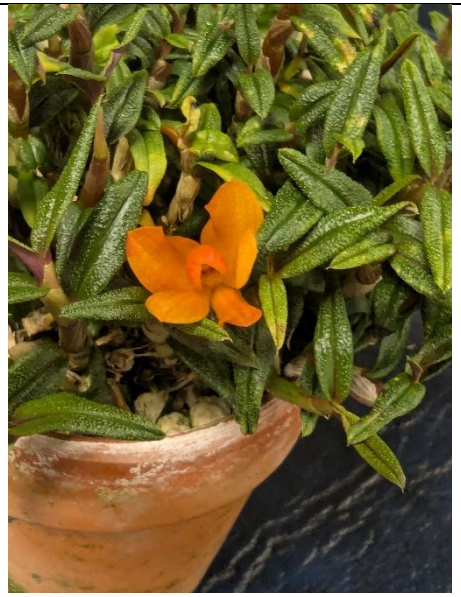
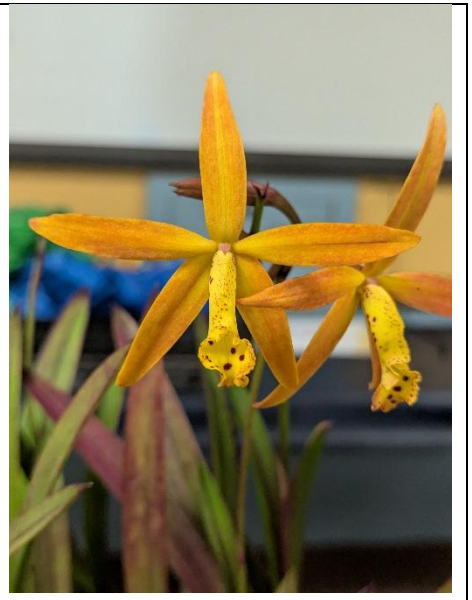
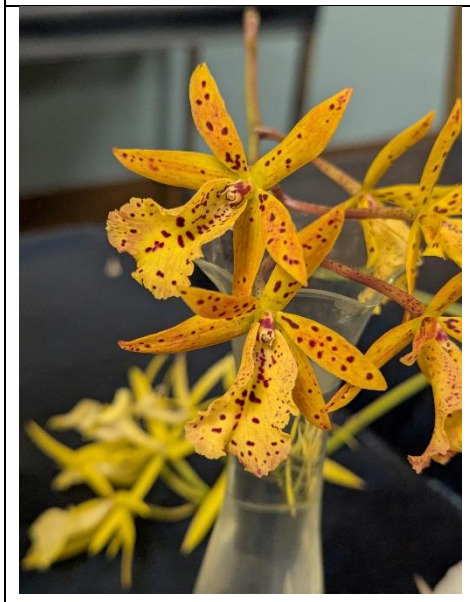
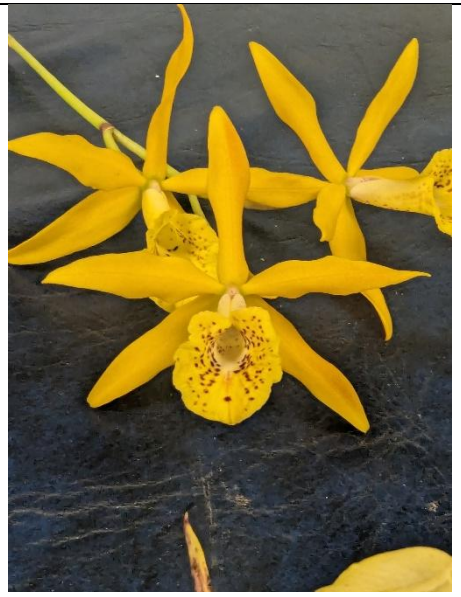


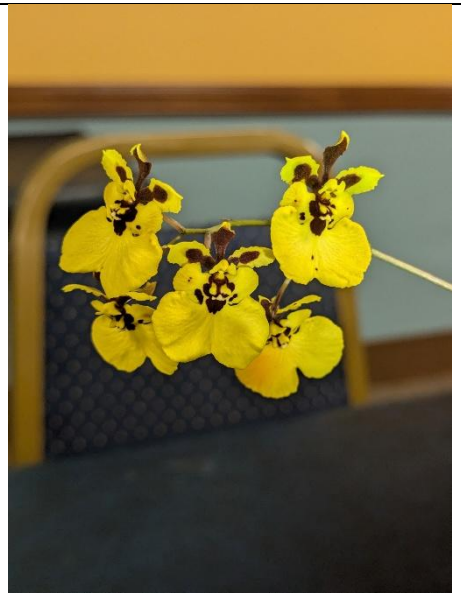
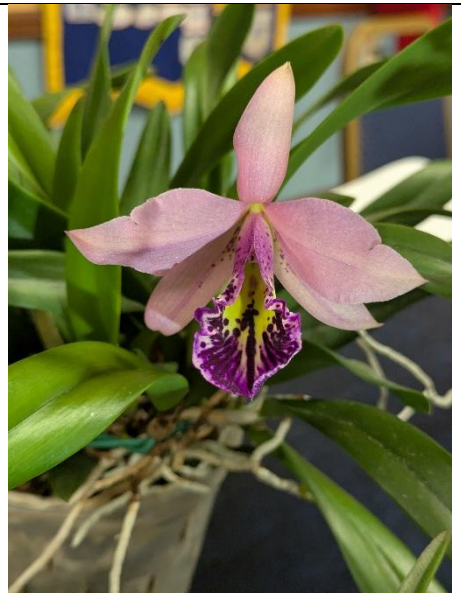
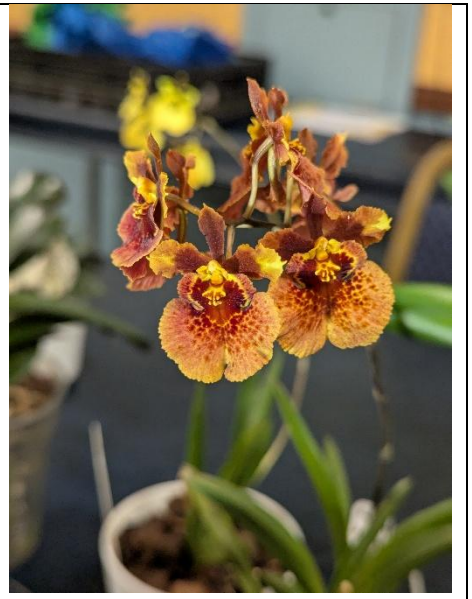
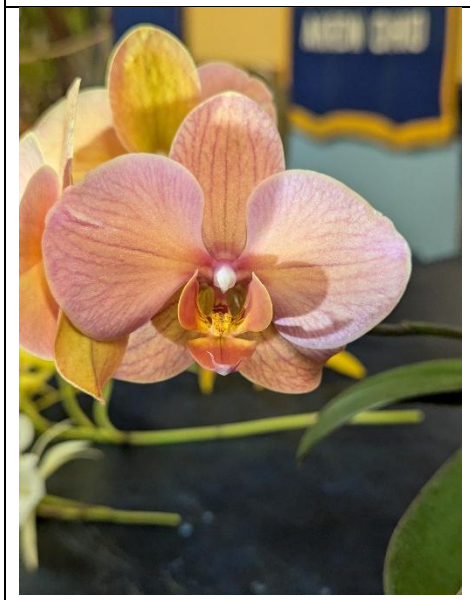
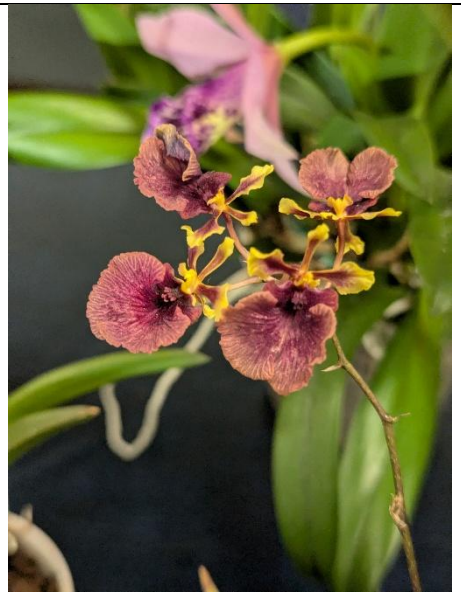
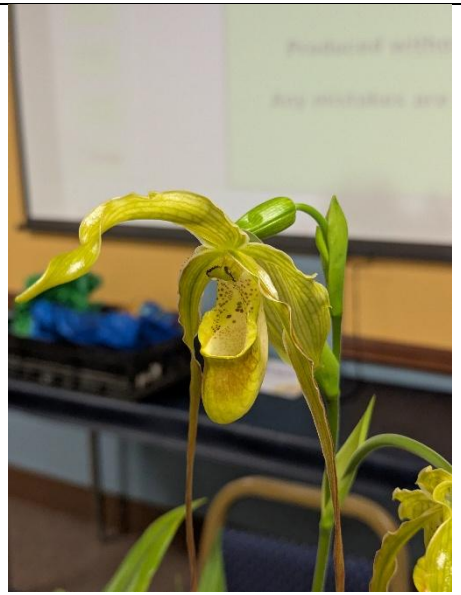
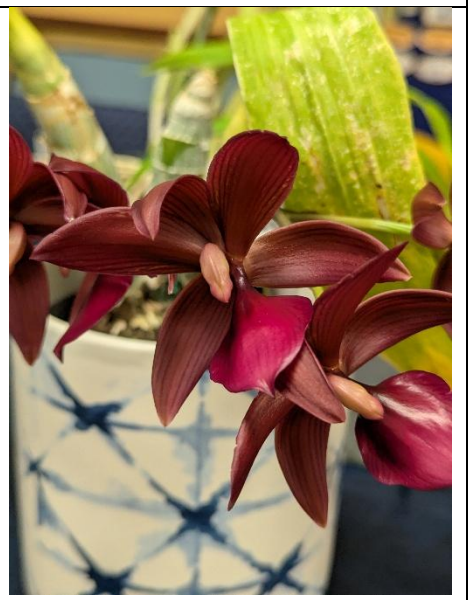


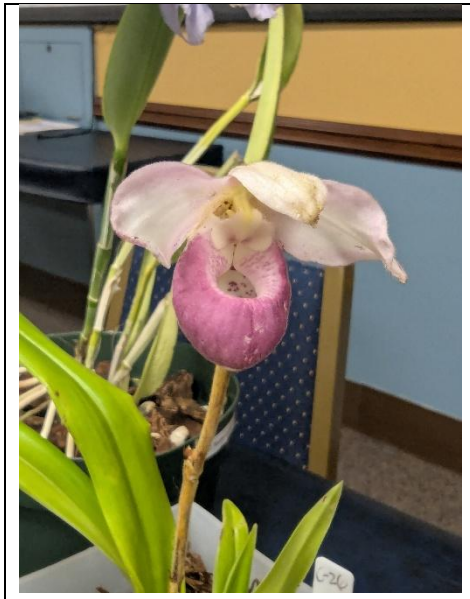









KIWANIS
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MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE UPDATE
Growing Together
Spotlight on Our Youth Essay Contest Winners
Growing My Orchid Knowl
Zygopetalum: Are orchid
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