

September
2025

The Orchid Grower

Orchid Growers Guild of Madison

www.Orchidgrowersguild.org



Meeting Dates

- September 21
- October 19
- November 16
- December 21, venue TBA

All in-person and Zoom Meetings start at 1:00pm in the Learning Center at Olbrich Gardens unless otherwise noted

Up-Coming Events

- September 13-14, Wisconsin Orchid Society Show: "Fall in Love with Orchids", Mitchell Park, Milwaukee
- September 19-21, Chicagoland Orchid Fest
- November 1-2, Eastern Iowa' Orchid Society's Show, "Orchids Are a Scream 2025", Radisson Hotel Conference Center, 1200 Collins Rd, Cedar Rapids IA
- February 7-8, 2026, Orchid Quest, Monona Terrace
- March 7-8, Illinois Orchid Society Show
- March 21-22, Batavia Orchid Show

Officers and Committees

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Vice President:

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Secretary:

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NEXT MEETING SEPTEMBER 21

Brandon Corder, Ph.D.: "The Secret Lives of Wisconsin's Native Orchids"

Our speaker will be Dr. Brandon Corder, a newly minted Ph.D. orchidologist from the Department of Botany at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, who will present a talk on "The Secret Lives of Wisconsin's Native Orchids." Brandon will present an overview of his research into the biology of orchids and their fungal partners from across Wisconsin and the Great Lakes Region. He is well known to people who follow him on iNaturalist and Instagram where he shares his passion for botany to a global audience. Brandon also has been invited to present his research finding to numerous orchid clubs in the USA and Canada. We are very fortunate to have him right here in the Madison community!



President's Message

Happy 40th Anniversary to Orchid Growers Guild!

I would like to once again thank everyone for their support and trust in me as the new president of the Orchid Growers Guild as we begin the 40th year of the Orchid Growers Guild! Members of the board have been busy over the past few months. The 2025-2026 speakers have been confirmed and we even have some for 2026-27 lined up! Be sure to check out the OGG website for a sneak peek at this information. All of our meetings will be held in the Learning Center rooms at Olbrich for every meeting except for December. Stay tuned for an exciting announcement about our anniversary party!

In August, Chuck and I attended the Mid-America Orchid Congress (MAOC) in Dayton Ohio. There were many familiar faces and many new faces. We both learned a lot about the role of AOS and the 42 other Orchid Societies that make up the MAOC. There was so much positive en-

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AOS: Nancy Thomas
MAOC: Lynn West

He will be sharing his research into Wisconsin's Native Orchids.

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ergy and information from each and every organization that our heads are full of lots of information, ideas and activities that would be fun to implement here in Madison. There will be lots of opportunities for you to volunteer your knowledge, skills, enthusiasm and energy this year. Think of OGG as a large, diverse ecosystem. The ecosystem is healthy when it is diverse. Within that ecosystem there are many habitats and within each habitat there are many niches that are occupied by essential organisms. I encourage each of you to find the niche in our organization that allows you to showcase your skills, knowledge and expertise.

Our first meeting is on Sunday, September 21st in the Learning Center at Olbrich Gardens. I'm looking forward to seeing all your blooming plants at our monthly Show and Tell. There will be some short announcements and updates on some of the Guild's projects and activities. I'm excited to announce that our in person speaker is a newly minted PhD Dr. Brandon Corder.

There will be many opportunities to show off your well-grown orchids this season because none of the shows fall on the same weekend as our OGG meetings! Finally! You can go to both! The first Fall Orchid Show starts with the Wisconsin Orchid Society's Show September 13 and 14 at the Mitchell Domes in Milwaukee. The Chicagoland Orchid Fest which includes Open House at Hausermann's and Natt's Orchids is September 19-21. Wouldn't it be fun to organize a road trip to either one or both of these events!

There will be many exciting and educational opportunities for members of the Orchid Growers Guild throughout this upcoming year! I'm looking forward to everyone finding their niche among the many habitats of OGG and contributing to the healthy ecosystem of orchid growing that we have here in Madison, Dane County and the rest of South Central Wisconsin.

— Meredyth Graham

PROGRAMMING TIMELINE

Schedule is Approximate as Follows:

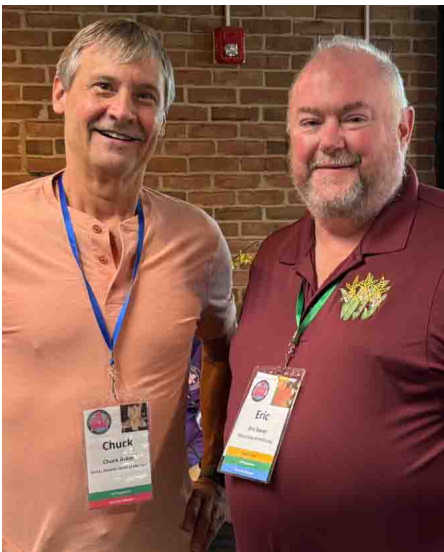
- 12:00 pm Doors Open for Setup
- 12:30 Socializing During Plant Judging
- 1:00 Meeting Begins; Announcements
- 1:20 Chuck's Challenge Plant Information
- 1:45 pm Show & Tell Table
- 2:05 Break
- 2:20 pm Guest Speaker, In-Person
- 3:15 pm Closing Thoughts & Door Prizes
- 3:30 pm Meeting Ends



Meg Kraft-Lee's *Phalaenopsis* Mini NOID

Mid-America Orchid Congress Road Trip

The Mid-America Orchid Congress was held in conjunction with the Miami Valley Orchid Society in Dayton, Ohio on August 22-24, 2025. MAOC is a consortium of 40+ orchid societies in 18 States as well as Southern Ontario, Canada. The MAOC is an organization dedicated to preserving native orchids, propagation of orchids and the production and development of new and better plants through breeding. They also play an important role in providing information to orchid societies, orchid show judges and orchid growers of all kinds. They are the organization that supports the Judging Centers at Botanical Gardens in Chicago, Atlanta, Toronto and at least three other cities. In other words, they have far-reaching tentacles. You have used the products of the MAOC when you register orchids using those handy-dandy cheat sheets of intergeneric abbreviations or when you are wondering which class to put your dendrobiums in. MAOC is the organization that brings people together to see, learn about and judge orchids. OGG can't exist without MAOC and AOS and AOS and MAOC can't exist without OGG. We are all part of the same ecosystem and our strength is in our diversity.



Chuck with MAOC President Eric Sauer

that are very interested in coming to our Orchid Quest. Chuck was able to connect with customers he's done business with for years but had never met face to face until now. Throughout

the weekend, we were able to sit in on a variety of lectures and workshops presented by AOS speakers Ron McHatton and Ron Kaufman. The presentations ranged from 101 Ways to Kill an Orchid, to Orchids of Madagascar, to Effective Pest and Disease Management. We were also able to participate in a hands-on workshop for testing orchids for viruses.

Friday night included a dinner of roasted chicken, potato salad, veggie salad and home made, hand decorated sugar cookies. The cookies were literally a work of art! Saturday we returned for raffles, more presentations and a chance to see the exhibits.

Rather than an exhibit room with entries by each society, orchid plants were arranged by family. All the Slipper Orchids were together, all the Cattleyas were together, etc. There were five flower awards and two Certificates of Botanical Recognition. A CBR is awarded to rare and unusual species with educational interest that have received no previous awards. The entire plant must be exhibited. Unfortunately, we don't know which plants got those awards because people were able to take their plants out of the exhibit before the end of the event.

Saturday night included- you guessed it-more



Meg and Chuck in Fellowship Hall at MAOC



One of the hand-made orchid themed sugar cookies

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food! This time it was barbecued pork with beans and coleslaw with locally famous Young's Jersey Dairy Ice Cream in a variety of flavors for dessert. If you were ever hungry during this weekend, it was your own fault! Following that dinner there were some fun games including an Orchid Trivia contest. We each had to play an individual game- no teams! The majority of the 25 questions came from Erika Hannikel's book The Orchid Muse. The highest score was 19- which goes to show that even the smartest orchid expert doesn't know everything! (I scored 12, Chuck got 13). Following the Trivia game there was Orchid Bingo where the MAOC President Eric Sauer called out words associated with all things orchids. Prizes ranged from books to cross-stitch kits to plants. (Neither of us won anything).

Finally on Sunday, we attended the business meeting which included discussions and ideas from various societies, MAOC and AOS. These events are not just for Board Members. They are open to anyone interested in orchids. The pri-

mary focus this year was on increasing outreach through social media, accessing speakers and basically advertising and promoting each other's events. The MAOC has a lot to offer local societies! Chuck and I were able to divide and conquer, share our knowledge and enthusiasm as well as bring back more ideas and activities that can help us all increase our knowledge and enthusiasm about our favorite orchids! In summary, Mid-America Orchid Congress is as entertaining as it is educational.

— Meg Graham & Chuck Acker



Can you guess why she is called 'Miss Kitty'?

← Clockwise from right: Chuck and HC from HC Orchids specializing in beautiful Mini-Phals, fun photo "Anybody can be a Cymbidium!", and raffle array of blooming and spiked orchids. Guess which one Meg won? !



Meg Graham's *Phalaenopsis* Star
Green Beauty (Ming Hsing Moonlight
× Golden Apollon)



OGG JUNE PICNIC RIBBON JUDGING

Jeff Baylis	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> (<i>lindleyanum</i> × <i>andrettae</i>)
Jeff Baylis	<i>Leptotes bicolor</i>
Wanda Buckingham	<i>Epidendrum</i> (Comet Valley × Rose Valley)
Wanda Buckingham	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> Jacob's Green (Mem. Jacob Jake Piloto × <i>venustum</i>)
Ken Cameron	<i>Brassavola digbyana</i> (= <i>Rhyncholaelia digbyana</i>)
Ken Cameron	<i>Bulbophyllum bicolor</i>
Ken Cameron	<i>Encyclia tampensis</i> alba
Meg Graham	<i>Phragmipedium</i> Living Fire (<i>besseae</i> × Sorcerer's Apprentice)
Meg Graham	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Star Green Beauty (Ming Hsing Moonlight × Golden Apollon)
Meg Graham	<i>Phragmipedium</i> Diana Salazar (<i>klotzschianum</i> × <i>caudatum</i>)
Meg Graham	Lc Acker's Spotlight 'Pink Lady' (<i>C. aclandiae</i> × Lc Acker's Madison)
Meg Graham	<i>Paphiopedilum callosum</i> type pygmy form × self
Meg Graham	<i>Phragmipedium</i> (<i>wallisii</i> × <i>hirtzii</i>)
Meg Graham	<i>Phragmipedium</i> Sedenii (<i>longifolium</i> × <i>schlimii</i>)
Terri Jozwiak	<i>Oncidium</i> Sharry Baby (Jamie Sutton × Honolulu)
Terri Jozwiak	<i>Coelogyne mayeriana</i> × self
Terri Jozwiak	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> (<i>thaianum</i> × <i>delenatii</i> 'Deerwood' AM/AOS)
Terri Jozwiak	<i>Phragmipedium</i> Paute (<i>roethianum</i> × <i>humboldtii</i>)
Terri Jozwiak	<i>Brassidium</i> Kenneth Bivin 'Santa Barbara' HCC/AOS (<i>Oncidium cariniferum</i> × <i>Brassia arcuigera</i>)
Terry Jozwiak	<i>Bulbophyllum mastersianum</i>
Terry Jozwiak	<i>Vanda</i> (Paramate Star × Blitz's Heartthrob No 2)
Ellen Karlson	<i>Cattleya</i> Beau's Apricot Gem (Seagulls Apricot × Beaufort)
Gerald King	<i>Dendrobium</i> Tianmu Plain Botan (Spring Snow × Tianmu Green Elf)
Gerald King	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> NOID
Gerald King	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Mituo Diamond Canary (Diamond Beauty × Yungho Gelb Canary)
Meg Kraft-Lee	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> NOID Mini
Gary Lensmeyer	<i>Phragmipedium</i> Schroderae (Sedenii × <i>caudatum</i>)
Gary Lensmeyer	<i>Miltoniopsis</i> Andrea West 'HOF' HCC /AOS (Capitola × Doctor Ruth Ono)
Steven Liu	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Pinlong Cheris (Rothschildiana × Timothy Christopher)
Steven Liu	<i>Bulbophyllum Bicolor</i>
Anne Redford	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> NOID big yellow
Dan Schmidt	<i>Wilsonara</i> Bouley Bay 'Golden Showers' × <i>Odontoglossum</i> Parade 'Goldilocks'
Dennis Sornson	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Singuliflora (<i>bellina</i> × <i>sumatrana</i>)
Nancy Thomas	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> Phyllis Prestia (<i>conco-bellatulum</i> 'SVO' AM/AOS × <i>thaianum</i> 'Super Cute')
Nancy Thomas	<i>Dendrobium</i> Green Flash 'Nancy's Fancy' AM/AOS (André Millar × <i>convolutum</i>)
Travis Wilson	<i>Masdevallia guttata</i>
Unknown	<i>Ctsm</i> Francisco Berrios Gines (Dentigrianum 'SVO Excellence' × Portagee Star 'Brian Lawson's Sunrise')
Wanda Buckingham	<i>Miltoniopsis</i> Tome Yokoyama 'Red Berry' × Timberland 'Sunburst'
Unknown	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> Quintal Shadow (Lorraine's Pride × Shadow Boxer)

SHOW AND TELL ORCHIDS, JUNE 2025



Wils. Bouley Bay 'Golden Showers' × Odm. Parade 'Goldilocks'. Dan Schmidt, "The plant is mine, but I don't claim full credit for growing it. Sue Reed gave the plant to me in April with a spike started. I was able to watch it grow from a 2 foot spike to the 66" it is now in bloom. It opened the last of it's 54 two-inch flowers just days before the potluck. I did some engineering with wire and wire ties to help support it, but I need to do better next time right from the pot."



Jeff Baylis' *Leptotes bicolor*



Gerald King's *Dendrobium* Tianmu Plain Botan (Spring Snow × Tianmu Green Elf)



Phalaenopsis Singuliflora (bellina × sumatrana)

Dennis Sornson : "This free living phalaenopsis is about 15 years old. It hangs in a maple tree outside 6 months a year and has done so for about 10 years. During this outside half of the year it gets no fertilizer, no water, and no protection from the elements. It gets regularly pecked by woodpeckers, chewed on by squirrels and occasionally gets a sunburn but it still grows well and flowers regularly."



Steven Liu's *Bulbophyllum bicolor* on the left is mounted while and Ken Cameron's *Bulbophyllum bicolor* on the right is potted. Is that why they appear to be so different?

WHAT'S BLOOMING AT HOME...



Jeff Baylis' *Psychopsis* Mendenhall 'Hildos' FCC/AOS. "This plant got badly sunburned but Chuck told me that the pseudobulbs were in good shape and he predicted that it would recover. It finally produced a new spike this year and has bloomed twice so far."



Sue Reed's *Dendrobium* Ecuagenera Vibes (Hsinying Paradise × *cuthbertsonii*), "likes it cool with high humidity so I grow it in the basement in an aquarium under LED lights with a small computer fan and reptile fogger."



Paphiopedilum unknown hybrid. Gary Lensmeyer, "I purchased this slipper orchid as a small plant 5 years ago from Orchid Inn. It grew slowly but never bloomed. I didn't have the heart to throw it out. A few months ago, while speaking with an orchid friend, I mentioned the issue with the plant to him. He suggested that I fertilize it with 1 tsp of fertilizer per gallon of water.....I was using 1/4 per gallon. Surprise! A flower spike emerged soon after changing the feeding amount."



Jeff Baylis' *Sobralia sessilis*. "I got this plant as a keiki from someone dividing a plant at the Illinois show a few years ago. The original owner of not know the species. But when it bloomed this year I IDed it as *sessilis*. I grow it under a mist nozzle and keep it VERY wet. It bloomed for the first time this year. It is a sequential bloomer and three canes have bloomed. The photo is of bloom 6 of 7 with more buds to come. The flower only lasts a day and then collapses."

Jeff Baylis' *Cymbidium ensifolia* purchased from Etsy bareroot after ken's talk on Chinese cymbidiums. This is its first bloom on new growth.



Sue Reed's *Miltoniopsis* Molten Lava, "This is its second blooming this year, with two spikes. It likes the cool basement but I move it up stairs to enjoy the blooms."

Amy Holt got this cute little mini *Cattleya luteola* from OGG speaker and OQ vendor, Scott Elliott.

... WHAT'S BLOOMING AT HOME



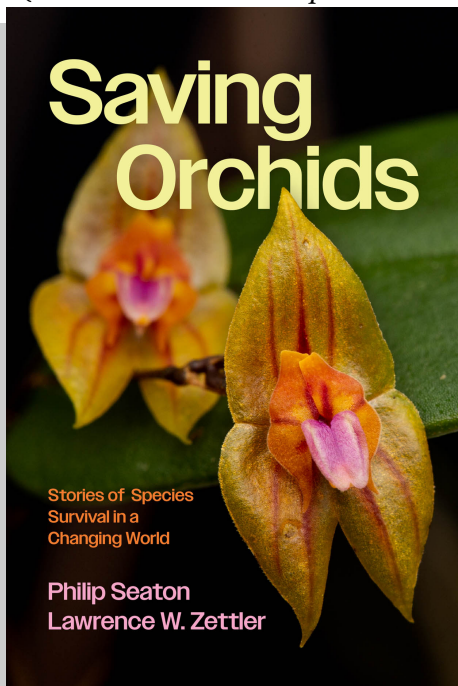
Jeff Baylis' *Phalaenopsis* Kenneth Schubert 'Hualien Blue Wave' (*violacea* var *coerulea* x *pulcherrima*)



Nancy Thomas' *Cymbidium* Fire on the Mountain 'Orange' (Shing Kuskar x Valerie Absolonova)



Nancy Thomas' *Angulocaste* (*Anguloa* Dubia x *Lycaste braedorum*)



Judy Stevens recommends this book:

Saving Orchids

Stories of Species Survival in a Changing World

Philip Seaton and Lawrence W. Zettler

A gorgeously illustrated ode to the beauty and significance of orchids—and to those fighting to save these unique plants across the globe.



Terri Jozwiak's *Paphiopedilum* Yang-Ji Hawk (*sanderianum* 'Lady in Red' x *adductum* var. *anatum* 'Ace' AM/AOS). Its long sepals are not shown here.



Nancy Thomas' *Phragmipedium* QF Kolea (*pearcei* 'Fox Valley' HCC/AOS x *fischeri* 'Purple Puff'), first bloom seedling



Nancy Thomas' *Paphiopedilum hirtutissimum* 'Late Sunset', "first bloom for me," measuring 5in horizontally.

Annual Summer Potluck Picnic

Last June Theodore Ceplina hosted our annual summer Potluck Picnic in Deerfield and it was a huge success! As usual it was well attended with oodles of great food and good company. Although it was warm, the weather cooperated and there was plenty of shade.

There were more than three dozen orchids for ribbon judging and as by tradition, every one was a winner! Chuck and Ken discussed some of the great qualities of some of the orchids on display (and for sale in the silent auction.)

Ken was able to deliver orchid supplies ordered by members.

More than 80 orchid plants and supplies were offered for sale by twelve members for our Members Silent Auction. For the first time we allowed sellers to list a minimum bid as a commission with the idea that this might encourage people to part with higher quality plants and to compensate for the cost of pots and potting media. Sellers got a kickback, buyers got some beautiful plants at a reasonable price, and the Guild got the remaining profit; a win-win-win!

In the end, sales totaled \$1,459 and we will pay out \$623 to sellers, leaving the Guild with a profit of \$836 to help support our mission (43/57% split). Did you like this

new approach? Should the opening bid be at least \$5 over the seller's fee to guarantee the Guild gets at least some profit? Would you prefer that we do the annual silent auction in May or continue to hold it during our June potluck? The Board would appreciate your feedback. Thank you to everyone who participated.

-- Ken Cameron



Host Ted (on right) with guest



Ken offered up Lc. Betty Ford 'York' AM/AOS in bloom, which Cindy took home for \$30



Ken and Denise

What is New with the 2026 Orchid Quest Raffle?

By Carrie Wiesman and Judy Williamson

Judy Williamson (judp2d@gmail.com) and Carrie Wiesman (cleocatz@msn.com) will be organizing the Raffle for Orchid Quest 2026, and we are going to shake up how the raffle will work at Orchid Quest 2026.

We will need all of our members to make this raffle work in 2026! Yes, YOU!! You ask "What can I do to help?" We are asking members to create container (basket, bucket, gift bag) filled with different items with a theme. You could do this yourself or with the help from another member. Right now you are thinking, "I can't do that, I have no creativity." Creativity is not a requirement, but determination is! We would like to have 25-30 baskets each day (60 baskets total) so we will need the whole membership to jump in and take part.

So how to go about it. . . . Just think about what you like to do and put items together ... For example, do a movie night basket with popcorn, your favorite movie, candy, and depending on the movie maybe a bottle of wine with cheese and crackers. All we ask is the value of the basket be at least \$50.

Now you are thinking, "But that is too much to donate new items." Ask your favorite businesses for donations (gift cards or items). Be creative and put in a like-new used movie, or buy items on sale. Thrift stores are great for like-new items. Then just group them together, make a list and if you don't have a basket or something to use to group the items together, bring them in a paper bag and we will package them together for you!

Individual like-new items can also be donated for the raffle if you have a special item that you would like to share with someone new. We all have items

that are hard to part with but by donating to the raffle you can provide the opportunity for someone else to enjoy that item and raise money for the club at the same time.



Will the raffle work the same as in the past? No. We will have raffle items each day with a ticket collector container in front of each item along with a list of what is in the basket. Tickets will be sold by either 6 Tickets for \$5 or 30 Tickets for \$20. The purchased tickets will be dropped into the container for the raffle item the purchaser would like to win. At the end of each day, one ticket will be drawn from each container and the winning ticket will be announced. The more tickets purchased and dropped into the item of your choice the greater your chance to win.

Why are we asking for raffle baskets 4 months before Orchid Quest? This will give you time to think about your THEMED BASKET and gather the items together. We will begin collecting in December/January. This is the best part - everyone likes to compete and we'll have a contest for the most creative raffle basket, and the club members will vote on who is the winner(s). The Chosen Top basket(s) will get a special prize from the club. But you will all be winners in the end just by donating a basket to help raise money for the club.

Can we count on you? If every member donates items for at least one raffle basket, there will be plenty of baskets for both days of Orchid Quest. This is an easy and great way to help with Orchid Quest.

Here are a couple of examples from other raffles:



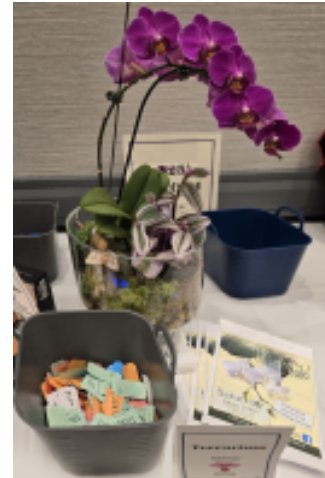
COLORING BASKET
Note book, journal, colored pens and crayons, etc.



GIFT CARD BASKET
This one is for Woodman's



HONEY BEE BASKET
Local honey, Honey pot, Bee themed mugs, bowls, apron, dishtowel, etc. and candy. Followed by name of donor and estimated value



Raffle item and corresponding ticket receptacle

THE ORCHID GROWERS GUILD TRAVELING TEAM WANTS YOU!

Each year we participate in several orchid shows hosted by other clubs by setting up displays just like we do at Orchid Quest. This allows us to show off our orchids more often and builds relationships with other clubs so they will come to Orchid Quest to set up their displays. This makes OQ even better!

In order for this to happen we need your help. We need volunteers to create these wonderful displays before the shows and to take them down after. And the displays cannot be made without orchids, so if you have blooming orchids you would like to send you can help in that way whether you can help with the displays or not.

We travel to two shows in the fall and two more early next year. The fall shows are right around the corner so check your schedules and see if you can help out with either of these two upcoming shows:

“Fall in Love with Orchids” by the Wisconsin Orchid Society at the Domes in Milwaukee
Setup is from 10am to 6pm on Sept 12th
The show is 9am to 4pm on both Saturday, September 13th and Sunday, September 14th.
Take down would follow the close of the show on

Sunday.

“Orchids Are A Scream”
by the Eastern Iowa Orchid Society at the Radisson Hotel Conference Center in Cedar Rapids, IA. The show is Saturday, November 1st from 10am to 5pm and Sunday, November 2nd from 10am to 4pm. Setup would be Friday, October 31st, take down would follow the close of the show on Sunday.



If you would like to help setup we will pair you with an experienced member so you can learn the ropes. If you have plants, there will be emails from the setup team as we approach each show with details on how to get your plants to the show. Reach out with any questions you may have!

Happy Growing!
Sean Stake
OGG Away Show Chair
608-575-2144
mythical.plants@gmail.com

Chat with Chuck

I would like to introduce a new format I am offering to members of the Orchid Growers Guild called ‘Chat with Chuck.’

Perhaps you are new to the Guild and shy in large crowds and feel your questions or comments about your plant may sound too simple. Or, you cannot find time during our monthly meetings to ask someone about an issue with your plant or how to grow a certain plant better. There have been numerous times when I have felt this way in a large group, especially when I was new to the setting. This format will be for the orchid grower who may feel intimidated to speak among a large crowd. Feel free to bring your questions, comments, plant issues or whatever orchid related matter you may have.

This will be held at my house in Waunakee in a small setting with no more than 5 people. It will be a casual, no frills setting where you can ask questions and talk about the simplest or the most complex things regarding your orchid

plants. No topic is off limits.

With my 45 years of growing orchids for my family’s business of Orchids by the Ackers, I have the knowledge and background to cover a wide range of orchid growing issues and topics. Answering orchid related questions for our customers was one of my most enjoyable jobs while in business and this is an opportunity for me to continue sharing what I know and love, all things orchid!

I will have a sign-up sheet at the September meeting with the date and time of the first gathering. If the sign-up sheet fills up and there are more members interested, I will add another date during the meeting before we adjourn to allow more participants. There will be light snacks offered and feel free to bring a beverage of your choice. More information will be provided at the September meeting.

Happy growing!

— Chuck Acker



CHUCK'S ORCHID CHALLENGE 2025

I am pleased to announce Terri Jozwiak as this year's winner for the first member to bloom the *Prosthechea mariae* from Chuck's Orchid Challenge! Terri submitted the image of herself holding the blooming little gem on May 30th! Congratulations Terri! She will be awarded her prize at the October meeting when I will be judging the second tier of the challenge for the "most robust growing plant." For those of you who did not yet bloom your challenge plant you are still in the running for the second judging tier!



Terri Jozwiak's winning
Prosthechea mariae

her well grown plants after learning her water was softened during our water testing meeting last November. This is a true testament to knowing the quality and type of water you are using to grow your orchids!

I have secured 52 plants for the next orchid plant challenge and the treasurer will start taking payments of \$10 for this at the September meeting. At that time I will introduce the plant, talk briefly about the culture required for success and be open to any questions you may have about the plant. If you are planning to partake in this next challenge, please bring your \$10 and you will be on the list to receive a plant which will be distributed to paid participants at the October meeting. This will be on a first come basis as I am only able to get 52 plants. Don't be left out! If you are not able to attend the Sep-



Liz Wood's *Prosthechea mariae*

tember meeting and would like to partake, please make arrangements with our Treasurer Ken Cameron for payment. I look forward to seeing you all at the September meeting.

Happy Growing!

— Chuck Acker



From a July pottery class: "Thank you Brook for a great afternoon! We all had a great time with you and in your neat store. You have a good ability to anticipate our issues and much patience!"

We Won't Need an Island in the Arctic, Just a Fridge

The largest seed vault in the world is located in Svalbard, Norway, an island in the Arctic Ocean. It has approximately 11,000 sq. ft. of floor space.

After hearing Dr. Robert-Jan Quené speak about the orchid crosses he has made and orchid flasking, and then seeing urgent requests for orchid pollen, I had an idea. What if we started a pollen bank? Most orchid pollen can be stored in a refrigerator for a year and remain viable. If members collected pollen from their blooming orchids after showing them off, we could easily amass quite the collection of pollen, assuming many would be willing.

Have you ever thought about creating your own orchid hybrid? If you have, you might be aware of some of the challenges. You may not have the right two orchids blooming at the same time, you might not even have both orchids you want



Svalbard Global Seed Vault

to use. Maybe the orchids never bloom at the same time of year. How do you know if your orchids are even compatible? There are many other potential challenges but what if the col-

lective power of the Orchid Growers Guild could overcome some of them? A pollen bank solves timing issues, pools pollen from others which makes it more likely the pollen you need is available, and, maybe, allows you to test compatibility because more pollen is available.

Right now I am looking to see how many members would be interested in this type of program. It's my idea, so, I'm volunteering to spearhead the project if we move forward. I'm looking for some people who would be willing to assist me in building and administering the program, we'd probably only need a couple people for that. I'm looking for people who would like to have access to pollen, would like to contribute pollen, and/or would like to learn how to collect and store pollen. For this, the more we have the better the program would be.

There are still many details that would need to be discussed if a project like this moves forward but there could be a lot of benefits. Our members would have access to more pollen which could encourage more hybridizing for those interested. Even those with no interest in hybridizing could help others and the club by donating pollen and learn more about their orchids in the process. It would likely generate income for the club by charging fees for pollen access, especially for those who haven't donated pollen. We could potentially even offer pollen to other hybridizers for a fee, maybe even sell it at Orchid Quest. We may be able to gather information on pollen longevity and viability with thorough record keeping over time. It could even distinguish the OGG among orchid enthusiasts.

There are concerns to consider as well, like how to deal with orchid virus, where will we keep the pollen, how quickly can someone access it if needed, and how much will it cost to start. That is why we need a willing club not just one guy with a, possibly crazy, idea.

Thanks for reading! If you are interested in being a part of this project or have questions or thoughts about it, please feel free to contact me!

— Sean Stake



Phalaenopsis pollinium

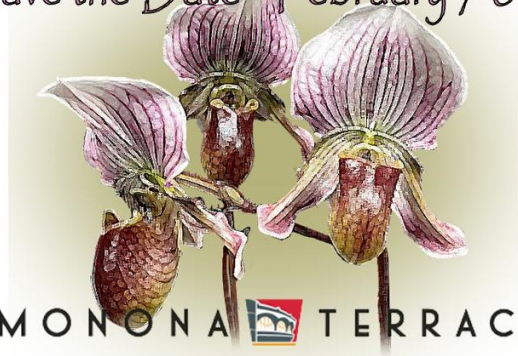


Sue Reed's mini *Catleya Shelly Huynh* (*bicalhoi* × *alaorii*), "I grow this cool under lights in the basement. It is its first time blooming and needs to be repotted in a more water retentive mix for leaves are wrinkled. But it's blooming anyway!!"

Mark Your Calendars!

Orchid Quest 2026

Save the Date - February 7 & 8



Set-up Friday, February 6

Youth Essay Contest

Call for Entries: AOS Essay Contest *"Best Moments from My American Orchid Society Journey"*

The American Orchid Society is excited to announce an essay contest celebrating the stories that make our community so special. We want to hear about *your* most memorable AOS moments—and what being a member of this orchid-loving family has meant to you.

Whether it was discovering a rare bloom, making lasting friendships, or growing in your orchid knowledge, your journey matters. And we want to share your story with the world!

Who Can Participate? AOS members only. Two age divisions are open:

- **Youth Division:** Ages 14-18 years old
- **Adult Division:** 19-25 years old

Essay Guidelines

- Topic: *Best Moments from My AOS Journey and Why I Love Being an AOS Member*
- Length: Up to **500- 600 words**
- Language: Submit in **English** or **Spanish**
- Format: Typed and submitted electronically, Times New Roman, double spaced, 12pt font.

Prize Each division winner will receive a **1-year Silver Membership** in the American Orchid Society, special recognition in an official AOS ORCHIDS publication.

Important Dates

- **Submission Deadline:** **November 1st, 2025**
- **Winners Announced:** **December 1st, 2025**

Send your essay to: debb@aos.org



Orchid Auction

Perfect opportunity to grow or begin your Orchid Collection.

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Cash, Visa, and Master Card Accepted

Visit the Website or event page for more information

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1296499518706181/>

www.newisos.org

When and Where:

Saturday October 4th

Event starts at Noon

Vande Hey Company

2093 CR-N

Appleton, WI 54913

Amenities:

Hot Chocolate, Coffee, and hors d'oeuvres free to attendees courtesy of Vande Hey Company

Auction:

Free Attendance

Open to Public

Large Selection of Orchids, most grown by Orchid Society members

Preview plants at noon

Auctions starts at 12.30

Access:

Pose your orchid related questions to one of our many experienced growers



Start Making Plans for the

32nd Annual



Chicagoland Orchid Fest

September 19-21, 2025

8:00am - 5:00pm Friday & Saturday

10:00am - 3:00pm Sunday

Free Admission. Free Parking. Special sale items & refreshments available at both locations.

Guest Growers at each location will be offering plants for sale from all over the world.

Visit two different, interesting and unique orchid nurseries located within a 40 minute drive.

GRAND PRIZE DRAWING

Nursery Gift Certificates valued at \$600 will be awarded at the festival's conclusion. A total of five (5) winners will be drawn from participants who have visited both locations during the festival weekend. Winners will be able to choose from which nursery they wish to have their certificate issued. See festival website or contact participating grower for an application form.

Look for festival special offers at both locations by visiting the festival website at www.chicagolandorchidfest.com

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