

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE

VIRGINIA ORCHID SOCIETY

APRIL 17, 2005 MEETING

MEETING : 2:00 P.M.

PLACE: SCIENCE MUSEUM OF VIRGINIA

PROGRAM: WESLEY HIGGINS, PH.D.,

MARIE SELBY BOTANICAL GARDENS

"ORCHID DIVERSITY"

Wesley Higgins to Speak

Wesley Ervin Higgins is a native to Richmond, although he was many years away from his association with orchids when he moved to Florida. Currently, he is the Director of Systematics at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens. This is Wesley's second career. Following retirement from the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) as a Master Chief Petty Officer (ATCM), Wesley earned a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Horticulture at the University of Florida graduating with Highest Honors. He continued his education at the University of Florida earning a Ph.D. with a Horticultural Science major and Botany minor. He also received practical training at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, Missouri Botanical Garden, and the Jodrell Laboratory of Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew.



Wesley's first career began following high school, when he enlisted in the USCG where he received training in basic electronics, radio code, and avionics. He earned an Associate of Science degree through the external degree program of the University of the State of New York (Regents College). Wesley then received advanced training in avionics at the Naval Aviation Technical Training Center, Memphis, Tennessee. Subsequently, Wesley attended DeVry Institute of Technology in Atlanta, Georgia, where he earned another Associate of Science in Electronics Engineering Technology. While at DeVry, Wesley was selected IEEE Student of the Year. Later, when stationed at the U. S. Coast Guard Institute in Oklahoma City, he worked as a technical writer preparing correspondence course material and standardized promotion exams. These course materials received an Award of Excellence from the Society for Technical Communications. During this period, he also received a Bachelor of Science in Applied Technology through the Competency Based Degree Program of Oklahoma City University. Prior to retirement, Wesley was the Aviation Training Quota Manager at the USCG Aviation Technical Training Center, Elizabeth City, North Carolina, where he managed the annual budget for training pilots and aircrewmen.

Wesley is an accredited American Orchid Society (AOS) judge, he has published articles in the *AOS Bulletin* (which has since been renamed *Orchids*), and his photography has been awarded at a World Orchid Conference, subsequently appearing on the cover of the *AOS Bulletin*.

— Jim Creech

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VOS Committee Chairs

Affiliated Societies

Barbara Noe
(804) 355-2270
celorchids@aol.com

Endowment

Wanda Andrako
(804) 794-3240
wandrako@comcast.com

Hospitality/Social Functions

Barbara Sims
(804) 323-1215
bks@sims.nu

Judges Forum

Joe Mathias
(540) 710-2323
orchidude@aol.com

Librarian and Archives

Steve Partlow
(804) 675-2294
itsbzar@yahoo.com

Plant and Auctions

Bill Akin
(804) 378-0999
akinb@comcast.net

Publicity and Public Relations

Terry Farmer
(804) 746-9586
terryorchids03@yahoo.com

Publications

Jim Creech
(804) 360-1625
jcreech@vcsc.state.va.us

Message From the President



- Maymont Flower and Garden Show - I would like recognize and thank Emerson Warden for helping with the Maymont Show on Sunday Feb. 27.
- Thanks to all the members who helped at the following Spring Events.
 - Stranges Florist: Terry Farmer, Carol Hollenbeck, Mimi Mace, Kay Patrick Charles Gardner, Michael Fine.
 - Boulevard Flowers: Kay Patrick, Terry Farmer
 - SMV-Surf and Turf: Chuck Gardener for helping me at this event
 - GBGH: Jim Creech, Valli LaNeve, Gretchen Rushing, Jim Culbert
- I would like to thank all members who helped make the March Grower's Auction a big success.
Bill Akin -Plant auction committee chairman ; Joe Mathias, Chris Wilkinson, Garland Hanson; Barbi and Steve Partlow, Sue Akin, Buddy Harvie, Debby Sauer, Jim Culbert and Wanda Andrako, Steve Sims, Cassie Wright, Bayne Hawkins and David Sombach.
- Nomination committee has been selected and shall present the nominated slate for office at the April meeting and the election of officers shall be held at the time of the annual meeting of the society in May.

VOS Hospitality Committee Needs Your Help: Both members of our hospitality committee have been injured and unable to do any lifting. They will need a few members to assist them with setup and cleanup. **Food is needed for the April meeting, this event is a joint event with the Charlottesville Orchid Society.** Also please remember to pickup your empty cups, cans, napkins, plates and discard in the many trash cans available in the room.
– Kathy Walker

Committee Messages

Membership Desk

The raffle brought in \$39; thanks to all that donated, and congrats to all the winners.

Please join me in thanking Dick Burch for his many years of service to the VOS membership desk. Dick has resigned his position.

Raffle and Door Prizes are needed. If you have or are considering making a plant, supply or book donation, please consider making it for this meeting. Presently, I do not have anything for the Raffle; this is one of the fund raising efforts. Bring your donations to the raffle desk and we will give you an in-kind donation form for the value of the items donated.



– Valli LaNeve

By-Laws Committee

The By-laws Committee will be making its report at the April meeting. Proposed changes to the By-laws will also be published in the May newsletter.

– Jim Creech

Plants and Auctions

The Grower's Auction was a big success. We sold \$784 more than the budget estimate while the expenses were only about \$20 more. The net to the Society was \$2,402. I want to thank Joe Mathias, Chris Wilkinson, Garland Hanson; Barbi and Steve Partlow, Sue Akin, Buddy Harvie, Debby Sauer, Jim Culbert and Wanda Andrako, Steve Sims, Cassie Wright, Bayne Hawkins and David Sombach for their help at the auction.

– Bill Akin

46 Attend Beginner/ Refresher Class in April

The Orchid Education Class continues to be of interest to Society members eager to increase their knowledge of orchid culture. A total of 46 members and guests (4) attended for the three-plus hour session on April 3 that included culture information on the “holistic care of orchids” by Steve Shifflett as well as additional culture data on other genera by Orchid Doctors Wanda, Buddy and Mike who reviewed problem plants brought in by members, and amply assisted by Steve.

Members bought many plants from Floradise Orchids of Gordonsville, owned and operated by Steve and wife Janet (who assisted with plant sales); picked up orchid catalogs and culture brochures; viewed Library material available; and enjoyed refreshments by Valli and Jim. Valerie assisted Valli at the sign-in desk.

In conclusion, an array of door prizes donated by members of the Society (plants, books, blooming phals, jars of cinnamon, etc.) by VOS (culture books, plants) and by Floradise (blooming orchid) all being won by attendees in the drawing conducted by Sue Akin, Jim and Barbara.

The Committee is very pleased with the third effort to further educate interested members. Appreciation was expressed to all members and guests for their interest and attendance. Somewhere down the road there will be other learning opportunities, time and place unknown at this time. In the interim, the new book “Orchids for Dummies” was highly recommended.

Committee Members Barbara Noe, Bayne Hawkins and Chris Wilkinson.

– Bayne Hawkins



Linda M. Bourgeois
807 Arlington Circle
Richmond, VA 23229
282-7367
lbougeois@comcast.net

Casie and Dave Davis
P.O. Box 126
Gum Spring, VA 23065
457-4201
CasieSDavis@aol.com

Welcome New Members

Gail Miccio
5303 Greentree Drive
Fredericksburg, VA 22407
(540) 834-2345
IGAIL@yahoo.com

Eugene and June Pierson
7350 Clark Circle
Mechanicsville, VA 23111
Home: 746-4343
Work: 764-6513

Rebecca Randolph
4802 Park Avenue
Richmond, VA 23226
359-2331
reblaw@hotmail.com

Questions and Answers About the Henry S. Spencer Trust

This Q & A was developed in response to a comment by Michael Mealy at a recent VOS Board Meeting, who said the membership does not understand the Trust. These questions were designed to help members understand the workings of the Trust as well as some of its short history. This is your money, you need to know about it and how it is managed.

What is the Spencer Trust?

The Henry S. Spencer Lectureship/Speaker Trust was established by Art Burke with the Virginia Orchid Society becoming the co-donor when the VOS agreed at a June 2001 board meeting by agreeing to match his initial contribution. It was set up as an endowment account of VOS with 90% of the Trust's income available "for use towards lecturers/speakers costs and expenses."

Did the membership vote on the establishment of the Trust?

No, at the June 2001 Board meeting when Art Burke formally proposed the creation of the Spencer Trust, he required that the Board make a commitment before the close of the meeting or the proposal would be withdrawn. Once the commitment was made, the membership was notified of the decision in the "From the President's Corner" column in the July 2001 newsletter, with some additional information available with the dues renewal form. When the membership next met in September 2001, it was presented with a budget that included an expense item for the VOS contribution to the trust. The membership was not asked about the Board's decision, but the membership also did not ask about the Trust decision.

Who is Henry S. Spencer?

Henry S. Spencer was one of the founding members of VOS and served as the first president.

How does the Trust work?

The Trust is made up of two parts: the corpus and income. Although not entirely accurate, think of the corpus as savings and the income as interest.

- The corpus portion of the Trust is available only for investment, with the intent to generate income. According to the agreement, "The trust corpus shall not be invaded." This means once the money goes into the savings portion of the trust, it remains there; it can only be used to create income. Donations to the Trust become part of the corpus.
- The VOS is entitled to receive 90% of the Trust's income (if there is any) under the condition that if speakers/lecturers expenses are less than the amount received from the Trust, the unspent portion must be returned to become part of the corpus.

Are there any restrictions on how the money is used?

The money from the Trust can only be used for speakers/lectures costs and expenses which may include speakers for a symposium or special events.

What if the VOS needs money for something important, can they draw any money out of the corpus?

No, that money is NEVER available to the VOS. Even if the VOS disbands at some time the money will go to the AOS.

Is VOS still a donor to the Trust?

Yes. Although members have donated \$2,177 to reimburse the Society, the remaining \$2,833 of the VOS initial donation still resides in the corpus.

How much has the Trust paid to VOS?

If VOS makes use of all the money from the Trust this year, VOS will have received \$3,064 from the Trust since its inception.

Has VOS ever not been paid by the Trust?

In 2003, the VOS Board did not receive any of the 2002 Trust income. Had it been requested, the payment would have been \$1,225, although that amount could have been adjusted because the VOS was overpaid by the Trust in the previous year; the adjusted amount would have been \$753.

What brought about the "Management" document last September?

The original Trust agreement provided only a barebones framework. The management document was to provide a basis of understanding between the committee overseeing the Trust and the Board of how the Trust would operate. Nothing in the original document was changed. It was essentially a management procedure document.

How is the Trust managed?

An Endowment Committee of the VOS is appointed by the president each year. They oversee investments and make changes as they think necessary.

How is the money currently invested?

The Trust is currently invested in four stocks:

- Colonial Properties Trust is a real estate investment firm (the committee managing the Trust purchased Cornerstone Realty Income Trust which has recently merged with Colonial Properties);
- American Capital Strategies provides money to companies for buyouts, acquisitions and recapitalizations;
- Duke Energy is an energy company (natural gas and electricity) with a real estate subsidiary; and
- Capital One Financial Corporation largely provides

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credit for individuals (credit card, car financing).

According to the stockbroker handling the Trust account, the stocks in the account are not appropriate for an income-generating trust. The stocks are not well diversified; they are in closely related economic areas that do well or do poorly together. In addition, based on risk level, the broker thought the only stock that should be in a Trust is Capital One Financial Corporation.

How much money is in the Trust at present?

According to the March 1, 2005 brokerage report there is a total of \$18,794.31 in the Trust.

How does the money get from the Trust to the VOS account?

The original Trust agreement does not specify any procedures, but according to the management document, the Trust “shall be paid to the VOS treasurer by January 31.” A future Board could decide to forego payment (by returning the check or not identifying any qualifying expenses) for a year or more in order to allow the Trust to grow. The membership would not necessarily be included in the decision; this has happened in the past when the Board did not request funds from the Trust.

Can the Board of VOS decide to transfer funds from VOS to the Trust?

Yes, it can happen in at least three ways.

- The Board can make it a budgeted contribution;
- The Board can vote to make a contribution outside of budgeted expenses; or
- The Board can refuse to make a claim for all or part of the Trust.

Prior Boards have made these or equivalent decisions without seeking the approval or opinion of the membership.

Can I still donate to the Spencer Trust?

Yes. There are two ways to donate to the Trust.

- A donation directly to the Trust will increase the amount of money in the corpus. VOS will indirectly benefit through its share of the interest income. The VOS portion of the income can only be used for speaker/lecturer costs and expenses.
- A donation to reimburse VOS will not change the amount of money in the Trust corpus. Although the donor gets credit for contributing to the Trust, the donation will go into the ordinary VOS account and can be used for any VOS expense.

Raffle and Door Prize Winners

Donated Item	Donor	Winner
Door Prize		
Orchid Notepad	Anonymous	Brenda Capps
4 tickets (Exhibits and IMAX)	Science Museum of Virginia	Darryl Smith
Peter's Orchid fertilizer	Anonymous	Valerie Thacker
Peter's Orchid fertilizer	Anonymous	Terry Farmer
Ortho Slug and Snail Killer	Anonymous	Dawna Jafferian
Ortho Slug and Snail Killer	Anonymous	Kenny White
Raffle Prize		
\$25 Gift Certificate	Great Big Greenhouse	Barbara Simms
Growing Orchids by Brian and Wilma Richardson	VOS	June Pierson
\$25 Gift Certificate	Krull and Smith Orchids	Cassie Wright
Orchid Earrings	Terry Farmer	Carmen Turkoff

As you think about repotting this spring, remember that Joe Mathias (540-710-2323) has a variety of potting mixes, pots and other orchid supplies available at every meeting.

Mini-Culture Lesson

Debbie Sauer will be speaking on making slug traps at the April meeting.

We are still looking for feed-back on presentations useful for the membership. Contact me at mlfine@vcu.edu or 784-0304.

– Michael L. Fine

Jim Creech, Editor
12308 Hardwick Court
Glen Allen, VA 23059-5374
jcreech@vcsc.state.va.us

Virginia Orchid Society

The Virginia Orchid Society

Founded in 1949, we are a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization.
We are affiliated with the American Orchid Society and Orchid Digest.

2004-2005 VOS Officers

President Kathy Walker kwalker4orchids2@aol.com (804) 737-0203	President Elect Jim Creech jcreech@vcsc.state.va.us (804) 360-1625
Vice-President/Program Chuck Gardner cgardner@vcu.edu (804) 553-1583	Treasurer Sue Akin pksue@comcast.net (804) 378-0999
Recording Secretary Barbi Partlow itsbzar@yahoo.com (804) 675-2294	Corresponding Secretary/ Membership Services Valli LaNeve laneve@infionline.net (804) 360-1625

Website: vaorchidsociety.tripod.com

The **VOS Newsletter** is a publication of the Virginia Orchid Society and is distributed to the Society's members ten times per year, prior to all club meetings.

Submissions to the newsletters should be sent to the editor early enough to arrive by the 25th of the month prior to a meeting.

Unless otherwise credited, all images in this publication were by the editor.

The Virginia Orchid Society meets at the Science Museum of Virginia, 2500 W. Broad Street, Richmond, at 2:00 P.M. of the third Sunday of each month from September through June. Yearly dues are \$22.50 per individual, or \$30.00 per family. Dues should be paid to the VOS Treasurer, Sue Akin.

**Hot Line
Contacts**

Wanda and John Andrako
jandrako@aol.com
(804) 794-3240

Buddy Harvie
llewellynh@worldnet.att.net
(804) 272-3784

Bayne Hawkins
baynehawkins@comcast.net
(804) 560-0205