

# THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE

# VIRGINIA ORCHID SOCIETY

**FEBRUARY 20, 2005 MEETING**  
**MEETING : 2:00 P.M.**  
**PLACE: SCIENCE MUSEUM OF VIRGINIA**  
**PROGRAM: ROBERT FUCHS, R.F. ORCHIDS**  
**"CURRENT TRENDS IN ASCOCENDA BREEDING"**

## Bob Fuchs to Speak

Robert Fuchs of R.F. Orchids may well be the foremost authority on the culture of vandaceous orchids. Much of his notoriety began in 1984 when the plants of R.F. Orchids won 12 individual medals, their exhibit won a Best in Class trophy, and Vanda. Deva 'Robert' was honored as the Grand Champion of the World. Since then, R.F. Orchids has enjoyed much success both within the national and international orchid communities.



Although he is a first generation commercial grower, Bob is the third generation of his family with an interest in orchids. His grandfather, Fred, Sr., spent significant time in the swamps around Homestead, FL, collecting orchids in the wild. From the age of 10, Bob accompanied his grandfather in exploring some of the many swamp and wilderness areas, which were then abundant in south Florida. His grandfather would tie a rope around Bob's waist, attach it to his own belt, and off they'd go. Bob remembers falling many times, and his grandfather using the rope to pull him out. That rope prevented him from getting lost and, perhaps more importantly, it kept him out of the alligator holes.

When he was 14, Bob went on his first salvage-collecting trip out of the country. Bob accompanied his father Fred, Jr. and two friends in a small, two-engine plane. They flew from the Homestead airport to the Dominican Republic. Running short on fuel,

*Continued on page 5*

**FEBRUARY 6, 2005 CLASS**  
**CLASS: 2:00 P.M.**  
**PLACE: SCIENCE MUSEUM OF VIRGINIA**  
**PROGRAM: LEON BLUMREICH, PINECREST ORCHIDS**  
**"CULTURE OF PAPHIOPEDILUM**  
**AND PHRAGMIPEDIUM ORCHIDS"**

**FEBRUARY 2005**  
**VOL. XXII, ISSUE 7**

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## Focus on Members

### Meet

#### Jim Creech

*Is there an anecdote about yourself that you think particularly captures how you feel about orchids?*

This is the question I get the most grief from those who have answered these questions, but I think it gives a lot of insight on the featured member. Growing orchids reminds me of the same struggles I had to reach several of my personal achievements. Earning Eagle in the Boy Scouts, Life Master in duplicate bridge, Ph.D. in academics and growing orchids all require a certain level of acumen and a lot of perseverance. The big difference is the level of confidence I had in meeting each achievement; I felt a lot more confident that I would reach all of those other goals than I do that any of my orchids will rebloom. But when they do rebloom, it feels like a major accomplishment.

*How long have you been a member of VOS? What benefit do you enjoy most?*



I joined about three years ago, and was asked to take over the newsletter last April. I have truly enjoyed a number of the speakers that VOS has brought in over the years. We have been fortunate to have very knowledgeable people coming in. The speaker I have enjoyed most was Chuck Akers when he discussed the *Phrag. bessae* hybrids.

*When and what first made orchids of interest to you?*

I have been drawn to the slipper orchids since I was a child. On the farm where I was born, there were some wild lady slippers (my guess is *Cyp. kentuckiense*). More recently, as Valli and I started to collect orchids, I preferred the *Paphs* and *Phrags* to the other genera. Now, out of a collection of about 65, almost 50 are slipper orchids.

*What is your favorite orchid and why?*

Whatever *Paph* or *Phrag* that is in bloom. Right now, I am torn between two *Paph* hybrids – one is Black Currants ‘Plum’ x Macabre ‘Brawny’, and Oriental Frieze ‘Green Jamboree’ x *sukhakulii*. Our *Phrag*. Cape Sunset is in spike and *Paph*. (Pinnocchio x *esquirolei*) is starting to bud, so I suspect that I will be torn again very soon.

## Committee Messages

### Membership Desk

In January, we had 71 members in attendance along with three visitors. The raffle brought in \$57; thanks to all that donated, and congrats to all the winners.



I have been assured that the name badges will be at the February meeting. I am also seeking volunteers to help with the membership desk for the remainder of the year. These volunteers would be substitutes for when the regular staff are unable to assist.

#### Reminders

- If you have not picked up your copy of the Roster, please remember to do so. It will be at the table as you first enter the meeting room.
- The entry forms for the Showtable will be available at the raffle table. Stop by when you arrive so that you can ensure that your plant will be entered.

Please call or email Valli (360-1625/laneve@infionline.net) prior to the meeting should you wish to contribute plants or supplies to be a Door or Raffle Prize. We encourage and appreciate your generosity.

– Valli LaNeve

### Publications/Judge’s Forum

This month’s Showtable results will appear in the next newsletter.

– Jim Creech/Joe Mathias

### Plant and Auctions

I want to remind everyone that the Grower’s Auction will be coming up on March 20. As typical for our auctions, there will be a preview period and an early start time for the meeting. Be sure to put this date on your calendars.

– Bill Akin



*Lycaste* Walnut Valley ‘Black’s Glow’  
Grown and image by Allen Black

### VOS Board Meeting

March 31, 6:30 to 8:30 P.M.

Science Museum of Virginia - Discovery Room



**In Memoria  
Merritt Huntington**

Long-time VOS member, Merritt Huntington died on January 28, 2005. His death is attributed to complications following a fall. He last joined us at the May 2004 meeting where he spoke on historic Cattleyas and their influence on Cattleya breeding in the first Henry Spencer lecture. At the same time, VOS also made him an honorary member of the Society. A brief biography can be found in the May 2004 newsletter, and Art Burke recalled an early experience with Merritt in the June 2004 newsletter - both newsletters can be found on the VOS website. Meanwhile, the thoughts and prayers of VOS members are with Merritt's family.

*I would like to express my deepest sympathy to the family of Merritt Huntington. May beautiful memories remain for a man who touched so many hearts throughout the orchid community. He will truly be missed!*

*Kathy Walker*

**Message from AOS Executive Director Lee Cooke**

January 28, 2005

TO: Orchid Community

FROM: Lee S. Cooke

It is with an extremely heavy heart that I pass along to you very sad news.

Merritt Huntington, 78, long-time contributor to the AOS and the orchid community, passed away very early this morning, January 28, due to complications following a fall.

A list of Merritt's contributions to the AOS and the orchid community would be rivaled in length only by a list of friends he made for "orchids" and the number of hearts and minds he touched during his long journey. Four honors in particular stand out as singularly reflective of the stature that his orchidist peers held him - he was a past President of the Society; he was an Honorary Vice-President; he was honored by his peers with the formation of the prestigious Huntington Award; and he was an AOS Gold Medal recipient - twice.

Merritt's leadership and commitment were evident in so many areas over the course of the past 50+ years - at the Board level, certainly (he filled every AOS leadership position [a few several times] and Chaired and served on many committees), but also at the local, regional and specialty-organization levels. Merritt was Mr. Ambassador for the hobby - with a capital A, and arguably unparalleled in the annals of orchid history. An inspiration to decades of volunteers, the "Great White Father" of the AOS immersed himself in spreading the good word about the hobby and the many volunteer orchid organizations with

which he was associated. He was a keen orchid historian and educator. Of course, his Kensington Orchids nursery was one of the premier commercial firms in the country ... to the day he closed its doors in 2002. In short, Merritt touched the orchid community - and, in particular, the AOS - in a very special way. The orchid world's auctioneer-supreme, complete with that sometimes gaudy but-always-orchid tie and his special vest, was a friend to all, and his was a dedication to service that was on the highest plane imaginable. He set the Gold standard for the AOS ... quite literally. Some people make indelible marks upon the heart. Merritt Huntington was one of them.

At this point, the Huntington family is planning a private interment service preceded by a memorial service at Collins Funeral Home (University Boulevard and Dennis Avenue in Silver Spring, Maryland - 301-593-9500). Times for the service have not yet been set; if you're interested in learning such specifics in a couple of days, feel free to ask me to include you in a follow-up email; I'll also post the information on the AOS's Web site, in the AOS Forum. The Huntington family specifically noted their preference that memorial donations in Merritt's name be made to the AOS in lieu of flowers.

I'm sure you join the AOS staff and Merritt's countless friends throughout the world's orchid community in extending our deepest sympathies and prayers to his wife Helen, to his sons Tom, Russell, Richard and Roger, and to the rest of the Huntington family during this difficult time.

May the good Lord grant Merritt a peaceful final journey. His Maker will certainly greet him with, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Lee S. Cooke, Executive Director  
American Orchid Society

## Getting Ready for Fuchs

As VOS prepares for February's visit from Bob Fuchs of R.F. Orchids, we have recognized that this is a speaker that we need to make advance plans for. We have been in contact with his staff, and they have provided the information that appears below. The important aspect is that the number of plants that Bob can bring without an advance sale is restricted, so if you want something in particular, you will need to place an advance order.

Chuck Gardner has agreed to coordinate the advance order. You can contact him at (804) 553-1583 or email at [cgardner@vcu.edu](mailto:cgardner@vcu.edu). Chuck will have catalogs available at the January meeting (although RF Orchids will be printing a new catalog in February). You can also check on their current offerings at [www.rforchids.com](http://www.rforchids.com).

If your members want to put together an advance order, we can do that as well. Our terms for that are as follows:

"The minimum order would have to be \$200 (total), and we can offer a 20% discount on this advance order. That basically translates to free shipping on it, as we'd prefer to ship it in advance (weather permitting, of course). We also require that someone from VOS coordinate and manage the order... meaning that you (or whomever from VOS) takes all the individual orders from the members and consolidates them into one order to us, and then when the plants are shipped, handles the distribution to the individuals who ordered. Or, if the society wants to place an order for itself (for resale to members or however you want to handle it) that's fine, too.

"If possible, we'd prefer to have the order in hand at least a week (two or more would be better) prior to the shipping date. We'd ship to arrive a day or two before Bob arrives, so the plants will be fresh for the meeting. He will bring plants as well, but there's a limit to the number he can bring as checked baggage on the plane, so if you (and/or members) want something specific from our catalog, we'll need to know that well in advance."

## Bob Fuchs to Speak *Continued from page 1*

they had to land in Santiago rather than go on to the capital Santo Domingo. They landed despite being unable to contact the Santiago tower because the fuel problem was critical. This action led to the taxing plane being escorted by military jeeps with soldiers holding machine guns. However, when it stopped on the runway, Bob's father held out a bucket of Kentucky Fried Chicken to the soldiers. The soldiers smiled, put down their guns, escorted the Americans to the authorities, and then allowed them to stay and salvage orchids for three days.

Bob has spent many years collecting and studying orchids in different areas of Central and South America. He is also involved in conserving and perpetuating the native species of Southeast Asia with a breeding program at his growing facility in Thailand. An accredited American Orchid Society judge, he travels extensively throughout the world to attend orchid shows, present lectures and programs to orchid societies and other groups, and he has written many articles for orchid publications. He is the author of the section on "Vanda Culture" in the American Orchid Society's Handbook on *Orchid Culture*.

R.F. Orchids celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2000. In the years since the nursery's founding, it has won more American Orchid Society awards – more than 700 since 1985 – than any other nursery or individual grower. Those awards include more CCM/AOS awards for culture, given to the grower not the plant, than have been awarded to any other grower in the world. In addition, R.F. Orchids' plants have also won many FCC/AOS awards, and Bob's show exhibits have won more than forty Show Trophies from the American Orchid Society for the Most Outstanding Orchid Exhibit at an AOS-sanctioned show.

In the fall of 2002, Bob was appointed Co-Chairman of the 19<sup>th</sup> World Orchid Congress scheduled for the spring of 2008 in Miami Beach. The South Florida Orchid Society and the Ft. Lauderdale Orchid Society will jointly be the host for this event and it will be held at the Miami Beach Convention Center.

– Jim Creech

## Raffle and Door Prize Winners

Donated Item	Donor	Winner
<b>Door Prize</b>		
2 tickets (Exhibits and IMAX)	Science Museum of Virginia	Mike Altas
A \$10 Dipping Certificate	Melting Pot	Barbara Sims
A pint of Cinnamon	Gourmet Cookies by Valli	Bayne Hawkins
<b>Raffle Prize</b>		
Blooming Lc. Green Veil	VOS	Caitlan Mealy
Blooming Paph. Winston Churchill	Allen Black	Bob Pollock
Blooming Blc. Fordyce Fantasy	Allen Black	Kay Patrick
Three decorative clay pots	Thomas Foster	Larry O'Neill

# Beginner/Refresher Class in February

The second Orchid Education Class will take place February 6 at the Virginia Science Museum in the Atrium (one floor down) on the following schedule:

**From 2:00 to 3:00 p.m.** - Leon Blumreich, Pinecrest Orchids  
“Culture of Paphiopedilum and Phragmipedium Orchids”  
An informal discussion during which Le will advise on their culture and answer your questions.

**From 3:00 to 3:30 p.m.** - Break Time  
Check out what’s available from the VOS Library, picking up pertinent culture information, catalogs and purchasing plants from Pinecrest Orchids of Charlottesville.

**From 3:30 to 5:00 p.m.** - Orchid Doctors  
Three advanced Society growers, Wanda Andrako, Buddy Harvie and Mike Fine, will take a look at ANY of your problem plants (up to a maximum of three per member) and give an opinion on what’s going on plus suggestions that should improve the condition of your orchid.

Further, there will be opportunities to visit with and get to know other members in a casual atmosphere, enjoy refreshments, win door prizes, and more.

Committee Co-Chairs:  
Barbara Noe (355-2270) and Bayne Hawkins (560-0205)  
Committee Member:  
Chris Wilkinson (227-3927)

– Bayne Hawkins

# Event Planning Calendar

**February 6** VOS Beginner/Refresher Education Class, Science Museum of Virginia, 2:00 p.m. 2500 W. Broad St., Richmond, VA. Speaker: Leon Blumreich, Pinecrest Orchids. Orchid Doctors: Wanda Andrako, Mike Fine, and Buddy Harvie

**February 6** National Capital Judging Center, 12:00 p.m., National Arboretum, 24th at R St., NE, Washington DC 20002. (Send plants or cut flowers by Friday to: Mary Ann Jarvis, Program Director, U.S. National Arboretum, Washington, DC 20002.)

**February 6** Tidewater Orchid Society, Norfolk Botanical Garden, 2:00 p.m. Art Chadwick, Chadwick and Son Orchids

**February 13** Charlottesville Orchid Society, 2:00 p.m. Church of Our Savior, 1165 E. Rio Road, Charlottesville, VA. Speaker: Art Chadwick, Chadwick and Son Orchids.

**February 20** VOS monthly meeting, Science Museum of Virginia, 2:00 p.m. 2500 W. Broad St., Richmond, VA. Speaker: Robert Fuchs, R.F. Orchids.

**February 24-27** Maymont Flower and Garden Show, Greater Richmond Convention Center, Richmond, VA.

**March 2-6** North Carolina Piedmont Orchid Society Show, Charlotte Merchandise Mart, 2500 E. Independence Blvd., Charlotte, NC. Contact: Harry Galls, 19401 Mary Ardrey Cir., Cornelius, NC 28031; (704) 895-0099.

**March 6** National Capital Judging Center, 12:00 p.m., National Arboretum, 24th at R St., NE, Washington DC 20002. (Send plants or cut flowers by Friday to: Mary Ann Jarvis, Program Director, U.S. National Arboretum, Washington, DC 20002.)

**March 6** Tidewater Orchid Society, Norfolk Botanical Garden, 2:00 p.m. Speaker: Plato Mathews, Orchid Alley.

**March 13** Charlottesville Orchid Society, 2:00 p.m. Church of Our Savior, 1165 E. Rio Road, Charlottesville, VA. Speaker: Tom Nasser, Carolina Orchids .

**March 20** VOS monthly meeting, Science Museum of Virginia, 2:00 p.m. 2500 W. Broad St., Richmond, VA. Grower’s Auction pre-sale viewing begins at 1:00 p.m.

**April 2-3** Central Pennsylvania Orchid Society Show, Ag Arena, Penn State Campus, State College, PA. Contact: Cathy Riemer, 434 Chestnut St., Bellefonte, PA 16823; (814) 353-8741.

**April 3** National Capital Judging Center, 12:00 p.m., National Arboretum, 24th at R St., NE, Washington DC 20002. (Send plants or cut flowers by Friday to: Mary Ann Jarvis, Program Director, U.S. National Arboretum, Washington, DC 20002.)

**April 10** Tidewater Orchid Society, Norfolk Botanical Garden, 2:00 p.m. Speaker: Dr. Art Kaplan, Tidewater Orchid Society.

**Presidential Message** *continued from p. 2*

Saturday, March 12 Stranges Florist Spring Event  
Terry Farmer

Great Big Greenhouse Spring Event  
Jim Creech

- VOS Board meeting has been scheduled for March 31 from 6:30-8:30 at the SMV-Discovery Room.
- A By-Laws committee has been formed, at this time no meeting has taken place.

– Kathy Walker

**Welcome  
New Members**

Vincent and Elizabeth Guarino  
8411 Lyndale Drive  
Richmond, VA 23236-6039  
276-0071

**Virginia Orchid Society at the Maymont Flower and Garden Show**  
**Plant List**

**Date of event:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Pick up date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Return date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Member:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Received by:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Pick up date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Returned by:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>PLANTS NAME AND PARENTAGE</b>	<b>AWARDED RIBBONS</b>
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

Jim Creech, Editor  
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**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**

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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.

**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 25<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to a meeting.

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

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