

Richmond Orchid Alliance

*We are all about Orchids!*

July 2008

Wanda Andrako, Editor

ROA4U2@verizon.net

### Inside This Issue

- Page 2 Repotting on the Tracks  
About This Bulletin
- Page 3 October Bus Trip  
Thank You  
Missing  
Consultations
- Page 4 Orchid Information, Chapter 3
- Page 5 Growing Tips  
Board of Directors  
Committee Chairmen  
Suntrust
- Page 6 Growing Tips (continued)  
Address Changes

### Submission Deadline

Articles, pictures, and other content to be included in the ROA Bulletin must be received by the 15th each month.

### Upcoming Events

**July 13**

Joe Francis  
*Orchid Viruses*

**August 10**

Jeff Morris  
*Phrag Culture*

**September 14**

Dr. Clark Riley  
*Ten Worst Mistakes With Orchids*

**October 12**

*Bus Trip To NCOS*

**November 9**

TBA

ROA activities and speakers emphasize the how-to and hands-on aspects of growing orchids.

# ROA Bulletin

## Orchid Viruses

A S E R I O U S P R O B L E M



The purchaser of this Doritaenopsis Purple Martin 'KS' found it was already infected with the Cymbidium Mosaic virus. Photo by Jacob Knecht ([www.flickr.com/photos/morabeza79/224878468](http://www.flickr.com/photos/morabeza79/224878468)).

There has been a lot of discussion recently about orchid viruses, what they are, how plants get them, what can be done to avoid them, and what we should do once a plant is identified as having a virus. Our speaker will teach us about them and will demonstrate the latest testing methods that are available to the home orchid grower.

Joe Frances is a hobbyist orchid grower whose avocation began some twenty plus years ago when his wife brought home a mature, Cattleya skinneri in bloom and suggested that there was room in the family greenhouse amongst the annuals and vegetable seedlings for orchids. As many of us know, it only takes one orchid and you

may be addicted!

That plant led to an expansion of their greenhouse space from 180 sq.ft. to three structures totaling over 2,400 sq. ft. of growing space. Joe has perhaps 2,000 orchid plants under cultivation. His special interest is in the standard Cattleya, but the Oncidium and other genus capture equal bench space. Joe has twenty-four AOS awards almost equally divided between the flower and the cultural categories. He does not breed or sell orchid plants.

**BRING PLANTS FOR SPEAKER TO COMMENT ON BUT KEEP THEM APART FROM OTHER PLANTS. ✨**

**Members will be able to sell plants. 10% of the sale price is to be paid ROA.**



## About This Bulletin

The Richmond Orchid Alliance meets at the Science Museum of Virginia, 2500 W. Broad Street, Richmond, at 2:00 P.M. of the second Sunday of each month from January through November. Yearly dues are \$25.00 per individual, or \$30.00 for a joint membership. Dues should be paid to the ROA Finance Director, Judy Craggs, P.O. Box 8682, Richmond, VA 23226.

The Richmond Orchid Alliance is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. Any donations to ROA are tax deductible. We are affiliated with Orchid Digest and a member of the American Orchid Society.

The ROA Bulletin is a publication of the Richmond Orchid Alliance and is distributed to the Society's members monthly, prior to all club meetings.

Submissions to the Bulletin should be sent to the editor early enough to arrive by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to a meeting.

## Repotting on the Tracks

Outside of temperatures being around 102 degrees, the day was beautiful. A light breeze blew for a good part of the day.

Repotters were Sue Akin, Wanda Andrako, Steve & Barbi Patlow, Valli Laneve and Jim Creech, Thuyen Trevino, Arline Murphy, Van Williams, Buddy Harvie, and Mary Ann Adams and a rare assist by Bill Akin.

Van Williams himself came to learn and had a wonderful time working with both guest plants as well as his own. He even bought a few that he repotted just to get that little extra experience. John Hutcheson and Mike Chambliss worked on their plants and felt that they learned a great deal while having a good time. We received one new member who brought his own pots and medium and was just enjoying doing his own plants without help.

Judy Craggs and Nancy Thompson handled the entrance area, seeing that people paid for those plants to be repotted, those items bought and directing folks to the right location for having their work done.

There were over forty plants donated by members for sale to the public. Most were sold with a few going home with those persons who assisted with the repotting. There were some plants remaining that were taken home by members to be returned for sale to the membership at the next meeting.

There were three additional memberships received during the day and several volunteers (recruited by Valli) who will be adding to those already working within ROA. This event was truly an educational session for those bringing plants for potting.

We started around 12:30PM and closed around 3:00PM. The heat, this being the second continual day over 100 degrees probably kept our attendance down. We did, however, have advertising mainly being by signs at various stores, the Great Big Greenhouse as well as word of mouth. The enthusiasm, however, of our repotters to jump in and get plants done made just being there the "best". Anyone who missed stopping by missed being part of a good time. Our main drink was water, which was recommended by weather reporters to be taken throughout the day.

Thanks to those who came to work (and did with a willing mind and body), to those who donated plants, and to those who bought that which was for sale. ✨



Repotting at the Tracks was a chance for members to share culture tips and socialize.



Buddy makes a pot clip.



Thuyen and Valli potting orchids.

## Consultations for Problem Plants

If you have a plant that is not looking right or you think has problems, feel free to bring it to the meeting and we will have someone knowledgeable in growing that particular type plant help you diagnose the problems. This is how we learn. Contact Sue Akin when coming in and she will help find the person to help you.

## October Bus Trip

Remember that the October meeting will be a bus trip to the National Capital Orchid Society Show in D.C. We have reserved a bus for the trip but may need to change the size if more people want to go. We will leave in the a.m. from the Science Museum and return in the mid-afternoon. A fun outing with members and you will get to see the show, see what the 20 vendors have available for sale and not have to drive or hunt a parking space! These trips are a lot of fun and we get to know each other better and learn more about orchids.



*Calanthe vesitita*, grown by Jim and Valli Creech.

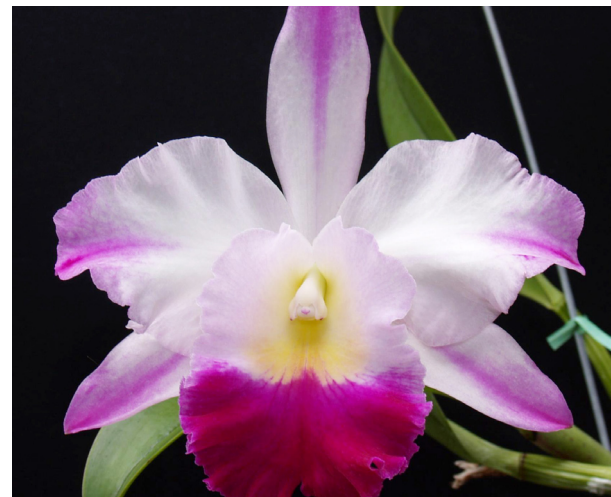
We have to pay for the bus now in order to avoid paying the higher prices in the fall when the gas prices are expected to be much higher. The price for one person is \$35 and \$60 per couple. Make your reservations now so that you will not miss out. We need the reservation and fee by the July meeting. We want as many members to be able to go as possible. Feel free to invite family and friends. ☆

**MAKE RESERVATIONS BY JULY 13 MEETING.**

## Thank You

Thank all of you for helping make our repotting 2008 a success. This is one of the ways that we all learn about orchids and ROA is strengthened through members participation in these events.

We will have some nicely grown, non-blooming plants available at the July meeting. Members that took home the unsold plants should bring them to be sold at the July meeting. ☆



Blc. Laura Bush. Laura Bush is a recent addition to the Creech collection.

## MISSING

One pair of black cupshaped nose cutters missing from the repotting session. If you saw or used them, please call Bill Akin 378-0999.



## Orchid Information, Chapter 3

Orchid flowers are the most highly evolved in the plant kingdom, with only the iris rating a rather distant second.

The criteria scientists use to determine a flower's status on the evolutionary scale has to do with, what do you know? SEX. In an orchid, the separate male and female reproductive organs have been fused into a single structure called the column. Even the

pollen has evolved so that it is no longer 1000's of separate dust-like grains, but rather 2 to 8 waxy pellets, called pollinia, each containing thousands and thousands of grains of pollen. These 2 changes make it possible for one single pollination to fertilize hundreds of thousands, even millions of orchid seed, and considering a single cattleya seed pod can contain as many as 5 million seeds, you can see why this is necessary.

With that many seeds in one single pod, if all the orchid seeds produced by all the orchids in one single year grew to adulthood, we'd all be walking around ear lobe in orchids. The very fact that we aren't, says something about the obstacles orchid seeds must face.

To begin with, orchid seeds – among the smallest in the world – have virtually no seed coat. If a seed lands in a patch of hot sun, it is rapidly cooked. If it lands in a puddle of water, it drowns. If it lands in a too-dry spot, it rapidly dehydrates. To further complicate matters, the seeds are rather short lived – viable for only a few months. And to add insult, orchids have practically no food reserves and have trouble making their own. Most can only grow in combination with a certain mycorrhizal fungus that manufactures simple sugars the plant can use.

Now a relationship of this nature is nothing new in the plant kingdom, but it does make it more difficult for the seeds to land in a suitable spot for germination.

With all these strikes against them, you can see why it is virtually important to an orchid to insure it's pollination, and to that end orchids have gone to amazing lengths. ☆



Masdevallia imposter, grown by Jim and Valli Creech.



Lc. Gran Success 'Cheetah', grown by Jim and Valli Creech. Gran Success is one of Ervin Granville's blue orchids. It wasn't so blue after all.

## Board of Directors

**Wanda Andrako**  
President

**Thuyen Trevino**  
Vice-President

**Judy Craggs**  
Treasurer

**Nancy Thompson**  
Secretary

**Betty Lu Guarino**  
Outreach Director

**Bill Akin**  
Director at Large

**Rick Santakis**  
Director at Large

**Dermot Murphy**  
Photographer

**Wanda Andrako**  
Editor

## Committee Chairmen

**Arlene Murphy**  
Showcase

**Mary Ann Adams & Barbi Partlow**  
Membership

**Vince Guarino**  
Fund Raising

**Steve Partlow**  
Refreshment

## SunTrust

Remember that if you have signed up for the SunTrust My Cause campaign that you will need to use your check card for a credit card at least once. This requires a purchase of any size for which you must sign. I thought it was a debit card but was informed that you had to sign for an item at least once.

## Growing Tips for June

By Courtney Hackney

“THE MOVE” is done! About 4000 orchids (really just 852 unless you count the babies) have made the 458 mile trip south. There are many tricks to successfully moving a collection learned over the years, but each time I move my greenhouse and orchids there are some new lessons too. It does not matter if you are moving your orchids across the country or across town; the only difference is the time it takes to move.

The first trick is to avoid disease. When orchids are moved roots are damaged, leaves cracked, and blooms broken. Before making any move, do your best to eliminate any scale or rots in your collection. This may include isolating infected plants if there is not enough time to complete the treatment. Treatment with an antibiotic/antifungal agent is also a good idea. Kocide is an old fashioned, but very effective copper-based, general fungicide and antibiotic that I like because it coats leaves light blue. For my purpose, that is ideal because I can tell that each plant has been treated. Treat a few days ahead of time to avoid any toxicity problems that might arise from handling your orchids. Check the product label to be sure of handling and reentry time.

It is also ideal to move your orchids after you have allowed them to dry thoroughly, even more than normal. Your orchids may seem unhappy to be so dry, but this, along with the Kocide tends to limit rots that turn up when orchids are packed tightly. In “Nature” orchids survive droughts just fine



Pyp. Mariposa, grown by Jim and Valli Creech. Mariposa is unusual because it has three flowers on two inflorescences (one of the inflorescences branched).

and will quickly re-hydrate once they are back in your new growing area.

During this time of year, orchids are in a growth mode, which means new growths and roots. There will be some inevitable damage, but this can be lessened by good planning. Plastic shipping containers can be purchased for any pot size. This commercial product is used by commercial nurseries to move plants in flower and bud and provides space between plants. A piece of open newspaper over the pot opening before dropping in the pot will provide a physical barrier between plants, preventing possible transfer of bacteria and fungi from plant to plant. Roots will inevitably be damaged, allowing fluid to be transferred to other damaged roots. This is a prime way that viruses are transmitted.

If you are transporting your orchids by car or truck pay careful attention to temperature. In winter, it is a good idea to move during the day and in summer at night. Most garden stores sell remote digital thermometers used to remotely monitor you greenhouse temperature. These work equally well in a truck or in the trunk of a car, allowing you to assess any

## Address Changes

If you have moved, changed your telephone number or email address, please email Richmond Orchid Alliance with the change at ROA4U2@verizon.net or to P.O. Box 8682, Richmond, VA 23226.

We don't want your Bulletin to be delayed or not received. This is an important part of your membership.

We're on the Web! Visit us at:  
[www.richmondorchidalliance.com](http://www.richmondorchidalliance.com)

## Growing Tips for June

temperature extremes during the trip.

No matter how successful your growing was before, a new location will require some adaptation by both you and your orchids. New water sources may require a change in fertilizer or even media.

Light will be the first problem. Once you have your orchids in their new location, carefully examine the light. It is a good idea to provide less light than you had before, at least initially. Not every leaf on every plant in the old location was exposed to ambient light because some were shaded by other

plants.

Place your orchids in their new home, but wait a day or so before watering. Let the wounded roots and leaves heal. Any obvious damaged tissues should be removed and the wound treated with cinnamon powder or hydrogen peroxide. Once wounds have healed a day, re-hydrate your orchids thoroughly. After another week, reapply a light treatment of your chosen fungicide/antibiotic. Pay careful attention to your orchids for a couple of weeks to be sure no other problems arise. ✨

AMERICAN  
ORCHID  
SOCIETY

ROA is affiliated with the American Orchid Society. Memberships are \$60.00 per year and include the monthly magazine Orchids. Details are at [www.orchidweb.org](http://www.orchidweb.org). AOS is a 501 (c) (3) organization.

**ROA**  
Richmond Orchid Alliance

P.O. Box 8682

Richmond, VA 23226

