



Newsletter of the Spokane Orchid Society

April 2026

Board Members:

- * President: Jim Pearce
- * Vice President: Erin Nelson
- * Secretary : Edwin Weber & Savannah Brommer
- * Treasurer: Jo E. Cook
- * Show Chairperson: Linda Drummond
- * AOS Representative: Harvey Singleton
- * Newsletter Editor: Suzanne Sawyer
- * Member at Large: Donna Foreman
- * Member at Large: Ernie Smith

Committee Chairs:

- * Librarian: Scott Rettenmund
- * Refreshments: Jeanne McKinnie

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President's Thoughts

WOW! What a great orchid show. This was one of the best shows in years. It was fun to walk around the crowds of visitors buying plants and to see the vendors with smiles on their faces. Each vendor I talked to said they wanted to come back next year!

This attitude was due to your participation and your orchids. I want to thank ALL of you who put in your time to make this happen; it was a great sacrifice for many. I especially want to thank Linda and her team for the extraordinary job to make this happen. As I have said before, my job is easy when there are so many of you doing your parts so well!

Suzanne has listed the AOS awards presented to our members and others in this newsletter. There were quite a few nominations with 4 orchids being awarded. One was an FCC, the highest AOS award. VERY RARE! It was given to George Grantham of the NWOS, a long time and good friend of the Spokane Orchid Society.

Hope to see you at our April meeting where we will continue as one, if not the best, orchid societies in the northwest

THANK YOU,

Jim

SOS April 2026 Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Time/Location
Wednesday, April 8, 2026	* Orchid Society General Meeting Refreshments: Mem & Stan and Colton Finch	5:30 PM: Social Time 6:00 PM: Meeting starts Manito Park Meeting Room * Need to leave Bldg. by 8 PM
Saturday, April 25, 2026	Garden and Greenhouse Tour at the home of Scott Rettenmund	10 AM to 1:00 PM 1028 E 33rd Spokane, WA 99203

2026 Orchid Show Wrap-up From Linda

2026 -The year the Spokane Orchid show took on a life of its own. Little did we know last year when we set the date in March we would have the warmest, driest winter in Washington history - until the Show weekend. Snow, sleet, freezing temperatures, pass closures, a vendor, photographer and judge canceling among other challenges. Yet at 10 am Saturday morning when the doors opened, the show looked great and we again had record attendance.

Thanks to all the volunteers who made the show possible and a special thanks to those who worked from set up to take down. What an amazing job you did!

The show committee has already had one wrap-up meeting and another is scheduled next week. Some of the items we are working on for next year include (not in order of importance)

- Marketing effort 12 months a year (we are all in marketing)
- Better area for classes and PA system to announce
- Supply area near registration with tape, scissors, etc.
- Registration is only that Friday and Saturday during judging.
- Member purse/valuables storage will be at the member table
- Member table- a heroic effort by Annette and Jo. Need more help cashiering and more help in sales.
- Ribbon judging-need more training for team captains. Dry run at a meeting?
- More signage at the show.

I'm sure there are more ideas out there as we all see the show from a different perspective. Please let us know what your thoughts are and 2027 will be the best show yet! Thanks again for a great Orchid Show!

Linda



Spokane Orchid Society Board members have also been working on a calendar of events, presentations and activities for the remainder of 2026. As always, these plans and dates may change, but here is a look into the future.

Here is our Event Calendar for the rest of 2026:

- **April:** General Meeting on 2nd Wednesday with a speaker about Native Orchids
- **May:** General Meeting on 2nd Wednesday and Mica Hills Native Orchid Hike
- **June:** General Mtg. on 2nd Wednesday and Field Trip to Botanica Orchid Nursery in Missoula, Montana
- **July:** General Mtg. on 2nd Wednesday, Breakfast Tour to Orchid Greenhouses hosted by Society members and annual Picnic
- **August:** General Mtg. on 2nd Wednesday with Presentation about *Cymbidium* orchids.
- **September:** General Mtg. on 2nd Wednesday and mini orchid show with members only. Host table at Spokane County Fair
- **October:** General Mtg. on 2nd Wednesday with our annual orchid auction
- **November:** General Mtg. on 2nd Wednesday with a *Paphiopedilum* orchid presentation. Board Elections.
- **December:** Annual Christmas Party

AOS CORNER with Harvey

For those of you who snagged a new orchid treasure at the SOS Orchid Show last month and are now wondering how to best grow it, remember that the American Orchid Society (AOS) has growing instructions for every variety of orchid. There is also a vast array of articles from past orchid magazines and hundreds of orchid webinars that can be a real help.

I don't know about you, but I have been bombarded with orchid specials from a wide variety of orchid growers - well, it's Spring, after all, and many plants are in bloom. Remember that AOS has their Wire Deal program which lists orchid growers and gives you a discount if you buy an orchid.

There will be a webinar about "Growing *Cattleya alajorii* and Its Hybrids" on Tuesday, April 21, 2026, at 5:30 PM PDT. The next Greenhouse Chat with Ron McHatton will be Tuesday, May 5, 2026, at 5:30 PM PDT.

Happy Spring. Grow Well.

Harvey

News From SOS Board Members

Board members have been working on a standardized agenda for our monthly meetings that will help us stay on track with our new requirement to finish our meetings and clean up by 8:00 PM, per a new Manito Park Policy. Some monthly meetings will deviate from this outline, but in general our meetings will be as follows:

- * 5:30 PM: Optional Social time and room and refreshment set-up time
- * 6:00 PM: Society meeting starts promptly with introduction of guests, announcements, and other business.
- * 6:15: Orchid Show and Tell (You can bring as many orchids as you want for show & tell, but if we have an evening program scheduled, please limit formal presentations to no more than three orchids. Other orchids can be shared during the refreshment break).
- * 6:45: Refreshment Break (this break may be shorter if our guest presenter or program topic requires more time)
- * 7:15: Program, Guest Speaker or Group Activity
- * 7:55: Begin to clean up room, put up tables and chairs so we lock up by 8:00 PM.

American Orchid Society Nominations & Awards at the 2026 SOS Orchid Show

The AOS judges nominated the following ten plants; four plants were scored and awarded.

1. *Stanhopea* #104 (*Stanhopea* Newberry Stargazer X *Stanhopea* *ecornuta*) awarded Award of Merit (AM) 80 points 20265507 grown by William Jasen. (Award is provisional until the grex is registered with the RHS)
2. *Warczewiczella discolor* awarded Highly Commended Certificate (HCC) 78 points 20265508 grown by Ernaldo Vazquez.
3. *Epidendrum* Magic Valley, not scored
4. *Paphiopedilum* Mem Gordon Peters, not scored
5. *Phragmipedium* Eugene Banziger Awarded First Class Certificate (FCC) 94 points 20265509 grown by George Grantham.
6. *Paphiopedilum delatanii* Awarded Award of Merit (AM) 81 points 20265510 grown by Scott Rettenmund.
7. *Cymbidium* Rolfe Bolin 'Red Velvet', not scored
8. *Epidendrum* Mountain Magic f. Alba, not scored
9. *Coryanthes elegantium*, not scored
10. BST Tarantula 'Sweet Orange', not scored

Thank you and all Spokane Orchid Society members for a wonderful orchid show.

Bill Jasen, American Orchid Society Judge



Orchid Tips and Information for New Growers

Springtime is Re-potting Time

Source: Chicago Botanic Garden

Spring: time for a close-up look at your orchids.

Other than watering and occasionally fertilizing them, you probably don't look closely at your orchids all that often when they're not in bloom. Spring is the time to examine each plant with a critical eye to assess the need for repotting. It's also when you'll see the new growth that signals emergence from the dormant cycle—the best time for repotting.

Is it a new orchid?

Nursery-grown orchids or newly-purchased plants are often planted with sphagnum moss, which absorbs and holds water—creating prime conditions for orchid root rot. Consider repotting all new orchids as soon as they are acclimated to your new environment or when they have finished blooming. Unless you have a lot of experience with growing orchids in sphagnum moss, you should consider switching to a bark mix that will allow your orchids to drain and dry more quickly.

When was the last re-potting?

Orchids need both the nutrients from the chunky, loose bark mix they're planted in and the air space in between the pieces. As the mix breaks down to particle size, it compacts the air spaces inside the pot—virtually suffocating your orchid's roots. Check the bark mix every spring and repot when you notice decomposition.

Is it crowded in there?

While orchids prefer a small pot—weaving their roots through the bark/media as they grow—they eventually run out of room. That's when their roots push the plant up above the rim of the pot or reach out into the air, looking for breathing space—often indicating that it's time to re-pot.

Gather a few supplies.

Repotting an orchid sounds complicated, but it's a simple process that requires just a few items:

- **A pot** that's one size larger than the original, in case your orchid is ready to move up and have some growing space.
- **Pruners** and/or a **sharp pruning knife**, that have been sterilized in a 10 percent bleach solution or hydrogen peroxide.

Spring Repotting Continued

- **Fresh bark mix.** The mix matters: some typical store-bought mixes deteriorate far too rapidly. For high-quality mixes, use big, chunky bark for Cattleyas and many other epiphytes. Select a smaller bark mix for Oncidiums and terrestrial orchids. Mixes that include charcoal and perlite are good choices.
- **Sterilized Scissors** for trimming roots and leaves.
- **Gloves** to protect your hands from splinters and prickles.
- **Mask** to prevent inhalation of bark dust and perlite dust.

Now comes the interesting part, which gets to the root of the process.

Remove the orchid from the pot. Roots can be potbound and sticky; first try "massaging" the pot to loosen the rootball. Not budging? Work a dull knife down and around the inside of the pot, then invert it and tap the pot on your work surface to remove.

Soak the roots. Examine the rootball and feel a few root ends. If the rootball is stiff and dry, soak it in water for a few minutes to soften the tissues. Careful: dried-out roots can snap!

Loosen and untangle roots gently. As you do, trim away black/hollow/soggy roots and remove the old compost trapped between the roots. Refresh the disentangled roots with a thorough rinse to wash away all the tiny bits of soil that can clog up breathing spaces inside the pot.

Settle plant into the new pot. Holding the plant in one hand, place the plant down into the pot. Pour fresh bark mix around the plant, working it all the way down and between the freshly separated roots.

Water thoroughly. Then test your patience: wait a full week or two before watering again—that break stimulates root growth in the new medium.

Healthy orchid roots are white to pale green, spongy in texture and have white or bright green root tips.



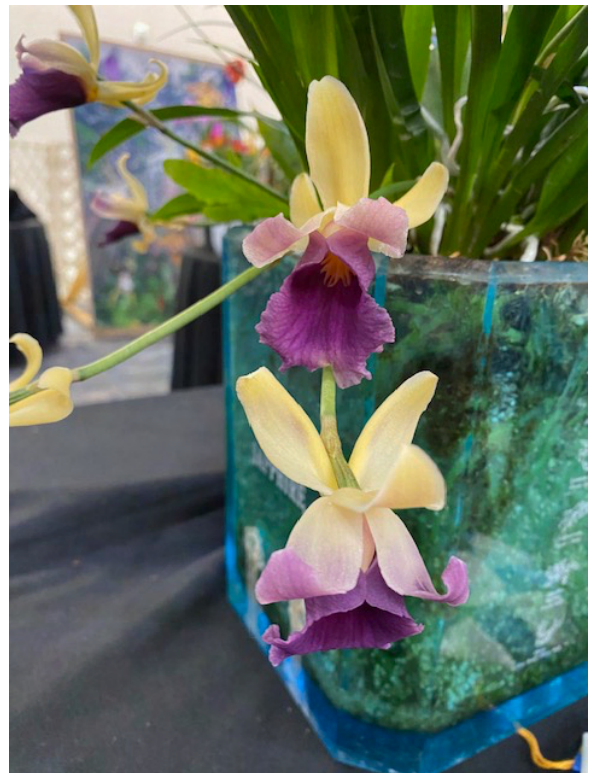
2026 Orchid Show Photos



Colton with his Orchid/Beer Holder Hat



This orchid grown by George Granthum received an AOS FCC award with a score of 94 points!



An AOS HCC award went to this orchid grown by Ernaldo Vasquez - see "Orchid of the Month" for more information about this lovely species.

2026 Orchid Show Photos



Harvey with his carnivorous Pinguiculas



Joe, the "Wizard of Orchids" in Emerald City



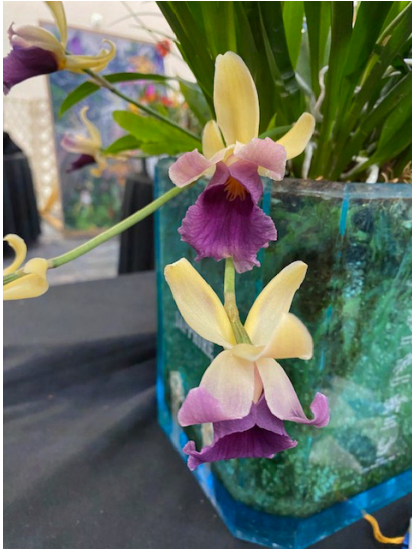
Colton's *Orchid Pollination* display was a big hit with kids and adults!



This Stanhopea grown by one of our AOS judges received an AOS award

Orchid of the Month

Warczewiczella discolor



You get a gold star if you can pronounce this genus correctly. Ernaldo brought this lovely orchid to our Orchid Show and it won the 2026 “Best in Show” award and an AOS award too.

Found in Costa Rica, Cuba, Honduras, Panama, Colombia, Venezuela and Ecuador in premontane and lower montane forests on larger branches and trunks of trees.



A small to medium sized, intermediate to cool growing epiphyte with a fan of leaves without pseudobulbs that loves humidity and good air movement. They appreciate shade and do best in a basket with some sphagnum mixed with wood chips. They lack pseudobulbs and have a short stem that can branch at the base to form small tufts, and give rise to a fan of overlapping, articulate, lanceolate, flexible, pointed pale green leaves with an erect, basal, 5 [12.5 cm] long, inflorescence arising on a newly forming growth and shorter than the leaves and subtended by a basal sheath with a single, waxy, long lasting, fragrant flower that appears from spring through the fall. See culture information below.

These orchids require shaded conditions with filtered or diffused light. Constant, strong air movement is required. These plants will grow well if there is cool, humid air near them and like slightly cooler temperatures at night. The cultivated plants should be abundantly watered during active growth. They must, however, have perfect drainage, and the base around the roots can never remain soggy. They can receive less water in winter, but no winter rest.

Orchid Trivia & Fun Facts

The relationship between orchids and fungi (Source: Shroomer.com)

Orchids owe much of their survival to a critical yet hidden partnership with mycorrhizal fungi (beneficial fungi that form a symbiotic, mutually beneficial relationship with plant roots).

Since orchid seeds are incredibly tiny and lack the nutrient stores typical of larger seeds, they depend heavily on these fungi for their germination and early development. Right from the very beginning of an orchid's lifecycle, the fungi infiltrate the seed's outer layer and provide the vital nutrients that the seed itself cannot store.

In exchange, the fungi are compensated with sugars produced by the orchid during photosynthesis. This partnership between the two organisms ensures the orchid's survival in challenging environments and enhances its ability to withstand diseases and pests.

Mycorrhizal fungi tend to be very specialized in their connections and will only associate with certain types of plants. Each orchid species usually partners with particular kinds of fungi, so the conservation of these certain fungal species in their natural habitat is crucial to protecting the orchids from extinction. If these specific fungal partners are lost due to environmental changes or habitat destruction, the orchids may fail to reproduce and sustain their populations.

