

# The ORCHIDIAN



Newsletter of the Orchid Society of Western Pennsylvania – September 2023



## OSWP MONTHLY MEETING – open to members, guests and the general public

- Location: Spartan Community Center, 134 E. Elizabeth St., Pittsburgh, PA 15207
- Sunday, Sept 17<sup>th</sup> - Doors open at 12:45pm; Approximate times: Mini Class at 1pm – Speaker at 3pm
- Mini Class: Managing the pests on your orchids coming inside for the winter by Jim Yamber
- Speaker: Gregory Griffis + **A very special surprise presentation you won't want to miss!**



## EVENTS SCHEDULE – happenings in Western Pennsylvania and surrounding areas

- Triangle Orchid Society's "Fall for Orchids" - Sept. 8 - 10, 2023 - [shows@triangleorchidsociety.org](mailto:shows@triangleorchidsociety.org)
  - Location: JC Raulston Arboretum - NC State University, 4415 Beryl Road, Raleigh, NC 27606
- Central Ontario Orchid Society Show – Sept 23 – 24, 2023 - [COOSshowchair@gmail.com](mailto:COOSshowchair@gmail.com)
  - Location: Cambridge Hespeler Arena, 640 Ellis Rd, Cambridge, ON, N3C 4N1, Canada



## OSWP OFFICERS – leaderships council and board of directors

- Co-Presidents: Michelle and Dave Panasiuk
- Co-First Vice Presidents: Natalie Turicik and Carolyn Bolton
- Second Vice President: Xander Morrison; Mentors: Tim Choltco and Katie Schuller
- Secretary: Kathy Collins • Treasurer: Janet Greenberg
- Directors: Tim Choltco, Kathy Grajcar, Dave Motak. Chuck Oldenburg, Brian Powell

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## OUR GUEST: September Monthly Meeting Speaker

**September Speaker:** Gregory Griffis (Virtual presentation)

**Topic:** Secret Stories of the Orchid World



**Bio:** Greg Griffis first became aware of orchids in 2009. He first heard about them through a college friend, who had always admired orchids. Studying at West Chester University, from which he graduated with a bachelor's degree in Music Education, put him in close proximity to Longwood Gardens. He attended the 2010 Longwood Orchid Show where he purchased his first orchid.

One plant quickly became twenty or so, and before long he was hooked. In 2010 he visited Parkside Orchid Nursery for the first time, and by Summer 2011 he was working part time for Tom Purviance and John Salventi. He studied under their tutelage while

working for them, and when they sold the nursery in 2012, he was hired by the new owners as the Grower and Manager of Parkside Orchid Nursery. He managed Parkside for one year, before leaving to grow orchids in Hawaii.

In Hawaii he worked for Hilo Orchid Farm for more than a year, spending a large amount of time working with Paphiopedilum, as well as Intergeneric Oncidiinae, and Miltoniopsis. At the beginning of 2015 Greg began working as the orchid grower at Longwood Gardens.

Since his arrival at Longwood, the orchid collection has grown and changed significantly. He has been a part of

developing a collection of terrestrial orchids from across the globe, and has initiated a number of breeding programs. Among these are breeding lines in the Habenariinae, Cattleya Alliance, Intergeneric Oncidiinae, Paphiopedilum, Masdevallia, Disa, and more. The Disa program achieved its first successes with the registration of three new hybrids in 2021, Disa Longwood Renaissance Horizon, Disa Longwood Dawning Ever New, and Disa Longwood Advancing Excellence.



Greg continues to work on improving and expanding the collection, as well as networking with great growers and hybridizers across the country. He also has authored a number of written works, and has participated in a number of video interviews as well.

In an era of unprecedented growth, along with the opening of the Reimagined Orchid House at Longwood, the future of the orchid collection is open wide and the possibilities for innovation are endless

## ORCHID GEMS – The Heart of the Society – Jim Yamber by Pam Horter-Moore

Every organization has a person whom everybody knows, who gets things done, who spreads the word, a go-between when others seek resources and information.

In OSWP, that person is Jim Yamber. Since his joining in 1973, the Society has counted on him using his considerable gifts and expertise to implement the layout of our Orchid Show, produce our newsletter, act as spokesperson, and fill as needed.

He has served in every office but the presidency. It isn't an exaggeration to state that we would be a much smaller, less successful organization without his long years of dedication and input.

Much has been said about the esteem with which Jim is held within the orchid world, so, for this article, I would like to spotlight some of his other accomplishments.

When I interviewed Jim, I discovered several themes running through his life that I believe can be attributed to his family background, which instilled in him a strong foundation of self-sufficiency, innovation, intellectual curiosity, and hard work.

In many ways, Jim's story starts before he was born in North Fayette Township on the adjoining farms where his parents Andy and Sarah were raised. The young couple spent their early years of marriage living on the farm of Sarah's grandparents. This was where Jim's older sister Lila Mae was born.

Jim's Scottish, German, and Hungarian roots taught him the value of ingenuity and resilience that served the family well. Jim still lives in the home his parents built. "My mother dug out the corners of the foundation herself with pick and shovel," Jim comments.

A lifelong Oakdale resident, Jim is a graduate of the West Allegheny School District. This was here in



elementary school where Miss Boxel discovered his musical gifts, and appointed him conductor of the school band. Jim continued to be active in the performing arts all through high school, participating in the County, Regional, and State Choirs where he gave solo vocal performances.

After high school, Jim's versatility made it difficult for him to decide on a single field of study. He was drawn to architecture and biology, but also to the ministry. That led him to Southwest Missouri State University (SMSU) in Springfield.

"I didn't go home for Thanksgiving that year, so I cooked turkey dinner and made pumpkin pie from scratch," Jim says. His college friends and their parents loved it. "They told me it was worth the drive just for the pie," he jokes.

It was characteristic of Jim, his sister, and their parents to do for themselves rather than do without. They worked as a family unit, helping each other in whatever capacity they could. “Whoever got home first started the cooking,” Jim says.

Jim’s mother Sarah was dietician for West Allegheny Schools, serving over three thousand children. Jim’s father Andy was a coalminer and construction worker who worked as a school janitor and as a cook at a small restaurant when business was slow. There were no idle hands in the family.

In 1967, Jim interrupted his academic career and enlisted in the Navy to learn electronics. While in the Navy, his singing brought him distinction as a member of the celebrated Bluejacket Choir, an honored tradition for over 100 years.

After training at NSA Mid-South near Memphis, Jim was assigned to the Naval Air Station Point Mugu in California. This site is distinguished as the Navy’s major base for missile development and testing. Jim was especially good at calculating where the missiles would hit.

One of Jim’s most devastating insights came aboard the USS Oriskany, an aircraft carrier. “You would be surprised how often people are killed on these carriers, due to the danger of moving planes,” Jim explains. As a case in point, on October 26, 1966, a fire erupted on the starboard side of this ship’s forward hangar bay and raged through five decks, killing 44 men.

In 1972, Jim returned home and received an associate’s degree in drafting from Triangle Tech; he already possessed the equivalency of an academic degree in electronics through his naval training. He worked successively for Houser-Karpis, Acres Company, and Larsen and Ludwig, engineering and heavy construction firms. As field engineer, he was sent to Detroit on temporary assignment to oversee the production of metallurgical coke in a continuous oven.

A self-starter, Jim was an early adventurer into the field of information technology. In 1984, he purchased an IBM PC AT (“It had 256kb,” Jim recalls). He also taught himself AutoCAD, the very edge of computer drafting in 1982.

Jim’s experiences dovetailed into his first teaching job while still a student at Triangle Tech. The sisters at St. Basel High School were desperately asking for help controlling their unruly youngsters. Several of Jim’s students would continue their education.

Jim discovered that teaching was a good buffer against an unstable economy. He taught drafting and AutoCAD at CCAC while working at Larsen and Ludwig, and continued to teach two years after Larsen and Ludwig closed.

His lengthy interview with ITT Technical evolved into a 20-year commitment teaching drafting, architectural and civil drafting, HVAC, and physics, eventually serving as Director of the Drafting Department. His students remember him as an excellent, but demanding, instructor.

While teaching, he received his Bachelor of Science degree from Point Park. “Most of the time, graduates in Journalism receive a Bachelor of Arts,” Jim comments. “However, I was different, since I was the computer tech for the software (QUARK) that they used.”

Through the years, the four Yambers – Andy, Sarah, Lila Mae, and Jim – were friends as well as family, vacationing together, camping at Lake Erie, and pitching in with the cooking at the school when special events such as teachers’ conferences were planned. “All the teachers wanted to eat at West Allegheny, because of its reputation for having the best food,” Jim says. He once helped his mother cook Baked Alaska for 500 people.

The close-knit family also shared and supported each other’s interests; Jim, his mother, and sister pursued the fabric arts.

“While in Springfield, Missouri, I attended an Early American arts and crafts fair that whetted my interest in weaving, so I designed my own jack loom.” (A jack loom is a floor model operated by foot treadles connected to a set of shafts) Later, sister Lila bought him a Mighty Wolf jack loom. As the Cadillac of looms, these models cost thousands of dollars.

The tie between brother and sister was well known to everyone who knew them. While Lila traveled in her job as marketing manager for Westinghouse Credit Union, Jim went to her classes and took notes for her. They were each other’s backup.

Through the years, Jim’s sister was at his side as the silent editor of the OSWP Newsletter. Her death last November motivated Jim to retire from his decades-long role. Lila Mae’s obituary says, “Lila loved to cook

and care for her best friend and brother, James Yamber, who survives. They enjoyed spending their lives together.”

Jim looks forward to a trip to Erie in April 2024 to photograph the total eclipse of the sun. He has just acquired a special lens in anticipation.

He will also continue his role as interim preacher for the Noblestown United Presbyterian Church. Established in 1792, the church has been an integral part of the Yamber family. His experience as a speaker and deep knowledge of the Bible have exposed the congregation to a greater understanding of Judeo-Christian traditions.

Although Jim is pulling back from his role as OSWP Newsletter editor, he will continue to be a mighty force within the Society, as well as a good friend to everyone.



### OSWP MEETING MINUTES – N/A – No August Meeting



### COMMITTEE CHAIRS – Volunteer Leaders

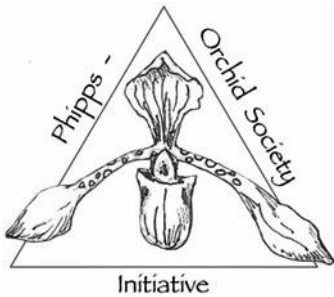
- AOS/Culture Corner** - Nancy Kline
- Facebook** - Lance Chevront
- Garden Club/Library Liaison/Hospitality** - Carolyn Bolton
- Library** – **Lori Beth Bloom**
- Membership** Kathy Collins
- Mini-class** **Zander Morrison**, Tim Choltc & Katie Schuller

- Newsletter** **Dave Panasiuk**
- Orchid Gems** Norma Raiff & Pam Horter-Moore
- Pfun/P-OSI** Demetria Marsh
- Raffle** Natalie Turicik
- Show** Sheila Nathanson, Norma Raiff & Janet Greenberg
- Speaker** Carolyn Boltin and Natalie Turicik
- Website** Jinghua Ou

## PHIPPS CONSERVATORY ORCHID SOCIETY INITIATIVE – PFUN volunteer work

### P-OSI

A joint initiative between Phipps Conservatory and the Orchid Society of Western Pennsylvania to create and cultivate an orchid collection of note for enjoyment, education and research.



September, 2023

**An extra special thanks to our Pfun leader, Nancy Kline, as she retires from her position as head Pfunster.**

From the moment Nancy joined the OSWP many years ago, she has been a very active member. Shortly after joining the society, Nancy volunteered to be the New Member Co-chair, welcoming new members in a special way and helping them become active members.

She was also willing to take over leadership of Pfun at Phipps when P-OSI was developed, helping our members volunteer at Phipps to help with repotting and other tasks for the Phipps Orchid Collection, under the orchid guidance of Georgia Wahl, then Katie Schuller and currently, Giovanni Giraldo. She has done this for many years.

In 2012, Nancy was instrumental in establishing P-OSI, the Phipps-Orchid Society Initiative, helping Phipps build an orchid collection of note, including the Barbara Tisherman Slipper Orchid Collection (BTSOC), a Living Museum of Slipper Orchids. She played a vital role in the Super Slipper Celebration in October, 2013, an amazing conference of national and international Slipper enthusiasts at Phipps Conservatory, to begin to build the BTSOC. Nancy came up with the name, P-OSI, the Phipps-Orchid Society Initiative.

Nancy co-chaired the society's sales plants at our annual orchid shows. She innovated the Culture Corner at our orchid meetings, where you can bring your orchid plant and ask cultural questions. Nancy for the last several years has been our AOS representative.

Wow! Nancy is spectacular in so many ways. We are so lucky to know her and have her as a friend and an important part of our society. She will be very much missed at Pfun.

We thank her very, very much for her many years of incredible service! **Thank you, Nancy!**

Pfun at Phipps is repotting as well as doing the inventory of the Phipps orchid collection. We are also helping as the Clean-up Crew and virus-testing too. **BIG CHANGE: We are now going to Phipps most Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9:45AM – 12:45PM.** It's all a great learning experience for all of us.

**If you would like to join our Pfun/P-OSI efforts and haven't previously signed up with us, please let us know at the email addresses below.**

Thanks and looking forward to working and learning together.

Nancy Kline  
[nancyk412@gmail.com](mailto:nancyk412@gmail.com)

412-367-1556

Thank you, Nancy!

Demetria Marsh  
[demetria117@gmail.com](mailto:demetria117@gmail.com)

412-848-4349

## OSWP LOGO CONTEST 2023

The OSWP will be having a big birthday in February, 2024 - our beloved orchid society will be 70!

In honor of this milestone, we propose a freshening up of our logo. We are hoping for something lively and colorful that would express OSWP's desire to be current as well as our strong commitment to community outreach and orchid education.

The logo will help promote brand recognition. And it will appear in the newsletter, website, letterhead and such spring show materials as posters, sponsor & ad requests, promotional materials, vendor outreach, and OSWP branded apparel. So we invite you to be part of this experiment and to take the time to show off your creative side.

### Rules & Requirements:

1. Must include "Orchid Society of Western PA or Pennsylvania".
2. Optional: could include "OSWP".
3. Must include "Since 1954".
4. Must be in color. (Note: Must be able to easy to view the submission in black and white, for stationery letterhead).
5. Must include a striking graphic
  - a. An original orchid drawing, or
  - b. An orchid photo. (Note: if using a photo that you have not taken, be sure to list the original source and to provide evidence of permission secured to reprint if it the photo protected by copyright.)<sup>1</sup>
  - c. Either choice needs to be easily recognized as an orchid.
6. Optional: Add a feature to tie in to Pittsburgh or Western PA.
7. Must be in digital format.
8. Submit to Jim Yamber, [quail1@verizon.net](mailto:quail1@verizon.net) and a copy to Jan Greenberg [janetg150@verizon.net](mailto:janetg150@verizon.net) by **10/31/23**.

### Who can submit:

1. Submissions must be made by an OSWP member or by a member who sponsors a submission on someone else's behalf.
2. Members who act as "outsider" sponsors can also submit their own logo for consideration.

### Recognition:

1. The contest winner will receive:
  - a. A \$100 gift certificate to the orchid vendor of their choice.
  - b. Free admission to the holiday party & 1<sup>st</sup> choice on the orchid party favor.
2. Other participants will be recognized at the event and thanked in the newsletter.

### Selection process:

1. The winning logo will be decided by majority vote by the of Board of Directors and BOD mentors. The Board also reserves the right not to choose a winning entry.
2. Submissions should will be decided 11/05/23 and will be announced at OSWP's Holiday Party on 12/10/23; however, the logo designer's attendance is not a requirement.

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<sup>1</sup> To see some photo options, google "free orchid photos".

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Annual membership: current renewals are now due for the fiscal year 07/01/23-06/30/24.

Given all the benefits of OSWP membership, we believe (and hope you do as well) that OSWP membership remains a bargain at the following dues levels:

Individual \$20; Family \$25

OSWP members benefit from all of the following:

- free admittance to the Spring Show,
- a free orchid to those who attend the holiday party,
- “Show & Tell” emails which allow our members the opportunity to share their blooming successes,
- OSWP’s monthly newsletter,
- monthly in-person meetings which include mini-classes on various orchid topics as well as presentations from a variety of orchid professionals from all over the U.S. These professionals are often vendors who have available for purchase unique and unusual orchids that are otherwise difficult to obtain in Pittsburgh.

Please Note: All new 2023 members, including from the March 2023 Spring Show are paid through 06/30/24.

Many members have paid their dues.

If you are not sure whether your dues are paid, please wait until the end of August for a renewal notice, that will be emailed ONLY to the unpaid members. The email will come from [Janetg150@verizon.net](mailto:Janetg150@verizon.net). (Should you wish to, immediately, determine your status, please send an email to this above address.)

The end of August email notice will include instructions for methods of payment, which include check, cash at meeting, or at OSWP.org. The online payment lets you enter as a PayPal guest.

Thank you.

Kathy Collins, Membership Chair

Janet Greenberg, Treasurer



### A Word From The Editor:

I hope you all enjoy the new format that is under construction, and can appreciate a nice transition. I look forward to your input and always welcome your contributions and suggestions. I would, once again, like to thank Jim Yamber for the many

years as editor and am humbled following in his footsteps. I hope everyone has a great autumn and look forward to all the LOGO CONTEST submissions!

Thank You, Dave Panasiuk, Co-President & Editor







## The Orchid Society of Western Pennsylvania

Dave Panasiuk, Editor  
328 Ophelia St.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213  
Letsgroworchids@gmail.com

The Orchid Society of Western Pennsylvania Inc.  
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The propagation, horticulture and preservation of  
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Education and scientific endeavors.

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American Orchid Society  
Education. Conservation. Research.  
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### **9/17 MEETING**

**SPEAKER** is  
Greg Griffis.  
**MINI CLASS** is  
Managing the  
pests on your  
orchids coming  
inside for the  
winter by Jim  
Yamber

## WANTED

***The American Orchid Society Judging Program  
is seeking highly motivated orchid enthusiasts  
to join the judging ranks.***

*Work with other such people and help maintain our  
awards programs and educational efforts.*

*For more information contact Dave Miller at 330-307-7189 or  
dcmjpasml@aol*