



# Orchid Society of Western Pennsylvania

Jan 2023

[www.oswp.org](http://www.oswp.org)

## Upcoming Events

Jan 15 2023

**Tim Choltco**

speaking on

**"Sex, Lies, and Orchids"**

## Looking Ahead

Feb 19 2023 TBA

March 16-19 2023 Spring OSWP Show  
Crowne Plasa-Pgh South

### **" UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES "**

OSWP meetings are held at the Phipps Garden Center on Shady Avenue and are open to members, their guests and the general public. Program Calendar is also available at [www.oswp.org](http://www.oswp.org)

HOWEVER, we are on Zoom for meetings , and those interested non members could use the 'contact us ' section of the website to get a Zoom invitation

#### **OSWP Officers**

**Co-President:** Michelle and Dave Panasiuk

**Secretary:** Kathy Collins

**Co-First Vice President:** Natalie Turicik and Carolyn Bolton

**Treasurer:** Janet Greenberg

**Second Vice President:** Katie Schuller Mentor: Tim Choltco

**Directors:** Tim Choltco, Kathy Grajcar, Dave Motak. Chuck Oldenburg, Brian Powell

### **What's Blooming Now**

Orchis

The remains of a youth named Orchis  
According to Greek mythology, orchids were made from the remains of a young man named Orchis. He was the son of a nymph and a satyr, and while attending a festival of the wine god Bacchus, he became drunk. He abused the priestess Bacchantes and was torn apart by the other guests at the party. When his sorrowful father asked Zeus to make him whole again, Zeus refused but allowed flowers to grow from his remains. These were the first orchids. It should be noted that there are many variations of this story, but all do end with the creation of orchids from his remains. This is why the flowers look like a little man.



## Co-President's Letter January 2023

Hi Everyone,

Happy New Year! It was wonderful to see so many old friends and new gather at the Crown Plaza Hotel for our annual holiday party. What a great crowd! I have not seen that many members gather in person for a very long time! Thank you so much to everyone who helped organize the event and to all who attended. The cookie table was a huge success thanks to everyone who brought treats to share. Thank you to Jim for sharing a poem and a prayer before our meal and a very special thank you to Carolyn for getting a projector in time for the party, setting up our zoom account, and ordering the orchids for our holiday gifts.

It's OSWP tradition for the past presidents to honor a special person with a Lifetime Membership Award. Our past presidents, Sheila Nathanson and Mike Lyse, chose Janet Greenberg as their recipient. They had been planning the presentation for months and finally found the perfect opportunity at our holiday party. Congratulations Janet! Thank you for your hours of hard work, attention to detail, and always going above and beyond for the Orchid Society. We appreciate everything you do!

It is time to start thinking about the Spring Orchid Show! We will be sharing more information with you soon about ways you can get involved. We will need lots of volunteers to complete a variety of tasks. It is a great opportunity to get to know fellow members and learn more about orchids.

Thank you,

Michelle and Dave Panasiuk  
Co-Presidents, OSWP

## January 15, 2023 Speaker Tim Choltco!

Our own Tim Choltco is going to give a talk on:

### “Sex, Lies, and Orchids”

The not so PG-13 story of orchids. This presentation is an informative and often cheeky view into orchid sex. It begins with a short discussion that answers that age old question “What is an Orchid?” The body of the presentation continues with the discussion of orchid extracurricular activities. Beginning with the more family friendly pollination strategies of non-deceitful (rated G) and pollen mimicry (rated PG) the presentation builds to the rated R and possibly rated X strategy of Pseudo-copulation.

Thanks, Natalie

## **Orchid Gems – The World is an Adventure - Christie and John Jennings**

by Pam Horter-Moore

You can't go any place in the world and guarantee that you won't find Christie and John Jennings there. Whether by land or sea, they have logged thousands of miles traveling far and wide. "Taking a 42-day cruise is not like taking a one- or two-week vacation. Your fellow passengers become more than strangers; we made good friends from around the world," John remarks.



The Jennings married late in life -- she was 43 and he was 50. Since then, they haven't let the grass grow under their feet. That's not saying that they didn't lead exciting lives before that.

In high school, John was attracted to commercial aviation, meteorology, and architecture. He finally chose architecture, and worked for a private firm before becoming an architect for the City of Pittsburgh. John retired as Chief of The Bureau of Building Inspection. John said, "I supervised 75 employees and was responsible for the life safety requirements of every building and property within the City of Pittsburgh. It was a 24/7 job."

Christie's career took a U-turn. Although she began studying engineering at Virginia Tech, a stint of volunteering for the disabled on a camping trip changed her focus. She then entered WVU to study therapeutic recreation for special populations, and spent the first years of her career in Charleston, West Virginia. She returned to Pittsburgh to work for the City's Department of Parks and Recreation, eventually becoming a Supervisor in the Senior Program.

It was during the renovation of one of her senior centers that she met John, who was the architect for the project. They have been married for 17 years. "Our marriage works because we love and respect each other," John comments. "We were fortunate to retire early at 52 and 58 years old, and we have enjoyed every minute of it together."

Retirement gave the Jennings a chance to travel more broadly. "Years ago, we took a land-and-sea cruise to Alaska. After that, we were on mailing lists to receive other opportunities to travel." The motivation behind a 42-day South Pacific Island cruise was simple: They finally had the time to fulfill John's dream of going to Bora Bora and Christie's dream of going to Hawaii.

A unique port of call was remote Fanning Island, which has no electricity or running water, and where the main industry is the cultivation of seaweed. Another trip was a six-week stay on the island of Lanzarote, one the Canary Islands noted for its volcanic landscapes. It is plain that the Jennings enjoy adventure as well as indolent luxury. They are enthusiasts of the cruising experience, but with a caveat: "We prefer smaller ships, 400 passengers rather than thousands on the larger ships. The crew gets to know you," says John. "It is a more personal experience."

Road trips aren't out of the question. They put 11,000 miles on their car touring the United States and Canada on a 2-month adventure, where they visited over 25 national parks and monuments. "It was 130 degrees the day we toured Death Valley," John remarks. They've seen every state but four, which they plan to visit in 2023.

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One trip, which took an unexpected turn, was their attempt to thru-hike the Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine. They set out for their 6-8 month venture on Valentine's Day of 2019 but, after 2 weeks of almost constant rain and near-freezing temperatures, reconceptualized their vision. They opted for the 14-State Challenge instead, hiking portions of the trail in each state the AT passes through, a much more sensible approach, in their minds.

When the Jennings aren't traveling, they still don't stop. When they were single, she traveled when time allotted, and he had his "toys" -- a sailboat on the Great Lakes and airplanes with a flying club at the Allegheny County Airport. The toys have been replaced as the zest for travel seized them. "I still maintain my pilot's license," John comments, although he seldom flies. He loves astronomy and, as a ham radio operator, has joined an international network of fellow enthusiasts.

Christie enjoys beading, and submitted one of her beaded bracelets for competition at the City ART-Works competition held annually by the City of Pittsburgh to showcase the talent of Pittsburgh employees, family members and retirees. John took home prizes in past years for his photography, but Christie took home the big one in 2022. "I entered the contest primarily in support of the Department of Parks & Recreation," Christie states. "I never thought I'd win First Place."

The Jennings volunteer at the Little Sisters of the Poor, a city-based branch of an international congregation of Roman Catholic religious women caring for the elderly poor. They participate in the Meat Drop held in December, the rummage sale in July and various activities throughout the year. Christie also helps with make ceramics for their fundraisers, and John even plays Santa Clause to help celebrate the season.

Like so many OSWP members, the Jennings have an interest in gardening. Christie has always been a plant person, but never grew orchids until she "married into them."

John explains. "In 1980, I was gifted an orchid after the firm had moved into a new building." Even though his first results weren't as rewarding as he had hoped, his interest was piqued.

Now, most of Christie's and John's 45 orchids grow on a large southeast-facing bay window in the master bedroom, a colorful collection largely of Phalaenopsis and Cattleyas, one of which dates back to 1980.

The Jennings enjoy rescuing orchids. "If you treat them right, they will rebloom," Christie states confidently. "And, if a plant should die, it makes room for a new plant."

John is a native Pittsburgher, raised in what is popularly known as Green Tree City. Christie was born in New York, but grew up in Pleasant Hills. They are living in the house where John grew up, but have added a significant addition to make room for their many interests, as well as for opportunities to entertain.

The Jennings joined OSWP at the March 2020 Orchid Show, which occurred just before the Covid restrictions. Since May, they have participated in Pfun at Phipps, the collaboration between OSWP and Phipps' Conservatory, learning from Giovanni and from other OSWP volunteers. "It's an experience where you discover that there is a lot of room for discussion," says John. No one method works for

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everyone, and everyone encounters different challenges when growing orchids.

One of the great challenges for the Jennings is balancing their passion for travel with the needs of their collection. "It's hard to find dependable help who will adequately care for your collection while you are away," John comments. A lot of orchid growers would agree with him on this one.

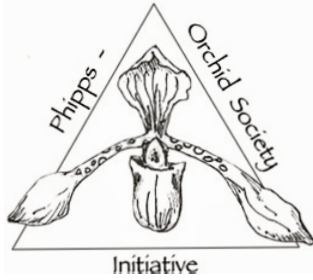
Perhaps one of the reasons why there is so much room for discovery is that every orchid challenge requires a uniquely creative solution.



### **Mini-Class- January 15, 2023**

The Dangerous and Highly Competitive of Orchid Hunting, presented by Lori McDermott

Please join us prior to the meeting at 1pm for a mini-class. These half hour classes are for new or experienced orchid growers, and they are taught by your fellow orchid society members. An overall great way to learn and get to know your fellow orchidophiles. This month we are taking a right turn from our regular meeting subject material. Our long-time society member Lori McDermott will lead us in a discussion about The Dangerous and highly Competitive World of Orchid Hunting. Please join me and the rest of the OSWP for this presentation prior to the regular monthly meeting.



## 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.

January 2023

Pfun at Phipps, a vital part of the OSWP's volunteer work at Phipps, is repotting orchids as well as doing the inventory of the Phipps orchid collection. The Pfunsters are also helping as the Clean-up Crew too. Because of holidays and the Orchid Show installation, we are just going to Phipps three Thursdays and one Monday from 9:45AM – 12:45PM. If you don't think you have the expertise to repot orchids or work on the inventory, you can help with orchid greenhouse clean-up. 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. We are using at least 4 members each date, with at least one being a more experienced grower.

(If it's your first visit, you must stop in at the Volunteer Office with proof of vaccination and ID and sign a photo release. At the moment, all of the volunteers are required to wear masks at Phipps.)

Don't miss the Orchid and Tropical Bonsai Show at Phipps starting January 14th!

Looking forward to working and learning together and having Pfun!

Happy New Year!

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demetria117@gmail.com  
412-848-4349

### November was the last meeting raffle!

At our Nov. 20 meeting Nancy Klein won the lovely Brsdm. Gilded Urchin! Raised \$67 to benefit the society.

We are looking for a plant for our raffle. Anyone who is interested in donating a plant, please contact Natalie Turicik" natalie.rozum@gmail.com

### Current Committees Chairs,

AOS	Nancy Kline	Orchid Gems	Norma Raiff, Pam Horter-Moore,
Culture Corner	Nancy Kline	Pfun	Nancy Kline
Facebook	Lance Chevront	P-OSI	Demetria Marsh
Garden Club/Library Liaison		Raffle	Natalie Turicik
Hospitality	Carolyn Bolton	Show	Sheila Nathanson, Norma Raiff and Janet Greenberg
Library	open	Speaker	Carolyn Boltin and Natalie. Turicik
Membership	Kathy Collins	Website	Jinghua Ou
Mini-class	Tim Choltc and Katie Schuller		
Newsletter	Jim Yamber		



First Class Mail

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The Orchid Society of Western Pennsylvania Inc. is a non-profit corporation organized to advance the propagation, horticulture and preservation of orchid species and hybrids through research, education and scientific endeavors

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American Orchid Society  
*Education, Conservation, Research,*  
Affiliated Society

**Upcoming 2023 speaker**

**Jan. 15, 2023**

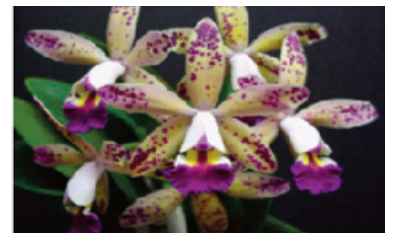
**Tim Choltco**

speaking on

**“Sex, Lies, and Orchids”**

Zoom and in person meeting

More to come for the future programs for 2023



**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 demjpsmil@aol*