

# CIOS News

February 2026 | Des Moines, Iowa



Above: Paph. Song of Love x (Paph. liemianum x Paph. lowii) grown by CIOS Secretary Ardie Strawman. If you want your own orchid photo featured in the newsletter please send submissions to our general mailbox, [centraliowaorchidsociety@gmail.com](mailto:centraliowaorchidsociety@gmail.com)

## Next Meeting

March Meeting

3/1/2026 – 2pm

Union Park United  
Methodist Church

2305 East 12th Street

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# President's Message

Brian Johnson



Above: Your author at the Orchid Fest Friday member preview night. It's a lot of work to get ready for this event every year, but it's worth the effort!

This year's Orchid Fest is behind us, but my thoughts are on next next year's event. It's our largest fundraiser for the year and the money we raise makes our annual Speaker's Day event possible. This is especially important as our event costs have increased significantly.

Unfortunately, this year's sales numbers were much lower than expected. Several factors seemed to be at play. Conflicting sporting events reduced attendance and people were just buying less.

During the event I had the chance to speak with some of members about changes we could make to improve the event. We discussed changing the weekend to avoid conflicts with sporting events. We also thought about other ways we could attract guests. The auditorium that held our information displays and Q&A booth would be a fantastic space to hold scheduled presentations or demonstrations - something we have done in the past.

Programming could be very simple. Short talks, Q&A sessions on certain topics - even a trivia "pub quiz" similar to what we did for Speaker's Day 2025. I'd like to encourage members to consider ideas and even volunteering to develop content or host sessions.

Nearer term, we're planning on another show and sale

event at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden April 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. This will be another opportunity for us to pad our account for unexpected Speaker's Day costs. It's also a chance to test the waters with a larger event at the Botanical Garden.

My concern is making sure we have the volunteers for setup and to staff the event. It's a two-day event and in addition to club and member sales I'd like to have an orchid display and host an information booth similar to the Reiman event.

If you haven't volunteered for an event before, please consider doing so! Interested in building displays? Love chatting folks and sharing knowledge? There's so much more to the orchid hobby than just collecting plants. CIOS events can give you the chance to expand your experience and skills.

Happy growing!

Brian Johnson, CIOS President

## March Meeting

We'll be discussing the results from the Reiman Garden Orchid Fest, the upcoming Greater Omaha Orchid Society show, and the April Botanical Garden event and more!

We'll have plants for the raffle table and as always if you have anything interesting to share, bring it in for show and tell.

3/1/2026 – 2pm

Union Park United  
Methodist Church  
2305 East 12th Street

# Orchid Fest 2026

Brian Johnson

Remain Garden's Orchid Fest was on February 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> with a special member preview evening on the 7<sup>th</sup>. We brought in orchids for sale along with guest vendor Natt's Orchids, and orchid-inspired artwork from Art by Sarah Broer.

This year's event was the first year we've had access to the auditorium space for our Q&A booth which we shared with the Ames Garden Club. We used the presentation facilities to project our orchid information slideshow and orchid tour videos. We took advantage of the large space by setting up Carol Lewnau's information display boards, a space for coloring pages, and a computer monitor we could use to display CIOS newsletters for guests to view.

The Hughes Conservatory display titled "Big and Small" featured spring bulbs and flowers and a large flower sculpture. The conservatory also had some blooming orchids on display along with :Smelly Roll" - a *Amorphophallus konjac*, or VooDoo Lily which thankfully was not quite open during the event.



Above: Our intrepid Friday night volunteers taking a break after setup before the member preview night guests start arriving.

Left: Flower sculpture by student employee Keelie Fleener.

Below left, right: Carol's information displays and the CIOS Q&A booth set up in the Auditorium.



# Orchid Fest 2026

continued

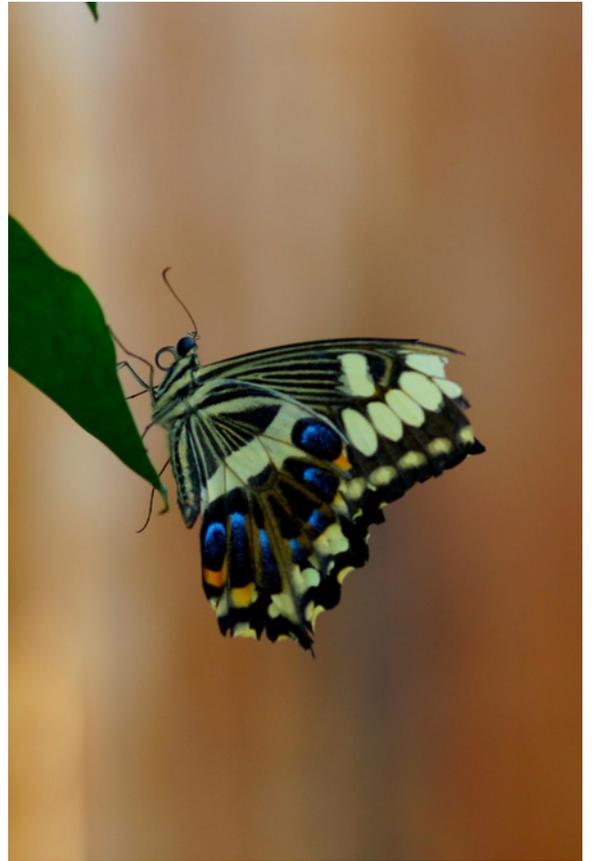


Above: Our CIOS volunteers helping with checkout, packing, and wrapping plants for guests.

Right: One of the many butterflies in the butterfly wing.

Below, left: Dendrobium on display in the conservatory

Below, right: The VooDoo Lily, "Smelly Roll", surrounded by a small display of flowering orchids and succulents.



# February Meeting Minutes

Ardie Strawman

The February meeting of the Central Iowa Orchid Society was called to order by President Brian Johnson. The entire Secretary's report of the January meeting was included in the January Newsletter, so an abbreviated version was read today. Our Treasurer, Patty, was not here today so Brian announced one payment had been made. This was to Fred Clarke for \$1163 for orchid plants to be sold at the Reiman Gardens Orchid Fest this coming weekend. Due to transportation issues, several of the plants are frost-damaged, so we will get credit for those. Brian announced that we will be having an Eboard meeting in March to discuss the future of shipping plants in February. Our librarian, Chriss, was not here today, but Brian announced that there are many books and magazines that can be checked out to read.

Brian announced that the January Newsletter was emailed out. If you did not receive it, let him know. He asked that anyone who has photos or stories about your orchid-growing, to sent them to him for a future Newsletter. He asked that anyone who would like to make a presentation about your orchid-growing experience to let him know. We should be hearing Patty's story next month. Brian asked if there is interest in the First to Bloom contest for this year; we will ask Jason Rauscher to coordinate.

Reiman Gardens Orchid Fest is this weekend. Friday night is Members' Night from 5-7pm, then Saturday and Sunday are open to the public from 9am-5pm each day. This is a big sales event for us, with the intent to make money to finance our summer Speaker's Day. We have Sales tables, information tables, and a running slide show of orchids. The people who work at the Sales tables will talk with customers, ring up sales, or wrap the plants. The people who work at the Information tables will have culture sheets to hand out, and will answer questions from customers. Brian announced that there may be some changes in the layout of the rooms we have. Option #1 would be the same as last year, with Sales and Info all in one room. This has been fairly crowded in past years. Option #2 would be to have only the sales in the room, then info and other activities in the auditorium room. There are various pros and cons to this, mainly needing signage to direct customers from one room to the other. Brian said that he has updated the Phalaenopsis care sheets and others, and will have coloring sheets, and maybe an orchid crossword puzzle in the Info Room. We will have a Cash only line and a Credit Card line for sales. Brian asked that members sign up for various shifts for



Above: CIOS member Carol Lewnau brought in a lovely little Neofinitia orchid for show and tell. IF you have a plant you'd like to share, bring it in to the March meeting!

the Show.

We are going to be in charge of an Advanced Orchid Care class on Feb. 26 from 5:30-7:00pm at the Botanical Garden. Jenny, Patty, and Ardie will be doing this, along with help from Brian. The attendees will have an orchid plant, and we will talk about the care, light, and watering, and will probably be showing how to repot the orchid.

We will be having an Orchid Show and Sales at the Botanical Garden on April 11 and 12, with plants on display and plants for sale. We will be buying some for sale, but also members will be able to sell their own plants. Members will give 10% of the cost plus the sales tax to our Club and the remainder is theirs. Speaker's Day 2026 - We will have Alan Koch from Gold Country Orchids in California as one speaker. We will have Kristin Uthus from New World Orchids in Michigan as the other speaker. Maria Fedorova is working on reserving hotel room for our speakers. Doc Bannister asked for help on Friday in loading his orchid plants that will be going to Reiman Gardens. Meeting adjourned. We had one Show and Tell plant from Carol Lewnau.

Respectfully submitted, Ardie Strawman, Secretary

# Upcoming Events

## Wisconsin Orchid Society's "Orchids for Everyone"

March 7 - 8, 2026, Racine, WI

Wisconsin Orchid Society

Our annual spring show will be held the weekend of March 7 - 8 .

Mileager's Garden Center  
4838 Douglas Avenue in Racine, WI

## Illinois Orchid Society's "Orchids: Amplified"

March 14 - 15, 2026, Glencoe, IL

Illinois Orchid Society

The show will take place the weekend of March 14-15, 2026 at the Chicago Botanic Gardens ("CBG") in Burnstein Hall. Deadline to register a display is February 22, 2026, and the deadline to register plants is Thursday, March 12, 2026 at 6:00 pm.

Saturday & Sunday  
March 14 - 15  
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Chicago Botanic Garden  
1000 Lake Cook Road  
Glencoe, IL

## Santa Barbara International Orchid Show

March 20 - 22, 2026, Santa Barbara, CA

Santa Barbara International Orchid Show

Dive into a world of wonder at the 78th Annual Santa Barbara International Orchid Show, taking place March 20 - 22, 2026. This year's theme, Orchid Escape, invites you to explore the vibrant beauty of orchids and their natural habitats.

Show Times: 9am-5pm  
Earl Warren Showgrounds  
3400 Calle Real, Santa Barbara, CA 93105.

## Batavia Orchid Society Show

March 21-22, 2026, Wheaton, IL

Batavia Orchid Society

Join us for the annual Chicago Suburban Orchid Show, held at the Cantigny Park in Wheaton, Illinois! Some of the finest local growers attend each year, selling plants that thrive in the Midwest. Admission: Free (donations appreciated). Cantigny parking \$6

Saturday March 21 9:00 am to 5:00 pm  
Sunday March 22 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Cantigny Park  
1S 151 Winfield Rd, Wheaton, IL 60189

## Springfield Orchid Society Show

March 21 - 22, 2026, Springfield, MO

Springfield Orchid Society

Springfield Greene County Botanical Center  
2400 S. Scenic Ave, Springfield, MO 65807.

Show Times:  
Both days 10am-4pm

## Greater Omaha Orchid Society Annual Orchid Show and Sale

March 28, 2026, Omaha, NE

Greater Omaha Orchid Society

Judging is being held on March 28, 2026 at 7:00 AM.

Show Times:  
10am-4pm

Lauritzen Gardens  
100 Bancroft St, Omaha, NE 68108.

For more events see

'The Orchid Mall Announcements and Events'

[orchidmall.com/announce.htm](http://orchidmall.com/announce.htm)

# Membership

The Central Iowa Orchid Society (CIOS) was organized in 1960. It is a nonprofit social club. Membership in the CIOS also includes membership in the Mid-America Orchid Congress.

Yearly dues are \$15 for an individual or \$25 for a family. **New members joining after July 1st are only required to pay one-half the annual membership fee - \$7 for an individual or \$12 for a family.** Membership can be renewed starting in November and dues become delinquent after the February meeting.

Meetings are generally held on the first Sunday of every month at 2:00 pm. This year locations will alternate between The Union Park United Methodist Church and The Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, See our website, [centraliowaorchidsociety.org](http://centraliowaorchidsociety.org) for the schedule.

Among the advantages of membership in CIOS are a large library of orchid literature, programs, displays and discussions on blooming plants, helpful advice, door prizes, and friendly socializing about orchids.

We invite you to attend a meeting and see for yourself the excitement that orchids generate. While there, inquire about membership or send in the below membership application to:

Central Iowa Orchid Society  
c/o Patty Graziano, Treasurer  
540 SE Prairie Park Ln.  
Waukee, IA 50263

## CIOS Officers for 2026

President - Brian Johnson

Vice President - Maria Fedorova

Secretary - Ardie Strawman

Treasurer - Patty Graziano

E-Board (1st Year) - Joe Ku

E-Board (2nd Year) - Jason Rauscher

E-Board (3rd Year) - Carol Lewnau

Immediate Past President - Roy Molina

American Orchid Society & Orchid Digest  
Liaison - Maria Fedorova

Librarian - Chriss Barck

Webmaster - Carson Whitlow

General correspondence can be sent to:  
Central Iowa Orchid Society  
c/o Carson E. Whitlow  
22957 280th Street  
Adel, IA 50003

General email:  
[centraliowaorchidsociety@gmail.com](mailto:centraliowaorchidsociety@gmail.com)

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## Central Iowa Orchid Society Membership Form

Please make checks payable to the Central Iowa Orchid Society. \$15 for single, \$25 for family membership **After July 1st - \$7 for an individual or \$12 for a family.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate Family or Single: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_