



Hilo Orchid Society Newsletter

December
2025

Note: In lieu of a December meeting, we're holding our annual Holiday Party. The deadline for reservations is past – sorry, we can't take any more!

Date: Sat., December 13, 2024
Time: **11:00** Doors open to talk story
11:45 Luncheon
1:00 Auction
Place: Hilo Yacht Club
77 Laehala St., Hilo
(see map and directions on page 7)
Program: Holiday Party and Auction

Holiday Party and Auction

There will be no regular meeting in December. Instead, we're holding our annual Holiday Party and Auction on Saturday, Dec. 13 at the Hilo Yacht Club. Only those who signed up and paid in advance can be admitted. There is a dress code – see the article at right.

The event features a social hour and sumptuous lunch at the scenic Hilo Yacht Club, providing a chance to get together with old friends and maybe make some new ones. Then comes the auction, an opportunity to obtain top-quality donated orchid plants at bargain prices and benefit your Society at the same time. This event is not open to the public. It is open to Hilo Orchid Society members and their guests by reservation only.

For those who signed up, doors will open at 11:00 a.m. to enjoy beverages and talk story, followed by the installation of officers at 11:45, lunch, and the orchid auction.

For a map and directions to the Hilo Yacht Club, see page 7.

Plant Exchange at Holiday Party

Many members enjoy taking home a new orchid they get in the plant exchange at the holiday party. If you wish to participate in the fun, bring an orchid plant, which will be tagged with your auction paddle number when you check in. During the meal, everyone who brought a plant gets to draw a number for a plant that someone else donated.

There is no obligation to participate. If you do, look through your collection for something that a friend would enjoy receiving. Plant exchange plants do not have to be in bloom, but they should be healthy and free from pests such as little fire ants.

Yacht Club Dress Code

The Hilo Yacht Club has some rules for members and guests (us). T-shirts are not allowed. Men should wear a shirt with a collar. An aloha shirt is fine. Rubber slippers are not allowed, but other sandals are fine. Shorts are fine, as long as they're tasteful (not bathing trunks).

Kiwi Orchid Bark Sale

Did you sign up to get one or more bags of Kiwi Orchid Bark that Tom Mirenda ordered? We had planned to distribute the bags of bark at the Holiday Party. Unfortunately, we learned from the seller of the bark that it will not arrive here in Hilo until after the Holiday Party.

So, there's a slight change in plans. If you signed up for Kiwi bark, you will be able to collect the bag(s) of bark that you ordered and pay for them (\$20 per bag) at our January HOS meeting. We're sorry for this delay, but we think the bargain-priced, high quality bark is worth it.

Orchid Stories

Ugly Stepsisters

To most beginning orchid growers, if Cinderella is like a beautiful white *Cattleya*, then the ugly stepsisters are *Paphiopedilums*. I certainly felt that way once. Many paphs have ugly color combinations like muddy red mixed with brown and green. Some even have warts with hairs coming out of them. To further the analogy, they really are “stepsisters” – hardly related to other orchids. Botanically, orchids are divided into (A) the *Cypripedium* tribe (“slipper” orchids, including paphs), which have two stamens, and (B) all other orchids, which have one stamen. Some botanists have even argued on this basis that the slipper orchids aren’t orchids at all.

So why do most orchid lovers eventually change their minds about paphs? First, “pretty” paphs do exist. The first one I grew, *Paph. niveum*, has small white flowers unsullied by brown or green. And its leaves, like most warm-growing paphs, are mottled in attractive patterns. Paphs are among the few orchids that look good out of bloom.

As for the hybrids, “classic” paph hybridizing has produced large, round-shaped flowers in various combinations of colors. It’s true that, because paphs have never been successfully mericloned, really superior ones are rare and are very expensive, if they’re available at all. When the species *Paph. armeniacum*, which is pure buttercup yellow, was discovered in China in the 1980s, it put the older yellow hybrids to shame (they were mostly pale yellow mixed with tan or green). Hybridizing has come a long way since then, and some of the white and pink hybrids are very nice. But a pure red paph is still going to be rare.

Then again, some people like paphs because they aren’t “pretty”. After all, much of the beauty of a *Cattleya* is in its exotic, irregular form compared to, say, a daisy. *Paph. Chiu Hua Dancer* couldn’t be more dramatic (see photo). It inherits its curly petals from its parent *Paph. sanderianum*. Much modern hybridizing has utilized such dramatic species and gotten away from the traditional round flowers.



Paph. Chiu Hua Dancer

Finally, there’s the practical side. Paphs are easy to grow. They like the same temperatures as humans and they don’t need much light. They’re tolerant of overwatering; in fact, they like to be on the damp side. Some of them bloom multiple times per year. And the flowers last for months. My *Paph. niveum* bloomed twice a year for three months at a time. After struggling with some other finicky species, paphs start looking very attractive indeed.

Larry Kuekes

Photo Contest Winner



This photo of *Cattleya warneri* won our 2025 photo contest. We thank all our members who voted in the contest. The plant was grown and photographed by Rick Kelley. As the contest winner, Rick won a free ticket to the December Holiday Party. In case you're wondering whether Rick got special treatment in the contest because he was managing the ticket signup for the Holiday Party, the answer is no. Neither the preliminary judges nor the membership who voted for the finalist photos were told the names of the people who had submitted the photos, so Rick won the contest fair and square!

Send Us Your Orchid Photos

We will have another Orchid Photo Contest in 2026. The only rules are: (1) the photo has to include a blooming orchid, and (2) you have to be the photographer. You don't have to be the grower. We want your photos, not some photo that you found on the Internet.

We accept photos all year up until next October. But please send us your photos before then, because we also like to post our members' photos on the HOS Facebook page, and we do this all year long.

You can email your orchid photos to Larry at lkuekes@gmail.com, the email address from which you receive this newsletter. Mahalo!

October AOS Awards

Photos by Glen Barfield



Left: *Cattleya Dolosa* f. alba 'Sebastian Ferrell' AM/AOS, grown by Orchid Eros

Right: *Cattleya perrinii* 'Ave Maria' HCC/AOS, grown by Orchid Eros



Left: *Cattleya perrinii* 'Dance of the Hours' AM/AOS, grown by Orchid Eros

Right: *Cattleya perrinii* 'Pastoral Symphony' AM/AOS, grown by Orchid Eros



Left: *Cattleya perrinii* 'Pretty In Pink' AM/AOS, grown by Orchid Eros

Right: *Cattleya perrinii* 'Rite of Spring' AM/AOS, grown by Orchid Eros



Left: *Cattleya perrinii* 'The Sorcerer's Apprentice' AM/AOS, grown by Orchid Eros
Right: *Cattleya perrinii* h.f. delicata 'Gabriel Amaru' AM/AOS, grown by Orchid Eros



Left: *Cattleya perrinii* h.f. delicata 'Sebastian Ferrell' FCC/AOS, grown by Orchid Eros
Right: *Cattleya praestans* 'Copy Catt' AM/AOS, grown by Orchid Eros



Left: *Cattleya praestans* 'Doppelganger' AM/AOS, grown by Orchid Eros
Right: *Cattleya* Trufords Cat 'Gabriel Amaru' AM/AOS, grown by Orchid Eros



Left: *Cattleya* Trufords Cat 'Orchid Eros' AM/AOS, grown by Orchid Eros
Right: *Cattleya* Trufords Cat 'Sebastian Ferrell' AM/AOS, grown by Orchid Eros



Left: *Cattleya alaorii* h.,f. semi-alba 'Pucker Up' AM/AOS, grown by Orchid Eros
Right: *Catasetum* Dreamboat 'Shogun's Dive into the Abyss #2' AM/AOS, grown by Shogun Hawaii



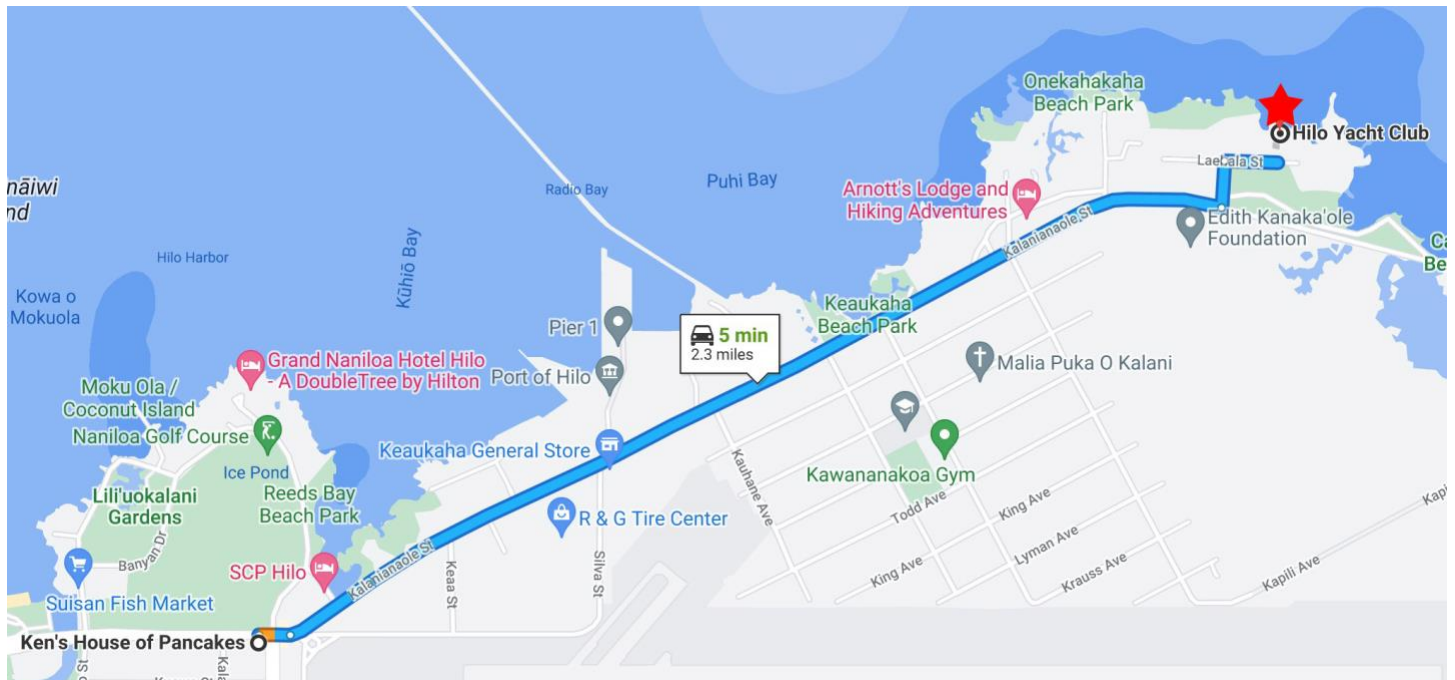
Left: *Catasetum* Joseito's Dark Phoenix' HCC/AOS, grown by Shogun Hawaii
Right: *Phragmipedium* Ruby Slippers 'Hinemaya' AM/AOS, grown by Sandra Dixon

Directions to Hilo Yacht Club

Note: To attend the Holiday Party, you must have signed up and paid in advance. You will be checked in at the door.

To use your GPS to get to the yacht club, the address is 77 Laehala St., Hilo.

From the intersection of Rt. 11 and Rt. 19 in Hilo (Ken's House of Pancakes): Take Kalaniana'ole St. for about 2.1 miles, going past Keaukaha Beach Park. After you pass a sign for Onekahakaha Beach Park, take the next left onto a short road called Kamokuna St. that ends at Laehala St. Turn right on Laehala. The Hilo Yacht Club will be on your left. Park in the parking lot.



New Officers and Trustees Elected

At the November HOS meeting, the members elected the following officers and trustees for the two-year term starting in 2026. They will be sworn in at the Holiday Party.

President: Kathy Gollaher
President-Elect: Steve Meyer
Treasurer: Lori Fuller
Trustee: Daniel Bark
Trustee: Dorothea Fendentz

Master Gardener Event

On Sunday, January 25 from 10:00 to 2:00, Master Gardeners are holding a plant sale at the Komohana Research Center, 875 Komohana St. This year the event will also include the Ohia Fest.

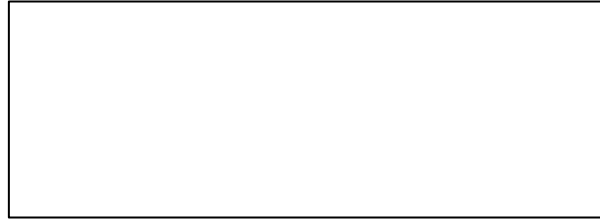
HOS will have a booth at this event and we need 2-3 helpers. Setup is at 8:30 am and take-down at 2:00 pm. Anyone interested in helping, please contact Kathy Gollaher at kathygorchids@gmail.com.

Hilo Orchid Society Officers and Trustees

President – Ellen Train pecetrain@gmail.com
Vice President – Tom Miranda biophilialk@gmail.com
President-Elect – Kathy Gollaher
Treasurer – Rick Kelley
Recording Secretary – Larry Kuekes
Corresponding Secretary – Dana Culleney

Past President – Karl Mendonca
Trustee 2025-2026 – Kathryn Duval
Trustee 2025-2026 – Lise Dowd lisedowd@aol.com
Trustee 2024-2025 – Sandra Dixon
Trustee 2024-2025 – Cyndi Helton

Hilo Orchid Society
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FIRST CLASS MAIL

Visit us on the web at
www.hiloorchidsociety.org