

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Enjoy 'Orchid Passion' At The St. Croix Orchid Society Annual Show

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Cynthia Graham **February 22, 2015**



Now in its 44th year, the St. Croix Orchid Society's Annual Show and Plant Sale is underway at the Great Hall on the Albert A. Sheen Campus of the University of the Virgin Islands.

The three-day event began on Friday, and today is the last day to catch this year's festivities, themed "Orchid Passion," which brings together orchid lovers from far and near.



Edna Hamilton, president of the St. Croix Orchid

Society, stands beside her booth at "Orchid Passion"

As part of the yearly showcase, elaborate exhibits are constructed, which are both judged locally by society members and on a national scale by visiting judges from Puerto Rico who are certified by the Florida-based American Orchid Society.

Edna Hamilton, St. Croix Orchid Society president, said this year's theme sought to express the emotion orchid lovers have for the plant.

"It's on the ultimate level. That's what most orchid lovers have, this extreme emotion for the orchids and that's why [the theme] so appropriate," she said.

Hamilton said judges look at over a 102 different categories, including color, form, creativity and more. She said many of the orchids displayed in the exhibits are grown locally on St. Croix.

"A lot of the orchids are grown by our local people, so it's something we should take pride in knowing that our locals are growing these right in their backyards," Hamilton said.

New at this year's show is an education exhibit put together by one of the society's members.

"It's showing the different ways for you to grow your orchids. You can use PVC to make your greenhouse, you can use plastic bottles to grow your orchids in, so it's a great way for you to learn how to grow your orchids," Hamilton explained.

Carlos Fighetti, chair of judging from the Puerto Rico branch of the American Orchid Society, praised the St. Croix exhibits.



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Exhibit at "Orchid

Passion"

When it comes to recognizing a prize-winning orchid display, Fighetti, who has been judging the St. Croix competitions since their inception, said he looks for "variety of flowers, the quality of the flowers, the presentation, all those things." He pointed out that ribbons are given for competition and trophies are awarded for best of class.

Stating that he has been impressed by the displays, Fighetti said, "It's a wonderful show and I hope the public has a chance to come here and visit because it's worthwhile."

The exhibit opens Sunday, Feb. 22 at 10 a.m. and will go until 3 p.m. A workshop on "How to Repot Your Orchids" will begin at 10:15 a.m. Activities will also be available for children.

The St. Croix Orchid Society has been in existence since 1963.