



The Informer

Newsletter of the Greater Omaha Orchid Society

PO Box 241871 Omaha, NE 68124 greateromahaorchidsociety.org December 2012

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Submission deadline for the
January Informer: January 2,
2012

Omaha Orchid Society Membership Information

Annual Dues:

Single: \$15.00

Family: \$20.00

Annual dues are paid to the treasurer by January 1 of each year and are delinquent the day after the February meeting. Dues for new members joining after July 31st are one-half the annual rate.

Dues should be made payable to G. O. O. S. and may be mailed to the G. O. O. S. post office box: G. O. O. S., PO Box 241871, Omaha, NE 68124.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS MEETINGS

(NOTE: All GOOS meetings are held at Monthly Meeting at the Douglas/Sarpy Cty Extension Office, 8015 W. Center Rd., Omaha, NE unless otherwise indicated)

December 14, 2011, 6:30pm
Annual holiday party, Granite City Food & Brewery, 1001 N. 102nd St. (Westroads Mall area), Omaha, NE

December 28, 2011
7:00 PM
Board Meeting, location TBA

January 11, 2012
7:00 PM New growers group
7:30 PM Program - Guest Speaker: New lighting and growing supplies - Paradigm Gardens
Refreshments :TBD
Greeter: TBD

EVENTS

January 28 - 29, 2012

Orchid Society of Minnesota Show, Marjorie McNeely Conservatory, 1225 Estabrook Dr., St. Paul, MN. Contact: Michael Dyda, 2095 Silver Bell Rd. #1, Eagan, MN 55122; (612) 940-1497; michael1027us@yahoo.com.

February 4-5, 2012

Orchid Grower's Guild Orchid Quest, Alliant Energy, 1919 Alliant Energy Center Way, Madison, WI. Contact: Judy Stevenson, 222 S Kenosha Dr., Madison, WI 53705; (608) 231-3163; judy_steveson@sbcglobal.net

February 9 - 12, 2012

Omaha Home, Lawn, Garden Show, CenturyLink Center, Omaha.

February 18-19, 2012

Batavia Orchid Society Show, DuPage County Showgrounds 2015 Manchester Rd., Wheaton, IL. Contact: Mike Rollinger, 23625 Andrew Rd., Plainfield, IL 60585; (815) 254-2207.

March 10-11, 2012

Illowa Orchid Society Show, Wallaces Garden Center, 2605 Devils Glen Rd., Bettendorf, IA. Contact: Suzanne Dennis, 9 Chiron Ct., Colona, IL 61241; (309) 441-6038; micatt@mchsi.com.

March 24-25, 2012

Great Omaha Orchid Society Show, Lauritzen Gardens, 100 Bancroft St., Omaha, NE. Contact: Jim Pyrzynski, 2107 Alberta Ave., Bellevue, NE 68005; (402) 734-4112; jpyrzynski@cox.net.

TIME TO PARTY!

This month is party time – rather than a formal meeting we have our annual holiday party. Granite City Food & Brewery (don't let the "brewery" part scare you – the food is great!) at the Westroads is the location. The meal consists of London broil, lemon chicken with baby red potatoes and green beans, cole slaw, cheddar soup, sourdough bread, cookie and tea or coffee (my mouth is watering already). Price is \$18.99 plus tax and gratuity.

We will still have our usual "gift exchange" – it's an exchange with a twist. We also have two \$10 gift certificates from Paradigm Gardens which will be raffled off at the party – and we also have a few more 2012 calendars for sale; get yours now.

Contact Jacque Lewzader if you plan to attend, her email address is jlewzader@msn.com, phone: 402-573-2217.

If you won't be attending, please have a safe and happy holiday and see you next year.

2012 FORECAST

The meeting program schedule is not quite complete but the schedule through April is firm and there are some additional

firm commitments for later in the year. The list includes some well-known guest speakers as well as some participation activities for the membership.

January starts off with a local guest speaker – Paradigm Gardens. They have a new type of lighting system that is supposed to lower electricity consumption, and produce less heat than either High Intensity Discharge lighting or the T5 high output fluorescent lighting and also be better than LED lighting. They will also discuss other products that are available at their store at 8949 J Street, Suite 5 in Omaha (one block north of L Street).

February brings Joe Lankton, an American Orchid Society Judge who will be judging chairman of the Mid-America Judging Center in St. Louis starting next year. Joe is a GOOS member and has been our show judging chairman for a number of our recent shows. Joe will talk about judging at the show and discuss what show clerks need to know to be an effective part of the judging team (last year there were some questions from clerks on their role in the judging team – so now is your chance to learn more).

For March show preparation is the topic. The show is March 24 and 25 and the meeting will provide us with an opportunity to get our supplies, etc. ready for the show.

April is the annual repotting session. And skipping ahead to June, for June we will have a guest speaker, Fred Clarke of Sunset Valley Orchids. He

is the developer of some “black” orchids (<http://www.sunsetvalleyorchids.com/>). **THERE IS A DATE CHANGE FOR THIS MEETING** since we are coordinating with the orchid societies of Kansas City and St. Louis on Fred’s talk. **THE MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY JUNE 11.**

In September, Tom Mirenda of the Smithsonian Institution will be here to talk. Tom’s columns on orchid culture are a monthly feature in American Orchid Society’s *Orchids* and each article contains a wealth of information.

We anticipate another speaker or two but the dates and topics need to be worked out.

TIME TO RENEW

Remember – it’s membership renewal time. Please use the renewal form at page 6 of this issue of the newsletter. Memberships become delinquent the day following the February meeting (February 9, 2012). To keep up-to-date on the latest in orchid news, please renew now.

HOME, GARDEN, LAWN, & PATIO SHOW

A big Thank You to all who signed up to help at the Annual Home & Garden Show at the CenturyLink Center (new name for the Qwest Center). The event is February 9 – 12 and we still have a number of slots available for people to help out. The signup sheets will be circulated again at the January meeting – or you may contact Jim Pyrzynski for more information. We plan to sell our potting mixes, plants, books, other

orchid supplies. And we will be publicizing our upcoming March show and the benefits of belonging to the Society. So if you think you can help out, please sign up.

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL ORCHID SHOW

Our twenty-fifth annual orchid show is March 24 -25 (with setup on March 23) at the Lauritzen Gardens. The annual orchid show is our big event of the year and one of the major events for the Lauritzen Gardens. It is well attended by public and it is the one thing that GOOS is well known for over a wide area, even among orchid vendors.

Of course the show doesn’t “happen by itself” – it represents the efforts of the GOOS membership and it will not be at its best without your help. We will need help Friday morning to setup the initial layout of tables – this can be a little strenuous. Next is the setup on Friday evening beginning at 5 pm. During this time vendors and other exhibitors will be arriving and they will need help getting their material into the building. (It is also a great time (when there is a lull in the workload) to look over the vendor sale areas for some unique specimen plants.)

Saturday morning is ribbon judging and AOS judging and clerks will be needed for the judging teams. During the day, the information table will need to be staffed (10 am to 4 pm) both Saturday and Sunday. Finally to cap off the weekend is the teardown on Sunday after show (4 pm until completed).

Signup sheets for these various tasks will be circulated at the January, February and March meetings. Check your calendars and mark the dates on it and plan to make some time to help out.

IN THIS MONTH’S ORCHIDS MAGAZINE

Want to see a 300-pound orchid? A photo of one, a *Grammatophyllum speciosum*, is in the December 2011 issue of American Orchid Society’s *Orchids*. The plant is displayed over a pool in the aquatic house at the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens and was in the process of being repotted. There is a photo of an even larger one in bloom in a Thailand garden. The plant requires nine men holding hands to encircle it. This is definitely not an orchid for your backyard greenhouse.

From the very big to the quite small – Tom Mirenda of the Smithsonian Institution (and our guest speaker for our September 2012 meeting) discusses the rupicolous *Cattleyas* – these were recently considered to be *Laelias* and may be still listed in many catalogs, etc. as that. These are diminutive orchids which would fit nicely in a teacup in many cases with small but perfectly beautiful *Cattleya*-type flowers. They are native to the Minas Gerais region of Brazil. *Rupicolous* means growing in and among rock and pebbles on the ground. In our library there is a set CDs by Francisco Miranda (no relation to Tom Mirenda), one of which discusses these orchids and shows them in their native habitat. They are a bit tricky to grow and present a challenge but can be very rewarding.

Do you photograph your orchids? The spotlight section of this issue has the orchid photo of the week and other orchid photos submitted by photographers. The process uses Flickr and you don’t have to be an AOS member. One photo is selected each week and is featured on the AOS homepage. Instructions for submission of photos can be found by following the link on the AOS homepage, www.aos.org. The magazine should be available in our library at the January meeting.

**FROM THE AOS WEBSITE
ANSWERS TO FREQUENT QUESTIONS**

How do I feed my orchid?

Experienced orchid growers fertilize their orchids weakly, weekly.

Orchids need to be fed regularly. Growers suggest using a “balanced” fertilizer such as 20-20-20 that includes all “necessary trace elements.” Regardless of the fertilizer formulation you choose to use, it should contain little or no urea. If you are unsure of what fertilizer to use, you can generally use any fertilizer you would for your other container plants. Orchids will do far better with too little fertilizer than with too much. Many growers recommend the “weakly, weekly” approach, applying a dilute (1/4 strength) fertilizer each time they water, rather than applying a full dose once a month. Also, it is best not to fertilize a completely dry plant as the fertilizer can burn the dry roots. Water first then follow with fertilizer solution.

How do I water my orchid?

Use a pencil or wooden skewer to determine whether an orchid needs to be watered.

Avoid overwatering which leads to the demise of many more orchids than underwatering. Constant wetness will cause the roots to rot, which leaves the plant without a means for taking up nourishment which then causes the leaves to droop and will eventually kill the plant. The classic advice is to water the day before the plant dries out. If you have to let the plant go dry to figure out what a dry plant weighs, it will not kill the plant and will make you a better grower. Another measure is to use the pencil trick (the point of a sharpened pencil, when inserted into the medium, will darken with moisture if the plant has enough water). And, there’s always the old standby - put your finger in the mix. If it feels wet, it is wet. If you aren’t sure whether it is time to water, wait one more day.

“Evenly moist,” while the most commonly given advice on watering, is the least easily explained. Because most plants are grown in plastic containers a good diagnosis is the weight of the plant: heavy - does not need watering; light - does require water. With a little practice, one can easily tell the amount of moisture remaining in the container. Water your orchid early in the morning. This insures complete water evaporation on the foliage as well as the crown by nightfall. If your home is very warm or has low humidity you will most likely need to water more often. The best place to water your plant is in the kitchen sink. Use lukewarm water (do not use salt softened or distilled water) and water your plant for about 15 seconds and be sure to thoroughly wet the media. Then allow the plant to drain for about 15 minutes. It may appear dry but it has had enough water. After the plants are watered, they should be placed so that the pots do not stand in water. Some people like to place the pots on “humidity trays” or in trays or saucers of gravel or pebbles and water. The pot is placed on the pebbles above the water line. This helps to insure that the base of the pot is not immersed in water, increases humidity for the plant, and provides some air circulation under the pot.

When should I repot?

When an orchid plant starts to grow over the edge of the pot, it is time to repot it!

Orchid plants need repotting for one or a combination of two main factors: Potting mix breaks down, often evidenced by dead roots, or the plant outgrowing the container. In the first case, a larger pot may not be required, simply replace the growing medium. In the second case, the plant may need dividing or may be shifted into a larger pot. Fresh media should always be used. A good general rule of thumb is to pot for the bottom of the plant, the root system, and not for the top, the foliage.

Where do I cut the flower spike when it is finished?

Phalaenopsis will often produce a secondary flush of flowers from a node on the inflorescence.

Of all of the more commonly available orchids, only Phalaenopsis (the moth orchid) will re-bloom from its old spike. Phalaenopsis will generally re-bloom given a little extra care. When the last flower fades, you can leave the spike (stem) on and it will still continue flowering but the stem gets very ungainly and the flowers get smaller. Some people believe it is best to cut off the stem entirely at the base where it comes out of the leaves, and it will bloom again in several months. You can also cut off the stem leaving two nodes (those little brown lines on the stem below where the flowers were) on the stem. One of these nodes will then initiate and generally produce flowers within eight to 12 weeks. Younger or weaker plants may not rebloom and some Phalaenopsis are genetically incapable of reblooming from the old spike. These are usually those that flower with branched spikes. It’s always worth a try. Orchids, like animals, are susceptible to viruses, so whenever cutting an orchid plant always use a sterile tool to prevent the spread of virus. A straight edged razor blade is a good tool to use for cutting flower spikes. (see the Youtube video at <http://aos.org/Default.aspx?id=76>)

American Orchid Society Monthly Checklist for January and February

Cattleya

Watering and fertilizing will be at a minimum, as will potting. Be on the lookout for senescing sheaths on your winter-into-spring bloomers. Careful removal of the dying sheaths will still allow buds to develop without the danger of condensation-induced rot. Low light will lead to weak spikes, so, and as noted above, staking is critical. If you have a chance to get out to nurseries, there may still be a chance to acquire good plants in sheath for spring bloom. Getting them now not only ensures that you'll have them, but allows them to acclimate to your conditions and bloom at their best.

Cymbidium

We are well into the flowering season now. Outdoor growers should be cautious of freezing temperatures. Damage starts to occur below 30 F. Be diligent about tying the inflorescences for best arrangement of the flowers. Also watch closely for slugs and snails. If weather is quite wet, protect the plants from the rain and this will help to reduce the risk of botrytis spotting.

Lycaste

The most glorious of all orchids, Lycaste, will be moving toward their flowering season. Make sure the palm-like leaves do not interfere with the emerging inflorescences. Tying them loosely together often is helpful. Some growers cut the leaves off at the pseudobulb, but this removes part of the attractiveness of this elegant orchid. Resist picking up the plant to inspect those beautiful buds and then setting it down in all different directions as the flower buds will be forced to re-orient themselves to the light source each time and will not open as nicely as they should. Keep plants a little drier during the shorter days.

Odontoglossums

Odontoglossums and their intergeneric hybrids offer a great splash of color now. Though once thought of as being difficult to grow and requiring cool temperatures due to the emphasis on odontoglossum breeding, the new intergeneric hybrids made using *Oncidium* and *Brassia*, for example, are just the opposite. These plants are quite content in more intermediate conditions. New growths generally emerge in the spring, later forming beautiful plump pseudobulbs. Look for the flower spikes to emerge from the inner sheath of the pseudobulb. If your plant's pseudobulbs are shriveled, then the plants have been kept too dry or too wet. Inspect the roots to determine which condition prevailed. If the lead pseudobulb is large, plump and green (and back bulbs are shriveled) but no flower spike is evident, the plants may have been kept too dry.

Paphiopedilum

The standard *Paphiopedilum* insigne-derived hybrids, which are called "bull dogs" and "toads," are at their peak. Unlike most other orchids, they can even be potted while in bud. There really is no wrong time to pot a *paphiopedilum*, and no other orchid responds so favorably to fresh mix and a cleanup. Keep an eye on watering until roots begin to grow.

Phalaenopsis

Now is the peak of spike development, with the first plants in full flower. Staking and plant preparation is a must for those all-important spring shows. Correct staking now will give a better display and also make it much easier to transport to your society meetings and shows. Care with watering is vital to avoid mechanical damage to the flowers, as well as rot-related problems. Keep spent blooms cleaned up to avoid botrytis inoculation. Do not repot this month. Now you'll be seeing lots of *phalaenopsis* at orchid shows and sales.

Zygopetalum

For the most part, the flowering season will have ended for this group, providing the grower a chance to do some repotting. The plants will then have a chance to become well established before the hotter months of summer arrive. Most growers use bark mixes, but some exceptional results have been seen lately using rock-wool blends. You may want to try this mix, but do not change your whole collection over to this new media until you are sure it is right for you. First, experiment with a few plants to see how they respond.

The AOS thanks Ned Nash and James Rose for this essay.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Greater Omaha Orchid Society General Meeting
November 9, 2011

The meeting was called to order at the Douglas/Sarpy County Extension Office at 7:30 pm.

President Roberta Ginavan welcomed visitors and members to the meeting.

The minutes of the October meeting were approved. Roberta noted that a correction was needed to the board meeting minutes of October 26, correcting Vicki Shallow's name (from Sparrow).

Jim Pyrzynski reported that the Home and Garden Show would be February 9 – 12, 2012 at the Century Link Center. GOOS plans to have a booth at the show. Sign up sheets to staff the booth were circulated.

Holiday Party. Jacque Lewzader discussed the plans for the holiday party which will be held December 14, 2011 at Granite City Restaurant. A signup sheet was circulated.

Library discussion. Librarian Ann Donovan discussed the contents of Taylor's Guide to Orchids by Judy White and how she uses the information she found in the book.

2012 Programs. Some programs for 2012 were discussed. January will have Paradigm Gardens, a local hydroponics and garden supply dealer. They will discuss the lighting and growing products they have available. February will have Joe Lankton, GOOS member and AOS judge. He will go over the show judging process with the emphasis on the duties of show clerks. March will be a show preparation program. June is up in the at the moment. We may have a speaker but the members would have to come on Monday (the speaker is making a circuit from St. Louis, to Kansas City, and then Omaha if we can agree to the date change. The annual picnic was planned for the date otherwise.

Conservation committee goals. After Jim Pyrzynski's talk on conservation, Roberta asked that he develop a set of conservation goals for the committee/society.

Program. Jim Pyrzynski gave a talk on orchid conservation.

Raffle plants. Norm Larson brought plants for raffle. Since there were only two, they were auctioned off.

Refreshments were provided by Marie Anne Smith.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Pyrzynski, Secretary

Greater Omaha Orchid Society Board Meeting
November 30, 2011

The Greater Omaha Orchid Society Board met at Denny's at 7:00 PM. In attendance were: Roberta Ginavan, Sandy Rome, Linda Schroeder, Jacque Lewzader, Eric Stoiber, Ron Fechner, and Jim Pyrzynski.

Holiday Party. The holiday party was discussed. Jacque Lewzader reported that she had two \$10 gift certificates from Paradigm Gardens for a raffle at the party. The possible auction of OrchidWiz Express was discussed. The software has a retail value of \$95 and usable only on Windows-based computers. A decision was made to have Sandy Rome evaluate the software and show it to the membership at the January meeting. There was also a discussion on how to get people at the party to socialize more and possibly having a different table arrangement was suggested, Jacque will have calendars to sell at the party.

Financial matter. Sandy and Roberta came across an additional area where the society was not complying with tax law. Nebraska REG -1-090, which applies to non-profit organizations requires, nonprofit organizations to collect sales tax on sales made by the organization. We have not been collecting tax on our sales of bark, books, etc. at the Home and Garden Show, our own show, etc.

Ways and Means. Jacque discussed whether the members would be interested in another item of clothing with the GOOS logo on it, e.g. sweatshirt, t-shirt. More research is needed and the membership needs to be surveyed to see who is interested. Printmakers is the company we have used in the past and they are in the local area. The income generated from past sales of these type items was not known.

Extension Office. Roberta plans to have a meeting with Wayne of the Extension Office and asked for someone to accompany her. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss our needs and their requirements. Jacque and Linda will try to be at the meeting.

New meeting location search. The search is on hold until after the meeting with Wayne (above).

Carol Behrens update. An update was given on Carol. She is still in intensive care and the assessment was that Dick was struggling with the number of plants they have. Carol will probably have difficulties getting around given the nature of her injury (broken femur) for some time.

GOOS Show. Jim advised that the show invitations are ready to be mailed out.

Programs. Fred Clarke will be the speaker for June 11 (Monday night). Antlfinger may be a good fit for October or November. There was a discussion on the speaker fees and associated costs. Roberta suggested a look at the AOS speakers list for some ideas on the costs. Eric emphasized the need for flexibility since some speakers are hobbyists and even though they sell plants, it's not their main business, others may be a speaker for a business but they are not the owner.

Business cards. Awaiting further action by Eric.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Pyrzynski, Secretary

**GREATER OMAHA ORCHID SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM (2012)**

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE (____) _____

EMAIL _____

SINGLE DUES - \$15.00 FAMILY DUES - \$20.00 STUDENT (18 YRS AND UNDER) - \$5.00

Make check payable to the Greater Omaha Orchid Society, and mail to:
Greater Omaha Orchid Society, P. O. Box 241871, Omaha, NE 68124