



The Informer

Newsletter of the Greater Omaha Orchid Society

PO Box 241871 Omaha, NE 68124 greateromahaorchidsociety.org May 2011

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Submission deadline for the
June Informer: May 30, 2011

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)

May 11, 2011

7:00 PM new growers group
7:30 PM Growing orchids with Dave Taylor
Refreshments: Marilyn Hawes

May 25, 2011

7:00 PM
Board meeting, location TBD

June 8, 2011

7:00 PM new growers group
7:30 PM Program - Guest Speaker John Stubbings of Clown Alley Orchids.
Topic: Unusual Relatives of Cymbidiums
Refreshments: Ann Donovan

EVENTS

May 6 5:30-8:30

May 7 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Men's Garden Club Plant Sale 8015 West Center Rd. Wildflowers, hostas herbs, heirloom tomatoes, grasses, perennials See list at www.omha-mens-garden-club.com

May 14 - 15, 2011

Spring into Spring
Lauritzen Gardens, 100 Bancroft, Omaha, NE

May 13-15, 2011

Redland International Orchid Festival, Redland Fruit & Spice Park, Homestead, FL. Contact: Bill Peters, PO Box 924243, Homestead, FL 33092; (305) 242-1333; whimsy@bellsouth.net.

May 22, 2011

Iris Show sponsored by the Omaha Iris Society. Open to public 12 noon to 4 p.m. Location the Douglas/Sarpy Co. 8015 W. Center, Omaha Contact Becky Kadel 402-556-2025

MAY 27, 2011

South Omaha Horticultural Society: "How do you Mark progress in prairie time?" Jim Locklear, Director of Conservation Lauritzen Gardens. Guests welcome. 7 p.m. Douglas/Sarpy Co. Extension. Info contact Jennifer Silva 415-5766

June 5, 1:00 to 4:00 pm

Shady Choice Hosta Society Annual Plant Sale. Sarpy/Douglas County Extension Office, 8015 West Center Road, Omaha.

July 31, 2011

Central Iowa Speakers Day, Fort Dodge, IA. See story pg 2.

MAY MEETING ORCHID GROWING WITH DAVE TAYLOR

Due to the enthusiastic response to our April meeting, the May meeting will continue with a discussion on orchid growing with Dave Taylor. For those who don't know Dave, he is a student in the American Orchid Society judging program. In his other life Dave is a biologist for the USDA in Lincoln, NE. His professional interests are in evolution and population genetics, and he is currently working on flies and their impact on livestock production. Dave is an excellent orchid grower with a large collection of many interesting species.

So come prepared and bring your questions for Dave at our May meeting. Our originally planned member recognition program will be done in conjunction with annual picnic/auction in August.

GUEST SPEAKER FOR JUNE

The June meeting features a guest speaker John Stubbings of Clown Alley Orchids in Pasadena, TX. John is a retired chemical/environmental engineer formerly working in specialty chemical plants. His last job in that field was to work near Bombay, India for a local Indian firm. That assignment lasted 16 months. Clown Alley Orchids is the family business

started in 1986 near Chicago. In September 2005 he re-opened the orchid business with a full time retail shop in Pasadena, Texas where the greenhouse space is much larger. John is the chief grower and hybridizer. Clown Alley Orchids attends many shows and fairs each year exhibiting and selling orchids suitable for the south.

John has been growing orchids starting indoors under lights and in windowsills in 1979. He built his first lean-to greenhouse in 1986 and then a larger freestanding greenhouse in 1996. John concentrates his orchid hybridizing work in *Cattleyas*, *Phalaenopsis* and *Galeandra*. John has registered over 15 *Galeandra* hybrids, 30 *Phalaenopsis* hybrids and two *Cattleya* hybrids.

He was President of The International *Phalaenopsis* Alliance with members from about twenty countries and nearly every state. Previously he was Regional Director and First Vice-President with the IPA.

John is a fully accredited American Orchid Society (AOS) judge (since 1991) John has served as Vice-Chair of the AOS Houston Judging Center. He has attended and judged shows all over the US and international shows in Canada, Scotland, Taiwan and Korea. He previously served as Vice-Chair, then for five years as Chairman of the AOS Chicago Judging Center. John was President of the Illinois Orchid Society for three years. He was a director or officer of the Illinois Orchid Society for over 20 consecutive years. He was President of the Houston Orchid Society for 2010. John has won many

AOS awards for flower quality as well as cultural excellence.

The topic for John's program is "Unusual Relatives of *Cymbidiums*" includes *Galeandra*, *Catasetum*, *Clowesia*, *Cycnoches*, *Mormodes* species and hybrids. There are many photos and there is an emphasis on culture. And it has some humorous aspects.

John will have plants for sale but you may pre-order plants. You can see what he has by visiting the website <http://www.clownalleyorchids.com/>. You can email or phone in you order (281)-991-6841.

HELP NEEDED FOR SPRING INTO SPRING

We need help to staff the Society's sale/information table at "Spring into Spring" at the Lauritzen Gardens. It's a plant sale at the Gardens and we will be among other garden clubs promoting our society and selling orchid supplies and some plants. The sale is May 13 (Friday late afternoon/evening) and May 14, 15 (Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.). One benefit of helping out at our table is that you get to shop the plant sale at the Gardens and also tour the Gardens – there is a fantastic sculpture show on the grounds which are now full of blooming flowers and trees. If you are interested contact either Jim Pyrzyński or Roberta Ginavan.

REMINDER CIOS SPEAKERS DAY

There is still time to register for the Central Iowa Orchid Society's Speakers Day, July 31, 2011. The speakers this year are Norito Hasegawa, owner of *Paphanatics*, Unlimited and Ivan Portilla of *Ecuagenera*.

Norito will give talks on "What's New in Paphs" and "Multifloral Paphs." Ivan will give talks on the "Orchids of Ecuador in their Natural Habitat" and "Cattleya Maxima and its Different Forms." There will be plants for sale but you are also encouraged to pre-order plants. Since the plants from *Ecuagenera* have to go through CITES processing plants they must be ordered by July 13. The CIOS website has a list of plants available (<http://c-we.com/cios/EcuageneraPriceList.pdf>); to order, email sales@ecuagenera.com with your list of plants and note that they are for the speakers day.

The day starts off with a continental breakfast and plant sales from 8 – 9 a.m. followed by the talks. There is a break for a lunch which is provided. There is AOS judging at the event. Plants for judging must be in place by 10 a.m.

The registration fee (see page 6 of this newsletter for a form) of \$25.00 per person covers all costs (\$30.00 at the door). Early reservations would be helpful in planning the event. For more information, reservations, etc. Please call: Carson Whitlow at 515-993-4841, David Hutson at 515-276-4475, David Brightwell 515-289-2853.

Fort Dodge is a military facility and you must have a photo ID to enter the fort. It is located in Johnston Iowa, a short distance north of Des Moines. Because of road construction on Merle Hay Road, the following is suggested: From I-35/I-80, take exit

#129 (NW 86th Street). Go north approximately 2.4 miles to stop sign at NW 70th Avenue. Turn east (right) onto NW 70th Avenue. Go approximately 1.2 miles to stoplight. Entrance to Camp Dodge will be to the left. Once through the gate, follow signs to meeting place.

OCGD BUST TOUR JUNE 4

The Omaha Council of Garden Clubs will hold a bus tour on June 4th. The itinerary is:

6:45 a.m. – depart from Lauritzen Gardens
In route enjoy the world largest Porch Swing.

10:15 a.m. - Arrive in Superior Nebraska. Tour authentic Victorian homes and gardens.

11:30 a.m. – Rothfuss private gardens. Enjoy the corncrib gazebo, the garden statuary, the beautiful iris beds and other gardens.

Lunch – Surprise location

1:30 p.m. – Imagine the past at the Starke Barn, a wonder of the West.

2:15 p.m. Tour Red Cloud, NE by bus. Roam the Cather Prairie, a botanical treasure, and visit the Webster County Museum.

4:45 p.m. Shop at the Petal Patch, Hardy, NE. You'll see beautiful garden items and purchase those last minute plants.

7:45 pm. – Enjoy a prime rib buffet dinner at one of Nebraska's best known restaurants – Chances R.

Cost is \$75. For more information call 402-933-5419. A registration form is on page 6 of this newsletter. Deadline is May 15.

**AMERICAN ORCHID SOCIETY
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON PHALAENOPSIS**

**The First Five of the Ten “Uncommonest”
Questions Asked About Phalaenopsis**

Q.
My phalaenopsis has a bloom spike arising out of the apical crown of the plant. What effect will this have on future flowering?

A.
Probably this means that your plant has reached full maturity, and it will cease to grow and flower after this spike is finished. However, we've seen some plants resume growth, and thenceforth act in a normal manner. Some say this atypical flowering results from too much light; others blame insecticides, especially the systemics. A plant that does not resume normal growth will usually throw one or more new plants or “keikis” from the base of the plant, so don't throw it away. Until it does produce new plants, continue to treat it in a normal manner.

Q.
My phalaenopsis plant has grown quite tall. How can I “top” it?

A.
Select where you will cut the plant by examining it carefully, and determining a point where the cut will leave the top half with an ample root system to sustain it until it becomes established. You can remove the bottom part and repot it, or leave it “as is”. To pot the top, be sure to cut off any leaves that will be below the potting media, and of course, use only a sterile knife. Remove any flower spikes to force growth energy into the division. Seal all wounds and cuts with a tree-seal paint. Withhold water from the bottom half for a few days to allow the injured roots to heal. Then keep it slightly on the dry side until one or more “keikis” appear - from one to six months. They can be removed when the roots are one to two inches long. As long as the bottom half remains alive, it will continue to produce, perhaps as many as six or more “keikis”. You can give slightly more water than is usual to the top half until it is well established.

Q.
When buying phalaenopsis seedlings, what kind of shape and color should I look for in the leaves and root tips to assure fine flowers?

A.
We know of no correlation between flower shape and size, and the shape of the leaves or color of the root tips. On our bench of stud and award plants, you can find every type of leaf shape: pointed, rounded, long, short, etc. Certainly, in buying seedlings with color expectancy, you'll want a plant with some pigmentation in the leaves and/or root tips. But again, there doesn't seem to be any correlation between the amount of color visible in the plant, and the intensity of color in the flowers. From our experience, the only assurance of fine progeny comes from the use of fine parents. Of course, there is no hard-and-fast guarantee of success but the odds are in your favor.

Q.
My phalaenopsis plant grows quite well, but doesn't bloom. Why?

A.
One reason could be too high temperature. We find that phalaenopsis flower quite well at 62 degrees F. If you are growing the plants indoors, artificial lights nearby might cause long days and thus inhibit flowering. If the plants seem to be growing well, water and fertilizer applied as directed, temperature ideal, and still no flowers, then not enough light is probably the answer. Gradually increase the light intensity until you have about 1000 to 1500 footcandles, or roughly all the light the plants can take without burning. If growing in the home, move the plants to a nice, bright windowsill that receives an hour or two of direct sun in the very early morning or late afternoon.

Q.
My phalaenopsis never quits blooming, and is badly in need of repotting. What should I do?

A.
Repot it - now! We repot year round as the plants need it. If the plant is healthy and robust, you can leave the spike on. If, on the other hand, the plant is a seedling, is weak, has a poor root system, or if you are apt to damage a goodly number of roots in repotting, then sacrifice the spike to force growth energy into the plant.

The Second Five of the Ten “Uncommonest” Questions Asked About Phalaenopsis

Q.

I seem to get a lot of crown rot in my Phalaenopsis. What can I do?

A.

Prevention is the best answer. Always water your plants before noon, or so the plants are dry before the falling temperature in the evening. Keeping your plants slanted or at an angle make help keep water drained out of the crown. A regular spray program - especially in hot, humid areas - with a good fungicide will pay off.

Q.

The buds on my phalaenopsis spikes open at funny angles, spoiling the spray arrangement for show and award purposes. Why?

A.

Once the buds start to form on the spike, and after staking up the spike, leave the plant absolutely alone in that position. Phalaenopsis spikes (as with most flowers) tend to draw toward the light; the buds will twist and turn back toward the light each time the plant is moved, thus spoiling the arrangement

Q.

I'm having trouble getting “takes” when trying to make Phalaenopsis hybrids. Many times the ovary stays green, starts to swell, then turns yellow and falls off. Or, I may get a seed pod, but when I sow the seed, get no germination. Can you help?

A.

Many of today's so-called “novelty crosses” are triploids, or have very unusual or dissimilar chromosome numbers. After pollination, hormones produced when pollen is introduced onto the stigmatic surface may start the ovary ripening. However, when fertilization fails to occur, the hormone process stops, and the ovary (old flower stem) turns yellow and falls off. We've found too, when crossing a small flower with a large one, pollen tubes produced by pollen from the small flower just aren't able to grow long enough to reach the ovules in the large flower. We always use pollen from from the larger flower onto the smaller flower. Another interesting point: after almost giving up trying to hybridize with certain plants over a long period of time, all of a sudden they seem to breed with almost anything - a kind of “puberty” some have suggested. We, and others, have used triploids successfully in breeding, so don't give up, although it may take many, many attempts. Dr. Sagawa has suggested that in certain complex hybrids many or most of the embryos may be dead by the time the seed pod matures. For this reason we use only green-pod or embryo culture methods, and take the pods about 120 days after pollination.

Q.

I've heard that there's a lot of unexplored territory in breeding phalaenopsis, especially with some of the species. Where should I start?

A.

First you might start by looking in Sander's List of Orchid Hybrids (AQ plus, RHS New Orchid Hybrids) to see what species have been used, and what ones have not. Once you find a little used species you would like to breed with, make certain you are, in fact, using that species... You'll probably have to grow 100 or more seedlings along in order to see a fairly accurate cross-section, but with good care, you should see most bloom within three years. You might also check catalogs, Orchids magazine articles, and contact hybridizers...to get more information on what has been done, and get some tips as to where to proceed.

Q.

How can we assure a good phalaenopsis crop for a certain holiday or show?

A.

Dr. Rotor, in Withner's book *The Orchids*, reports that short days and/or low temperatures induce flower initiation. He used *Phal. amabilis*, *Phal. schilleriana* and *Phal. schilleriana* hybrids with short days (black cloth) and a low temperature of 65° F. Long days (artificial lighting) delayed flowering. We've never experimented with black cloth or lights, but get continuous, year round spike initiation, we believe because of our cool (60°-62°F) night-time greenhouse temperatures. We are currently running a series of tests to determine the optimum low temperatures for spike initiation and how long it takes a plant to initiate a spike at that temperature. We feel that by using black cloth to delay flowering until a specific time - if for an extended time - would be detrimental to the plant's vigor, and possibly cut down on subsequent flowering.

George P. Woodward, Jr. (Santa Cruz, CA)

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REPORTS

Greater Omaha Orchid Society General Meeting
April 13, 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 March meeting were approved.

Sandy Rome gave the Treasurer's report. Filed for audit.

Annual Orchid Show. Jim Pyrzynski, Show Chair, thanked the membership for their help in putting on the event. Attendance for the show was 1,700 people. Jacque Lewzader thanked everyone for the donations to the hospitality room. And Roberta Ginavan thanked Jim for his efforts.

Lauritzen Gardens Spring into Spring. Roberta discussed the plant sale at the Lauritzen Gardens on May 14 and 15. GOOS will have a sale table and a volunteer signup sheet was circulated.

Dick and Carol Behrens gave a talk on orchids to the Papillion Garden Club.

Incorporation paperwork. Roberta advised that the changes to the Society's incorporation papers had been published in the Omaha World Herald on three weekends as required. The next step is to work with the federal government (IRS) on required paperwork for 501(c)(3) status.

Library. The rules for use of the GOOS library were discussed and will be published in the yearbook.

Website discussion. Roberta discussed some comments she had received from a teacher regarding our website. The comments suggested adding a link to another website that contained some information on orchids. After some discussion it was decided that a link should be added to the links on the GOOS website.

Coming events. Roberta advised the membership of 2 events coming up in the next couple of months: An Omaha Council of Garden Clubs bus trip to various gardens on June 4 and the Central Iowa Speakers Day in July. The April newsletter had an article on the CIOS speakers day and Jim Pyrzynski will include information on the bus trip in the May newsletter.

Native orchid field trip. Jim Pyrzynski and Tim Janssen plan to lead field trips to view native orchids. A signup list was circulated at the meeting.

Program. The program was the annual repotting meeting. The meeting attendees split into various groups for some hands on demonstrations. Dave Taylor led a discussion on orchid culture.

Refreshments were provided by Jim Pyrzynski.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Pyrzynski, Secretary

Greater Omaha Orchid Society Board Meeting
April 27, 2011

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

Show Hospitality. Jacque discussed the hospitality for the show. There was a total of \$185 in cash donations. Cost for the show hospitality was \$210.88. This was in line with past shows.

Lauritzen Show. Jim discussed the show finances and other issues. Show income is from table fees. There were 16 tables rented by vendors at \$125 each for a total of \$2000. Offsetting this income are costs for the show including the show fee, awards, mailing and copying costs, table and skirting rental, judges luncheon and miscellaneous costs. Net income was tentatively placed at just under \$600 barring some other costs surfacing. The information table generated Ways and Means income and also membership. There appeared to be some discrepancies in the sales log – more money than items recorded sold and at least one more membership than applications received. Further research is required before releasing a final figure. Jim also discussed the comments he received from one the clerks on a ribbon judging team. He said he would try to lay it out in writing and see what could be done to help the situation.

Spring into spring. The Lauritzen event for May 13 (setup and evening), Saturday, and Sunday was discussed. Roberta started to send around a signup sheet but it apparently it was not the one that was circulated at the April general meeting. She had no other signup sheet so apparently that one never made it back to her by the end of the meeting. There only a few time slots with names, so Jim will email a copy out shortly after the board meeting and ask for volunteers. We will sell the normal items plus Bletillas – free with a membership, otherwise \$10 each. A suggestion was made about one of the handouts (the meeting schedule) – it should include a map to the meeting location.

Future shows. Jim advised that letters to judges asking them to commit to the 2012 show (March 24, 25) and he has received one reply thus far.

April meeting discussion. The enthusiasm at the April meeting indicated that there is a need for more hands-on participation by the attendees and less formality. However a more structured approach to the new growers group might be beneficial, in particular with a set topic for each session.

June meeting. The June meeting will feature guest speaker John Stubbings of Clown Orchids. An article needs to be in the newsletter advising the membership that they can pre-order plants from his website and use the biography from the website.

August meeting. The meeting is the potluck and auction. It was decided to do as last year and have board member bring the main course dishes and the rest of the membership bring other items. A signup sheet will be circulated at the next board meeting. There was a discussion of ordering plants for the auction. A total price range similar to last year, \$300 - \$350. Various vendors were mentioned as possible sources.

May meeting. Jim asked for more information about the program for May (membership recognition) and suggested that it might be better to build on the enthusiasm from the April meeting on orchid culture and have another similar session and have the member recognition during the picnic/auction (August). Roberta will contact Dave Taylor and see if he can do another program – if not, others will lead multiple discussion groups.

Miscellaneous. There is a need for more “greeters” at meetings. Stick-on nametags need to be available. The website should have links to the “silk flowers” orchid information page and Jim added that a link to the Mid-America Judging Center website also be added.

Meeting adjourned

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Pyrzynski, Secretary

**OCGC BUS TRIP
Registration Form**

Registration \$75. Includes fun, all entrance fees, continental breakfast, lunch, buffet dinner and transportation. More information? Call 402-933-5419

Be sure to provide the following information and send your check to:

Name(s) _____

Telephone _____

Address _____ zip code _____

Garden club (if a member) _____

Make check payable to: **Omaha Council of Garden Clubs**

Mail to: Marta Wasson Davis, Treasurer, 7719 Marisu Lane Court, LaVista, NE 58128

Deadline: May 15, 2011 (no refunds after May 22, 2011)

**Central Iowa Orchid Society
Speaker's Day, July 31st, 2011**

Registration Form

To help us plan for Speaker's Day, we encourage you to fill out this registration form and return it to: Central Iowa Orchid Society, c/o Leo Schlunz, 422 S. 5th Street, Chariton, IA 50049-2402. We would like these returned by July 17, 2011 if possible.

Please make checks payable to the Central Iowa Orchid Society. \$25.00 per person (\$30.00 at the door).

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ ZipCode _____