



The Informer

Newsletter of the Greater Omaha Orchid Society

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

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Submission deadline for the
December Informer: October
3, 2012.

Omaha Orchid Society Mem- bership 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 Febru-
ary 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 THE LOCATION CHANGES FOR EACH MEETING BELOW:

November 14, 2012

**Extension Office
8015 West Center Rd.**

7:00 PM new growers group
7:30 PM Guest speaker,
Ann Antlfinger, topic: Orchid
population restoration
Refreshments: Jacque
Lewzader

November 21, 2012

**6:45 PM, Papillion Library
Board meeting**

December 12, 2012

**Holiday Party!
Grisanti's, 10875 West
Dodge Road, Omaha, NE
6 PM -**

EVENTS

November 3 – 4, 2012

Kansas Orchid Society
Fall Show. Botanica The
Wichita Gardens, 701 N.
Amidon St., Wichita, KS.
Contact: Sarah Pratt, 316-
772-5194, svcsjp@pixivs.
net

February 7 - 10, 2013

Spring 2013 Home and
Garden Show. Century
Link Center, Omaha.

February 8 – 10, 2013

Kansas City Orchid Show
The American Royal
Center, 1701 American
Royal Court, Kansas
City, MO Contact: Doug
Martin, 913-248-8669,
bethdoug@kc.rr.com

February 16 – 17, 2013

Batavia Orchid Society
Show, DuPage County Fair-
grounds, 2015 Manchester
Rd., Wheaton, IL. Contact:
Mike Rollinger, 815-
258-0872, mrollinger@
mindspring.com

February 23 – 24, 2013

Greater Lansing Orchid
Society Show, Michigan
State University Crop &
Soil Sciences Conservatory,
Contact: Pete Ostlund, 517-
449-5248

March 2 – 3, 2013

Greater Omaha Orchid
Society Annual Orchid
Show. Lauritzen Gardens,
100 Bancroft St., Omaha,
NE. Contact: Jim
Pyrzynski, 402-734-4112,
jpyrzynski@cox.net

THIS MONTH'S MEETING

ANN ANTLFINGER'S LADIES-TRESSES

No, this month's meeting
is not about some lady
named Ann who has her
hair in tresses. The meet-
ing is about a different
than the usual type of or-
chid – not Phalaenopsis
with their arching sprays,
not the dancing ladies of
Oncidiums, nor the frilly
lips of Cattleyas, but rather
something that looks more
intriguing under a hand
lens and while you are on
your hands and knees –
Ladies-Tresses Orchids.
Ladies Tresses Orchids
are orchids in the genus
Spiranthes and they are
generally terrestrial and
live in temperate regions.
The flowers are arranged in
a spiral around a tall spike.
Differentiating between the
various species is some-
times difficult. Nebraska
has several species; they
occur in our prairies and
bloom from late July into
October.

Our guest speaker, Ann
Antlfinger, Ph.D., is a pro-
fessor of biology at UNO.
She has been studying
Spiranthes cernua which
occurs on Nebraska prai-
ries and has successfully
reintroduced seedlings at
the Nine-Mile Prairie near
Lincoln. During her talk
she will discuss her find-
ings.

Note: Plants of *Spiranthes*

are frequently available for purchase at the annual Spring Affair in Lincoln—a fund raiser for the support the Nebraska State Arboretum which occurs on the last Saturday in April. They are of fairly easy culture if you follow the cultural requirements.

ON THE HORIZON

Show season starts early next year and preparations need to start correspondingly early.

First on the agenda is the Annual Home and Garden Show at the Century Link Center (formerly Qwest Center). For 2013 the dates are February 7 – 10. This means that the show will occur BEFORE the February meeting. Thus we will need to have our volunteer lists completed by the January 9th meeting. We will be circulating signup sheets at the November meeting.

Second is our annual orchid show and sale at Lauritzen Gardens which occurs on March 2 – 3. The show is early this year due to the date of Easter and other scheduling conflicts. Please get the dates for both of these events and see where you can assist. Thank you.

THE HOLIDAYS ARE ALMOST HERE

It's time to think about celebrating, the days are short and after the barrages of the past few months we need something to lift our spirits. The annual Holiday Party is December 12 at 6 PM. We are having this year's party at Grisanti's, 10875 West Dodge Road, Omaha. There are 5 entrees to choose from: Eggplant Parmesan, Lasagna, Prime Rib, Grilled Chicken Marsala, and Salmon Flo-

rentine. Entrees include a salad and breadsticks. The price for the entrees varies from \$13.99 – \$17.99 and includes non-alcoholic beverages (alcoholic beverages cost extra). Dessert choices are Tiramisu, Classic Cheese Cake, or Key Lime Pie and the cost is under \$3.00. There will be separate checks.

We plan to have or “quirky” gift exchange too. So make plans now. Jacque Lewzader will discuss the party at Wednesday's meeting.

LIBRARY NEWS

GOOS maintains an extensive library of books and periodicals on orchids. You can find the answer to a lot of your orchid questions in them. To view the list, use the Society's website (greatromahaorchidsociety.org). Click on the “Library” link on the left side of the screen; you will see a list of books available in the library. . If you wish to checkout books, make a note of the books you wish to get and then contact Ann Donovan (ladygator1@hotmail.com, 402-212-3214), Librarian or Ron Fechner (ronfechner@yahoo.com, 402-891-8445).

Members who have books checkout, please return them at the November 14, 2012 meeting.

SOCIETY BUSINESS DISCUSSION

SOCIETY FUNDS. The Society has money in a checking account and also some in Certificates of Deposit. One of the CDs is coming up for renewal. A review of the amount of funds in CDs and in the checking account determined that it would be advantageous to consolidate the CDs and

add some funds from the checking account into a single large CD for a longer term. Treasurer Sandy Rome will discuss this issue during the business meeting and ask for membership approval.

SHOW ITEM PURCHASE. For the annual orchid show and sale the Society rents tables and skirting. The rental cost runs about \$600.00 depending on the number of tables needed for sales and displays. The tables currently rent for \$5.75 each or about \$180 for a show; the skirts rent for \$10.00 each or about \$310 for a show.

One way to reduce the rental costs would be to purchase skirts. Skirts do not take up too much space and can be stored fairly easily (unlike tables). Depending on the material used and their construction skirts cost about \$14 up to about \$26. Some skirts that meet our requirements (color, construction, etc.) run about \$18. These skirts are attached to the table with clips with Velcro and there would be additional costs for the clips. There would also be some additional costs for some storage boxes for the skirts. A purchase of enough skirts for a show (about 36), clips and storage boxes would cost about \$800. This expense would be recouped by not having to rent skirts and would be fully recovered by the third show. Jim Pyszynski is working the issue and will further discuss it during the business November business meeting for membership approval.

RENEWAL TIME

It's that time of year again – time to renew your membership. A form is on the last page of this newsletter. You may mail your check to the address on the form or bring it to the meeting. We have some great plans for 2013 and would certainly be grateful for your participation.

HARLIN HAMERNIK

The horticultural world and Nebraska lost a giant recently. Harlan Hamernik died October 15, 2012 at the St. Elizabeth Medical Center in Lincoln. He was injured during a fire at his home. He was 76 years old.

Harlin founded Bluebird Nursery in Lincoln in 1958 and later moved it to Clarkson. The business was highly successful and became a wholesale operation serving garden centers and landscapers. In 2006, he started HH Wild Plums which specializes in native and woody plants.

Quoting from his obituary in the Columbus Telegram: “Always on the lookout for interesting, new or under-used plants, he introduced hundreds of outstanding new selections to the nursery industry from both native sources and around the world. He shared his enthusiasm by making countless presentations and speeches to students of all ages and many professional groups throughout the U.S. and overseas. He was a horticulture delegate to China in 1993, Inner Mongolia and guest of Republic of China in 1997, and to Tibet and ROC Departments of Forestry in 1999. They hosted numerous delegations from China and Tibet; Bluebird was always a favorite stop on their itineraries, where they were treated to traditional Clarkson hospitality and

food. A devoted member of the International Plant Propagator's Society for many years, he was named an IPPS Fellow in 1998, an honor he greatly cherished. He received major honors from the American Horticultural Society, Perennial Plant Association, Iowa Nursery and Landscape Association, Missouri Master Gardeners, U.S. Small Business Administration, National Soil and Water Conservation Society, PI Alpha Xi, University of Nebraska Horticulture Club, Nebraska Nursery/Landscape Association, Nebraska Certified Nurserymen, and PlantSelect, etc. He was president of Bedding Plants International in 1976. He recently received the John C. Fremont Pioneer Award, a bronze sculpture. Sadly, his walls full of plaques and commendations, as well as his extensive horticultural library, were destroyed in the fire that took his life."

Harlin's sons carry on his work at the Bluebird Nursery

MASTER GARDENERS NEEDED

Anyone interested in becoming a Master Gardener? An article in the Bellevue Leader weekly newspaper stated that the University of Nebraska Extension in Douglas/Sarpy counties is putting a call out to all "green thumbs" to take part in the Master Gardener Program. This is a volunteer outreach program that educates the educators. To become a certified Master Gardener, individuals must complete training and approved volunteer work. If you wish to apply for the 2013 Master Gardener you must attend one of two informational meetings. Extension staff will give

additional information to the public about becoming a Master Gardener.

There will be two meetings during the week of November 11. The meeting dates are November 13 at the Sump Memorial Library, 222 N. Jefferson St. in Papillion at 1 PM and on November 15 at the UNL Douglas/Sarpy County Extension central office, 8015 W. Center Rd. in Omaha (the GOOS meeting location) at 6 PM.

GROWING TIPS FROM FIRSTRAYS

<http://www.firstrays.com/>

Growing Orchids in the Home

Anyone can grow orchids in the home without living in the tropics or having the luxury of a greenhouse. Today, houseplants are a regular part of home decoration. If you have ever successfully grown a houseplant, or enjoyed a flowering potted plant, you can grow orchids. The good news is there are plenty of options to give yourself a beautiful display of flowering orchids year round.

Orchids grown in the home during the colder months will respond wonderfully well to being summered outdoors in a protected area. This will also extend the range of plant selections available to you. Be sure to read the companion sheet Orchids in the Garden and on the Patio.

LIGHT. No flowering plant will do well without sufficient light. In the home, where most available light is incidental (that is, at an angle, and therefore less intense), plants will need to be fairly close to an east or west, or lightly shaded

south, window. A north window will rarely provide adequate light. If light is too intense in a southern exposure, a sheer curtain could be hung to diffuse the light. Extra hours of light will not entirely compensate for poor light quality. Indeed, extending day length artificially to more than 16 hours can be detrimental to the plants' health and often will prevent flowering.

TEMPERATURE. Orchid plants will be comfortable where you are comfortable. Typical home temperatures of 55° to 60°F at night and 75°F during the day are fine. Guard against excessively low or high temperatures immediately adjacent to glass windows. Some leeway for seasonal fluctuations is allowed, and in some cases, is beneficial, as some plants prefer an autumn chill to induce winter flowering.

HUMIDITY. Rugs, drapes and some furniture can act as giant wicks that absorb the home's humidity, as do heating and air-conditioning systems. Also, it is not advisable to have the home's interior be too wet to accommodate the plants. Solutions: Group plants to take advantage of their collective transpiration (exhaled moisture) or place them on gravel-filled humidity trays to raise the humidity (don't let the plants get "wet feet" by sitting in the water).

WATERING. Care must be taken to balance the rapid surface drying that can take place in the home with the plants' lower metabolic processes resulting from lower light. Each particular type of orchid will retain its basic water needs, whether for moisture or periodic dryness. The home grower also needs to give thought to the logistics of watering. You can carry plants to the sink or even outdoors (when weather allows), or water them in place and remove excessive water so the containers do not sit in water.

FERTILIZER. Fertilize regularly at a low dosage of approximately one-quarter to one-half strength with a fertilizer appropriate to the potting mix in which your plants are grown. Fertilize less often during the winter. As most orchids are grown in soil-free media, use a fertilizer with a nitrogen source that is not based upon urea.

A Selection of Plants for In-Home Growing

Angraecums: Dwarf Madagascan species, fragrant at night; bright light.

Cattleya Alliance Hybrids and Species: Choose miniature types less than 10 inches tall; bright light of southern exposure is best.

Dendrobiums: Dwarf phalaenopsis types, or higher altitude miniatures; bright light at south window required.

Oncidium: Many types available in flower, best if smaller growing; bright light.

Paphiopedilums: Lady's-slipper orchids grow well under home conditions, giving long-lasting blooms; provide African-violet conditions.

Phalaenopsis: Moth orchids are absolutely the number-one best orchid houseplant; provide African violet conditions.

FROM THE AOS WEBSITE

Neem Oil By Susan Jones

The Neem Tree (*Azadirachta indica*) also known as indian lilac or margosa) probably originated in India or Burma. Neem is a large, fast-growing evergreen that can reach approximately 40 to 80 feet (12 to 24 m) in height. The tree is drought resistant and heat tolerant, and may live up to 200 years. It grows in many Asian countries, as well as tropical areas of the western hemisphere. Neem oil, which is extracted from the tree's seeds, has been used for its medicinal and insecticidal properties for more than 4,000 years.

Applications for Humans Since ancient times, man has utilized neem products for their pest-repellent properties. Neem has been shown to ward off sand flies and mosquitoes, aiding in control of the spread of diseases such as malaria. Neem oil has been used to treat lice and scabies, and tea brewed from the leaf of the tree employed as a termite control. Neem leaves placed in the pockets of woolen clothing are said to fend off moths; added to stored grains and beans, they help keep insects out. Neem products are included in some dog soaps and shampoos to repel fleas and ticks, and used as a cattle-feed supplement to kill parasites. The application of neem derivatives to bags and stored grains provides safe and relatively inexpensive protection against insect pests, fungus and even rats, reducing post-harvest losses in developing countries.

Medicinal Uses Neem is considered harmless to humans, animals, birds, beneficial insects and earthworms, and has been approved by the US Environmental Protection Agency for use on food crops. Azadirachtin and other active ingredients in the neem seed have insecticidal properties that are effective against a broad spectrum of insects, many mites and nematodes, and even snails and fungi, and do not seem to generate resistance in the pests they affect. Neem products do not provide absolute insect control, but frequent applications can reduce pest populations dramatically by repelling them; inhibiting their larval development, growth, fertility, mating and egg laying, and deterring feeding. A solution of neem oil smothers insect pests and has antifungal properties as well — the oil coats the plant's surface and prevents the germination of fungal spores. Neem oil can also be used as a safe, natural leaf polish.

A recipe for a neem-oil foliar-spray solution suggested by growers is as follows:

Mix 1 teaspoon (5 ml) of neem oil and ½ teaspoon (2.5 ml) of a gentle, plant-safe liquid dish soap (as a spreader and sticker for the oil) to 1 quart (.9 l) of warm water, or 4 teaspoons (20 ml) of neem oil and 2 teaspoons (10 ml) of liquid dish soap to 1 gallon (3.8 l) of water. A 50:50 solution of isopropyl alcohol and warm water can be substituted for plain water.

Shake the solution intermittently during application to keep the ingredients well mixed. Because the oil smothers insect pests, be sure to completely cover all plant surfaces for maximum effectiveness. Some sources indicate that the mixture begins to break down after eight hours, so a fresh batch should be used at every application. The insect-controlling properties of neem lose effectiveness over time, especially in warmer temperatures, and may be washed off during watering or by rainfall, so repeat sprayings at weekly to biweekly intervals are needed to control successive generations of pests. In addition, it is useful to keep up manual removal of bugs as part of the control regime.

Precautions Oil solutions should never be applied to plants during hot weather (85° F [29° C] or warmer) or in direct sunlight. To prevent burning of tissues, treated plants should be shaded until the application is dry. Another consideration is avoiding strong or excessive amounts of detergent or use of ammonia-based cleaners, as these may damage your plants, especially sensitive parts like buds and flowers. This is particularly true of soaps that could remove natural protective waxes from plant tissues. One source suggests that the flowers of some orchids, such as *Miltonia* and *Masdevallia* species, may be sensitive to neem oil. Horticultural oils, including neem, can also affect bees if it contacts them — once the spray has settled it is no longer harmful.

Other Considerations Most growers like to see insect pests drop dead right away. Although pesticides usually provide that instant gratification, their use contributes to the buildup of toxins in the environment, can affect beneficial insects and generate populations of pests resistant to their effects. In addition, these chemicals are responsible for the accidental poisoning of humans, pets, livestock and wildlife populations.

As an option for ecologically friendly pest management, neem is nontoxic to humans, animals and beneficial insects. It is biodegradable, does not build up resistance in pests and is relatively inexpensive. For safety and health reasons alone, controls such as this may be the only option for indoor growers or those whose collections reside in or very close to their living area.

References

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- Mp-Golden Harvest Organics LLC, 2004. How safe is it? (<http://www.ghorganics.com/NeemOil.html>).
- Johnson, Paul J. Mealybugs on Orchids. Insect Research Collection, South Dakota State University. (http://nat_hist.sdstate.edu/orchids/pests/mealybugs.htm).
- Lilot, Loetitia S., 2000. The Neem Tree: The Village Pharmacy. Southern Illinois University Carbondale/Ethnobotanical Leaflets. (<http://www.siu.edu/~ebl/leaflets/neem.htm>).
- The Neem Foundation, 1997. Neem for Eco-Friendly Pest Management. (<http://www.neemfoundation.org/pest.htm>).

Susan Jones was the editor of Awards Quarterly and assistant editor of Orchids. American Orchid Society, 16700 AOS Lane, Delray Beach, Florida 33446

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MONTHLY REPORTS

Greater Omaha Orchid Society General Meeting
October 10, 2012

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.

Minutes. The minutes of the September general meeting was approved.

Treasurer's report. Treasurer Sandy Rome gave a report on the transactions and the amount of money in the treasury.

MAOC meeting. Plans for the upcoming MAOC meeting in Kansas City were discussed. Roberta will need any plants for the display no later than Thursday, September 27.

Long-sleeved Wear. Jacque Lewzader discussed purchasing some sweatshirts and some long-sleeved polo shirts; prices would be about \$20 for the sweatshirts and about \$17 or \$18 for the polo shirts. Jacque is the point of contact for the wear items.

Upcoming 2013 events. Jim Pyrzynski gave the dates for the Home and Garden Show at the Century Link Center (February 7 – 10) and the annual orchid show and sale at Lauritzen Gardens (March 2 – 3).

Refreshments were provided by Sandy Rome and Elsie Snowden.

Raffle plants were provided by Howard Gunn and Dave Taylor.

Program. Guest speaker, Howard Gunn, gave a talk on the genus *Bulbophyllum*.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Pyrzynski, Secretary

Greater Omaha Orchid Society Board Meeting
October 24, 2012

The Greater Omaha Orchid Society Board met at the Papillion Public Library at 6:45 PM. In attendance were: Roberta Ginavan, Eric Stoiber, Jacque Lewzader, Ron Fechner, Linda Schroeder and Jim Pyrzynski.

Orchid shows. Jim gave the 2013 dates for the Home and Garden Show at the Century Link Center (February 7 – 10) and the annual show at Lauritzen Gardens (March 2 -3). The Lauritzen show is early this year due to the date of Easter and scheduling conflicts for judges. Jim went on to advise that the room used for hospitality will not be available and other arrangements would be needed. One possibility is to use the room that is used for AOS judging but restrict ac-

cess during the actual judging process (roughly 10 AM – 3 PM Saturday). There are some other locations that might be available and suitable for judging. Jim will discuss the issue with Joe Lankton, the show judging chair. Jim will have signup sheets for the Home & Garden Show at the November meeting.

MAOC preparations. Preparations for the GOOS display at the upcoming MAOC in Kansas City were discussed. Roberta will be traveling down early on Friday and setup the display. The show opens Friday evening for a preview party. Eric volunteered to go with Roberta in the morning to assist. Roberta will bring all the plants back.

Certificates of Deposit. There was a discussion on Certificates of Deposit and the funds available in general. In November one CD matures. The Society has 2 other CDs; Sandy proposed combining all three CDs, adding some additional money from the checking account, and purchasing a larger denomination CD for a longer period. Based on past data there should be enough money in the checking account to cover expenses. Jacque suggested that we could use money for other purposes: the Society show display, skirts for show tables (rather than renting), etc. The end result of the discussion was that Sandy will present her proposal to purchase a \$10,000 CD to the membership for approval. Jim will also present a proposal for purchase of skirts (up to \$1000) which would result in a reduction of show expenses once the cost was amortized.

Library. Ron Fechner discussed the library. Ron will submit a article for publication in the November newsletter.

Holiday party. Jacque discussed the possible locations for the holiday party (it was suggested at the October general meeting that we should try some other location than Granite City): Grisanti's, Olive Garden, Valentino's were the alternate locations. Grisanti's was selected. Menu possibilities were discussed and will be publicized in the November newsletter. Prices would range between \$14 - \$18, not including alcoholic beverages and desserts.

November Program. Sandy will contact Ann Antlfinger (guest speaker) on the topic for her talk.

2013 Programs. January will be a work meeting to prepare for the Home & Garden Show and our annual show. February may be an in-house speaker (time is needed in the business meeting to prepare for the annual show March 2 – 3). March will be the annual repotting session. April and/or May are open for guest speakers. There is a possibility to have Fred Clarke come again but this would also require a shift to Monday for the meeting. July and August – one month would be annual picnic/auction. September is the annual meeting and the program should be short – The Black Orchid CD was suggested at the program. October - undetermined. November should be another in-house speaker. December is the holiday party.

Eric requested that Roberta provide him with a list/email addresses of contact points at the other societies that we share speakers with (St. Louis, Kansas City, Denver, Salt Lake City, Chicago). The costs for speakers that we have had this fiscal year (Sept. 2012 – Aug. 2013) were discussed versus the total amount budgeted.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Pyrzynski, Secretary

**GREATER OMAHA ORCHID SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM (2013)**

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