



The Informer

Newsletter of the Greater Omaha Orchid Society

PO Box 241871 Omaha, NE 68124 greateromahaorchidsociety.org October 2013

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Submission deadline for the
November Informer: November
4, 2013

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:

October 9, 2013
Extension Office
8015 West Center Rd.
7:00 PM GROWERS
GROUP (see article at right)
display committee meeting
7:30 PM Annual meeting
Program: Guest speaker,
Joe Lankton; topic,
Paphiopedilums
Refreshments: Sandy Rome

October 23, 2013
Papillion Library
6:45 PM Papillion Library
Board meeting

November 13, 2013
7:00 PM GROWERS
GROUP
display committee meeting
7:30 PM Annual meeting
Program: Guest speaker,
Ron Midgett; topic Cattleyas
Refreshments: Marie Ann
Smith

EVENTS

October – 13, 2013

DOS Fall Show and Sale
Theme: Orchid Plea-
sures, John Mitchell
Hall, Denver Botanic
Gardens 1007 York St.
Denver, CO 80206

October 19 - 20, 2013

Fall Mid-America Orchid
Congress. "ORCHIDS 'N
ART" at the Dayton Art
Institute, Dayton, OH.

October 19 – 20, 2013

Eastern Iowa Orchid Show
& Sale, Noelridge Gardens
Greenhouse, 4900 Council
St. NE, Cedar Rapids, IA
Contact: Jon Lorence, 319-
624-3666, lorence5@aol.
com

October 19 - 20, 2013

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

January 24 – 26, 2014

St. Cecilia Cathedral Flo-
wer Festival
701 N. 40th St. Omaha, NE

February 1 – 2, 2014

Orchid Growers Guild
"Orchid Quest 2014"
Alliant Energy, 1919
Alliant Energy Center Way,
Madison, WI; Contact:
Judy Stevenson, 608-231-
3163, judy_stevenson@
sbcglobal.net

February 6 – 9, 2014

Orchid Society of Kansas
City annual orchid show.

SOMETHING NEW AT THIS MONTH'S MEETING

Growers Group meets at 7:00 PM – All welcome to attend

This month's meeting fea-
tures some changes in for-
mat from previous meet-
ings. Instead of a "begin-
ners group" (or somewhat
other name), Joe Lankton
will chair a Growers Group
– where we can all discuss
and learn about orchids
and how to grow them.
Joe is a Chair of the Mid-
America Judging Center
which meets in St. Louis.
He's extensive experience
in growing and judging
orchids and we are lucky
indeed to have him making
his expertise available to us
at our monthly meetings.

Monthly meeting pro- gram – 7:30 PM

Joe Lankton will also give
the program for the month-
ly meeting which will be on
Paphiopedilums – one of
the types of slipper orchids.
Paphiopedilums (or Paphs
for short) are tropical Asian
slipper orchids. The orchids
are referred to "slipper" due
to the resemblance of the
lip to a shoe, and the pet-
als which tend to resemble
shoestrings. Paphs present
some challenges to growers
but they have been in cul-
tivation for some time and
there are a large number
of species and hybrids to
choose from.

**CATHEDRAL
FLOWER FESTIVAL
COMING JANUARY
2014**

The annual Flower Festival at St. Cecilia Cathedral will be January 24 – 26, 2014. The Greater Omaha Orchid Society has been invited to “release our creative prowess and design a single, large arrangement scaled to the Cathedral.” We need some talented people to assist with the display which will be in one of the altar niches behind the main altar area. Between 7,000 to 10,000 people attend the flower show annually. This provides our Society with an opportunity to reach people interested in flowers and only 2 months away from our annual flower show at the Lauritzen Gardens.

This year’s theme is South Pacific so our display should be fit that theme. Unlike our annual orchid show rules, we can mix other flowering plants with orchids in our display. We may also mix cut flowers with orchid plants, something not permitted by orchid show rules.

Photos of January 2013’s Flower Festival can be seen here: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/cannellfan/sets/72157632725868065/detail/?page=1>

Displays in the area we most likely be using can be seen here:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/cannellfan/8459957342/in/set-72157632725868065/>

<http://www.flickr.com/pho->

<tos/cannellfan/8459958990/in/set-72157632725868065/>

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/cannellfan/8459962336/in/set-72157632725868065/>

**GUEST SPEAKER FOR
NOVEMBER**

Ron Midgett will be our guest speaker for the November. He is the owner of New Earth Orchids (<http://www.newearthorchids.com/>) in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He is also an American Orchid Society judge at the Rocky Mountain Judging Center in Denver. Ron had his first encounter with orchids about 40 years ago when he saw some “strange” plants in peoples’ yards in Santa Barbara, California – they were Cymbidiums. The orchid bug bite had hit its target.

He started an orchid business in 1990, the New England Orchid Company, to support and extensive breeding program. In 2003, Ron and his wife, Cynthia, moved to New Jersey and changed the name to New Earth Orchids. Then it was on to Santa FE, New Mexico where he established a full-service orchid nursery for Santa Fe and New Mexico.

Ron has been active in orchid societies wherever he has lived. He serves on the American Orchid Society Membership Committee. He has also served as chairperson for AOS judging at New Mexico Orchid Guild Shows.

The topic of Ron’s talk will be Cattleyas.

TOM LARKIN

Tom Larkin passed away last month.. He was the founder of the Orchid Society of the Ozarks. Tom was an American Orchid Society judge, an orchid grower who won many awards. He assisted in the judging of our shows at Regency. Tom was an orchid hybridizer who operated his own flasking laboratory and produced award-winning crosses, an orchid photographer, a tireless worker for and supporter of every orchid society to which he ever belonged at local, regional, and national levels, and of course a mentor and friend to so many people.

Tom is survived by his wife of 58 years Barbara A. Shawger Larkin, daughters, sons, grandchildren, great grandchildren, brothers and sisters.

**IN THIS MONTH’S
AOS ORCHIDS**

The September issue of AOS Orchids is in and it has a number of interesting articles. My Favorite Mexican Orchid by T.J. Hartung continues with Part III: Baskets and Pedent Inflorescences. Some of the genera in this section are Chysis, Clowesia, Epidendrum (parkinsonianum) Galeandra, and Stanhopea. There is a sidebar for culture of Mexican Stanhopeas.

Also continuing is Phragmipedium Sedenii, by Olaf Gruss ,with Part V: Hybrids and Summary. There is also a discussion of s supposed intergeneric

cross with Paphiopedilum. It has never been shown in an exhibition or illustrated in any printed publication. The article is accompanied with a number of excellent photos.

The Yellow Lady’s Slipper (Cypripedium parviflorum) ranges over most of North America (one form is found in a few places along the Missouri River in Nebraska). But an article by Todd Boland discusses the species in its far northeastern habitat – Newfoundland. There it grows among a jumble of limestone rocks where in some areas, during blooming season, the barrens almost take on a yellow hue.

Reedstem Epidendrums are the topic of an article, a Rainbow of Colors, by Paris Everett Merriam. The four ancestral species for a variety of hybrids are discussed along with the colorful progeny. There is also a reprint of an Orchid Digest article by Lauris and James Rose of Cal-Orchids on the group. And there is a promise of article in spring of 2014 of new developments in the breeding of these orchids.

Brian Sidoti of the Madison Orchid Research Group discusses orchid evolution as evidenced by the roots and leafless orchids in the tribe Vandaeae which includes Angraecum, Phalaenopsis and Vanda (as well as the mysterious Ghost Orchid).

Not to be overlooked is a brief article on the last page, “The Clonal Name Says it All.” It discusses the variations that can be found seedlings of a cross and what may just happen by some spectacular examples. So next time you shop for orchids, consider buying some unflowered seedlings.

PAPHIOPEDILUM: Lady Slipper Orchid
Pronounced: paff-ee-oh-PED-ih-lum

Healthy Paphiopedilum start with healthy roots:

- Pot in a fine medium. Fir bark mixtures are best, with 0.5 to 1.0 cm chunks of bark, perlite and charcoal.
- Repot when medium starts to decompose or new growths have reached the edge of the pot. Check for decomposition yearly, on newly purchased plants or if leaves are limp.
- Remove old medium if it is loose and any rotting roots (dark and soft to touch); choose a plastic pot that will only just hold the roots of the plant and center plant in new pot.
- Paphiopedilum require a basic (rather than acidic) mix. This is achieved with extra calcium. If your water does not have a high calcium content, top dress the medium with dolomite lime or crushed oyster shell and replace when it has disappeared.
- Roots should be slightly moist at all times. Water when medium has begun to dry but while it is still damp. Water thoroughly, with a volume of water at least equal to that of the pot.
- Do not use water softened in salt-consuming water softeners. Despite the need for extra calcium, low mineral water is preferred, such as naturally soft water or rain water. If hard water is used, water very heavily to flush minerals.
- Avoid leaving water standing in the crown of the plant as this can lead to fatal rot.
- Fertilize weakly and frequently with a balanced fertilizer. One-eighth to one-quarter strength recommended by manufacturer for house plants every week in spring and summer and every two weeks in autumn and winter.

Healthy leaves produce more and bigger flowers:

- Medium light levels are appropriate. Leaves should be a medium green, usually not yellowish (too much light) or dark green (too little light). They should be firm, not long and floppy (more light needed).
- Two to three hours of sunshine on a windowsill (East or West) or 15-30 cm under a four tube fluorescent fixture.
- Leaves should be firm; if soft and desiccated, check roots for rot, and repot if necessary. High humidity (such as enclosing the plant in a plastic bag) will aid recovery if most or all of roots lost, but be careful of rot.
- Paphiopedilum do best with 60-70% humidity but when mature will grow and bloom, although more slowly in lower humidity. High humidity is particularly desirable to form new roots, which may not grow properly in low humidity situations. Use humidifier to raise humidity – humidity pans and misting minimally effective. Enclosing plant growing areas is effective but ensure fresh air and air movement to avoid mold and rot.
- Grow Paphiopedilum in intermediate temperatures with 14°C minimum winter nights and 29°C summer day maximum. Ensure 6-12°C day/night difference to aid flower formation.

Asian lady slippers usually bloom annually and the flowers last for several weeks:

- Maintain plant orientation while spike is growing for best display.
- Some types require slightly different conditions o Complex type: Plain green foliage, large round flowers. Medium size plants. Standard conditions.
 - Maudiae type: Dark green mottled foliage. Easiest to grow, small plant, warmer temperatures and lower light. o
 - Multifloral type: Plain green foliage. Harder to grow, large plant, warmer temperatures and high light.
 - Brachypetalum: Dark green mottled foliage, bird's egg flowers. Harder to grow, small plant, warmer temperatures, low light, more coarse medium and much calcium.
 - Chinese types: Mottled foliage. Small plants, standard conditions, coarser medium. The species *delenatii* does not require a basic medium.

AMERICAN ORCHID SOCIETY
Monthly Checklist for November and December

Cattleya

Growers of just about every level of expertise will have begun to notice autumn conditions by now. Days are becoming shorter, hence cooler; the sunlight has less intensity as a result of the sun's lowering angle, nights are longer and generally cooler. Plants are responding by slowing and ripening their growth in preparation for winter.

The first cultural change noticed should be a reduced frequency of watering, as the plants dry out more slowly. This is a function of both the reduced day length and lower temperatures, as well as the plants' slowing growth rate. Reduced water needs signal a reduced need for fertilization. Note that the key word is reduced, not eliminated. Feed less frequently and at lower dosage, but feed. Growths, made during summer's heat, and relatively soft and green, will be ripening -- hardening -- in preparation for a brief period of rest (in many cases).

Many of these ripening growths will have a sheath, presaging the coming winter or spring flowering season. In some cases, these sheaths will have been evident since as early as July. (Early sheath development does not mean early

flowering on plants with winter-spring seasons.) You may notice that some of these sheaths are showing signs of yellowing. This is not abnormal. Autumn's more pronounced temperature fluctuation can lead to water condensation inside the sheath, hastening the normal process of senescence, so yellowing sheaths can be left on the plant only so long before they must be carefully removed to preserve the bud primordia within. Water condensation left unchecked can rot the bud primordia. The sheaths can be safely removed by slitting open and peeling down toward the pseudobulb.

Cool-Growing Orchids

One can almost hear a sigh of relief from all of the cool-growers, from masdevallias to odontoglossums. As day temperatures decline, one can see a noticeable improvement in these plants. Shorter days and lower light levels do not seem to bother them. Repot before winter arrives.

Cymbidium

Finally we begin in earnest the main cymbidium season. *Cymbidium ensifolium* can give some early and fragrant hybrids, but it is now that the bulk of the crop will be flowering. The season lasts for about seven months, adding color to any collection. Miniature varieties will peak for the next three to four months. There are three important things to do: stake inflorescences ramrod straight for best presentation, watch for slugs and snails (especially just after a rain), and fertilize with a mild balanced formula regularly.

Oncidium crispum Complex

This is the season for plants in *Oncidium* section *crispum* from Brazil to shine. Extremely vigorous hybrids come in wide varieties of markings dominated with chestnut and brown and butter yellow. Give plants high light to produce strong upright inflorescences. The pseudobulbs should be plump, so do not let the plants dry out while they are in bloom. Later, plants will enter a dormant period.

Paphiopedilum

The flowering season for the "toads" or "bulldog" paphs is just getting underway. These cannot be grown everywhere, but where cooler summer nights allow their growth, there is no longer-lasting or more exotic display than these. *Paphiopedilums* are, in general, not heavy feeders, and it is especially important with this type to reduce nitrogen levels now for best flowering and spike length. Be watchful for water accumulating in the growth around the sheath, or for the late-season warm spell, either of which can lead to the sheath's rotting. As the spikes emerge, do not change the orientation of the plant toward the light, as this can lead to a crooked or twisted spike

While *paphiopedilums* rarely like to dry out entirely, water needs are significantly reduced beginning now. Overwatering at this time of year can quickly lead to root rot or erwinia problems. Now is the time to practice good sanitary practices in your greenhouse or growing areas, as pest and disease problems have a way of multiplying rapidly in the darker and more crowded conditions that generally mark the winter growing area. With *paphiopedilums*, especially, "cleanliness is next to godliness" and if the growing area is littered with old foliage, weeds and dying flowers, keeping the plants alive and flowering will be next to impossible.

Phalaenopsis

Shortening days and cooler nights are the signals for inflorescence initiation in *phalaenopsis*. In more northern climates, or on the west coast, growers have already begun to see the early inflorescences that may be ready for Christmas. In the eastern areas, nights in the greenhouse will now be in the low to mid 60s, depending on the thermostat setting, so the first of our *phalaenopsis* will not begin to bloom until Valentine's Day at the earliest.

A reduction in nitrogen levels will go a long way to giving the best possible spiking, as will a boost in potassium and phosphorus. In other words, a "bloom booster"-type fertilizer is definitely indicated in the next few months. Disease and pest problems are best dealt with now, especially as mealybugs hide in the bracts and flower buds. Once they have established themselves, they are difficult to eradicate, and flower damage or crippling results. Potential disease problems can be dealt with by the application of a copper-based compound to control/alleviate rot problems before they start. There is nothing more frustrating than to have shepherded your plants through a growing season, only to have them decline before your eyes.

Vandaceous Genera

Whereas the general decline in temperatures is beneficial to cool-growing orchids, it is not for vandaceous plants. The only cold-hardy member is *Neofinetia falcata*. Orient your plants in such a way as to take advantage of as much light as possible. This can be a problem in northern latitudes. Reduce watering and feeding schedules.

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

REPORTS

Greater Omaha Orchid Society General Meeting, September 11, 2013

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

Minutes. The minutes for the August 2012 meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report. Sandy Rome read the monthly treasurer's report.

Nominating Committee Report. Ron Fechner listed the committee's officer nominees: President, Eric Stoiber; Vice-president, Jim Pyrzynski; Secretary, Anne Marie Smith; Treasurer (there were two nominees), Aaron Bugjo and Abby Vosika. Ron gave a summary about each of the treasurer nominees. Aaron has been working for GE for 14 years in locomotive maintenance. He has been growing orchids for 9 years. Abby owns and runs a insurance agency.

Cathedral Show. The show is January 24 – 26. We have been invited to have a display. We will be able to have information about the Society at the display for viewers to pickup.

Display committee. The first meeting was at the general meeting. October will be the next meeting. The committee needs to identify the shows that it wants to participate in. They should watch the newsletter (The Informer) for a list.

Lawn and Garden Show participation. Last year the net profit for our participation was \$57.15. Sandy Rome noted that our primary purpose in being there is education. Joe Lankton made a motion that we not participate in the event. The motion was seconded and approved. Roberta recommended that when we receive our invitation that we send a letter saying that we are unable to participate this year but to keep us on the mailing list for future years.

Annual Reports. Roberta noted that the annual reports for Ways and Means, Treasurer, and Show and the President's Report were in the informer.

Meeting with Lauritzen Gardens. Ron Fechner and Eric are to meet with Lauritzen Gardens personnel on the donation that was approved at the August meeting and to also determine how else we may become involved with the Gardens as a group.

Jim Pyrzynski recognition. Jim Pyrzynski received special recognition and thanks for his support of the Society over many years. Roberta thanked Dick Behrens for his help and compiling Jim's involvement with the Society.

Budget. Sandy discussed the budget for the new fiscal year. It is based on last year's. John Dolen questioned why there was such a large loss projected (~\$1800). Sandy provided an explanation. Dave Taylor voiced his concern about the expenditures which would cause such a loss. Dave said the 20% deficit should be addressed. The budget was passed but there were 2 no votes. Joe pressed for a clearer explanation.

Meeting location. Roberta discussed the meeting location and some developments with the Extension Office. Douglas County had cut the budget for the Extension Office by 10%. There was some email from the Extension Office indicating that the ability of groups such as the Society to meet at the Extension Office during 2014 would not be possible. A church at 60th and Girard was to be proposed as a new meeting location. Jim Pyrzynski countered that those emails had been superseded and that Eric had discussed the issue with the Extension Office and that we would still be able to meet there during 2014. Eric and Jim Pyrzynski will have a meeting with the Unit Leader, Deanna Vansickel-Staudt next week (week of September 16). Joe Lankton made a motion that we continue to meeting at the Extension Office. The motion was seconded and approved.

Election. There were no nominations from the floor. Joe mad a motion that the offices of president, vice-president and secretary be approved via voice vote since there was only one nominee per office. The motion was accepted and approved (those offices were also on the ballot which had been prepared because there were 2 nominees for treasurer). Aaron Bugjo was elected treasurer.

New President's Remarks. Eric Stoiber thanked the board members, in particular Roberta and Sandy for their services and efforts over the past several years. Roberta, in particular, for getting the Society its 501(c)(3) status and Sandy for straightening out Nebraska tax requirements. Eric went on to discuss his goals as president which were to members more involved and on growing the membership involvement in the meeting. He stated that members are welcome to attend board meetings. Joe Lankton said that the "beginner's group meeting which starts at 7 PM should be considered a "learners' meeting), all are welcome to attend and Joe Lankton will be chairing that meeting. Eric reminded the outgoing officers that they should attend the next board meeting (September 25) in order for there to be an orderly transition to the new leadership.

Refreshments were provided by Abby Vosika.

Show and Tell of member plants was held.

The meeting was adjourned.

Jim Pyrzynski
Secretary

Greater Omaha Orchid Society Board Meeting
Papillion Public Library - 6:45 p.m.

Attending: Roberta Ginavan, Eric Stoiber, Jim Pyrzynski, Jacque Lewzader, Marilyn Hawes, Ron Fechner, Sandy Rome, Aaron Bugjo, Linda Schroeder, and Marie Smith.

1. By-Laws and Conflict of Interest: reviewed; signed.
2. Extension Office Meeting: Eric reported on meeting with Deanna Vansickel-Staudt. No kitchen or plug-ins shall be available after the first of the year; coffee must be brought in. Marie volunteered, due to distance. Techs will use their own laptops. A dumpster shall be designated; no recycling. Master Gardner classes begin in November. Ron provided details of the strict attendance required for the 40-hour/8-hour commitment. GOOS provides a donation to the Extension Office for annual use. Need to reserve ASAP for scheduled days desired. Extension Office shall provide GOOS with a 3-week notice, should they need to "bump" our scheduled date. The new "Learner's Group" shall be held in the small, adjoining room with information provided by Joe, primarily. Rooms are to be left "as found."
3. Saint Cecilia Show: January 23rd - 26th; items removed by noon on 27th. Ron distributed the flyer; will email the website. Display: cut flowers complimenting religious paintings. Orchids may be mixed with other flowers. Sponsors provide \$250 for expenses. Aaron volunteered to contact a wholesaler of cut flowers. A committee of no more than five people are needed for this display. New GOOS business cards are also needed at a reasonable price.
4. Lauritzen Gardens Show: March 29th and 30th.
5. Kansas City Show: February 6th - 9th. Aaron and wife shall head up the K.C. Committee.
6. Christmas Holiday Party: Jacque will contact three options with private rooms; continue creating welcomed table favors and refreshment scheduling.
7. 2014 Programs: several ideas were suggested. January/February present travel challenges. Therefore, the board favors "in-house" presentations. Ideas included a "film night" (Black Orchid); panel discussions with members who grow orchids in various conditions; orchid games/trivia. March may require a separate, specific date/time/place for the few members needed for prep work/bark packaging for the show.
8. Show Display/Backdrops: the board was in favor of light-weight, flexible, adjustable, easy-to-assemble and dismantle PVC units, which Eric volunteered to design/mother able to sew fabrics. Milk crates/collapsing chick boxes may be a new addition. Roberta will inventory fabrics.
9. Budget presentations can be challenging. Simplicity was supported. Aaron is confident.
10. Lauritzen Gardens Orchid Greenhouse donation: Jim presented an update and recommended waiting for completion of the conservatory, then use ear-marked donation specifically for the orchid addition. Recognition will then be provided to the Society.
11. Lauritzen Garden/March Show. Ideas were discussed including use of the classroom for speakers on topics related to caring for orchids just purchased, perhaps by vendors present, each at varying time slots. Eric suggested media to "grab people's attention" during peek times for educational sessions. Dave, Brian, and Max were noted immediately as possible speakers.
12. Membership needs: A Questionnaire was proposed to learn how to engage new members to keep them coming back, and also increase participation. Asking if each would like to serve on a committee was noted; learning the "working/not working" and what makes a great meeting for members. Marilyn will look at questionnaires for such use.
13. Marilyn introduced concerns regarding Robert Rules of Order. Following lively discussion, along with historic recollections and review of historic minutes by Jim, further research shall be initiated to look at our By-Laws with regard to the Nominating Committee. Marilyn plans to report to the board at the next board meeting.
14. As Jim is preparing a compilation of the Greater Omaha Orchid Society's minutes in an electronic version to be transferred to a CD, Marie suggested the large collection of original historic documents are best kept together by the long-time, now honorary member, editor of The Informer.

Meeting adjourned: 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marie Anne Smith, Secretary