

The Informer

Newsletter of the Greater Omaha Orchid Society

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

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Submission deadline for the March Informer: March 4, 2013

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 ratee.

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:

February 13, 2013 Extension Office 8015 West Center Rd.

7:00 PM new growers group 7:30 PM Program: TBA Refreshements: TBD

February 20, 2013

6:45 PM Papillion Library Board Meeting

March 13, 2013 Extension Office 8015 West Center Rd.

7:00 PM new growers group 7:30 PM Program: TBA Refreshements: TBD

EVENTS

February 7 - 10, 2013

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

February 8 – 10, 2013

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

February 16 – 17, 2013

Batavia Orchid Society Show, DuPage County Fairgrounds, 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

Our annual orchid show and sale, our 26th annual, is less than a month away. The society will have a display and that means we need plants for the display – hopefully, some of your plants. At the month's meeting we will go over the plant entry process, i.e. how to enter your plants for ribbon judging. And we will go over the judging process so you can understand how the entry process relates to the judging. We will also cover how to groom your plants for the show so they look their best. Bring some of your plants to the meeting and we can use them in the demonstration. Eric Stoiber will also have a display of the stages of orchid growth from seed, through flask and compot, to a blooming plant. Any plants that you may have for the raffle table would also be highly appreciated.

RENEWAL TIME

Have you renewed your society membership yet? The day after the February meeting is the deadline – after that dues are considered to be delinquent in accordance with the bylaws. Your membership fee helps the organization to cover some of the expenses of operating (affiliation with other groups (AOS, MAOC, etc.), mailing of newsletter, website space,

etc.). In return you receive information on orchids and how to grow them – at the meetings and from the newsletter. So get your dues in if you haven't already, and if you have – a big THANK YOU.

GREAT NEWS!

We have great news to report! The IRS has recognized The Greater Omaha Orchid Society, Inc., as meeting the regulations for a Section 501(c)(3) organization under the Internal Revenue Code and, additionally, they have determined that we are a public charity under Code 509(a)(2).

This is the culmination of a multi-year effort to bring the Society into compliance with the federal tax code and corrects some discrepancies that occurred when the Society was initially formed and incorporated as a State of Nebraska non-profit organization. Maintaining this status will require compliance with federal guidelines, but requires much less reporting than that required of most corporations.

With this ruling, contributions to the Society are now tax deductible under section 170 of the Code. It also makes other opportunities possible that otherwise would be unavailable to us.

Roberta Ginavan and Sandy Rome, as well as many others who assisted in this effort, deserve a big thank you and congratulations for their efforts.

MEMBERS ON THE MEND

John Dolen, a long-time member of the Society, was taken ill recently and had spent a number of weeks in the intensive care unit at a local hospital. He is now at the Madonna Rehabilitation Center in Lincoln. John has been absent from meetings for some time due to his work schedule. For those who are do not know him. he is one of our best orchid growers and his plants have won several AOS awards. He has also sold plants at our shows, last year he had the sales tables adjacent to Iowa orchids.

Carol Behrens was scheduled to undergo surgery this week to remove the pins that were set in her hip when she underwent surgery over a year ago due to a fall. Carol is Dick Behrens' other half and an excellent grower. She keeps scrupulous notes on every plant she grows and it shows in the results. Carol's plants have won numerous ribbons. We will keep you apprised of her status.

If you would like to send cards: John's address is: John Dolen, 7538 Sherman Dr., Omaha, NE 68134. Carol's address is Carol Behrens, 8521 Northridge Dr., Omaha, NE 68112.

ANNUAL ORCHID SHOW MARCH 2 - 3

The annual orchid show and sale, our 26th annual, is less than a month away. That's a lot of orchid shows under our belts. The Omaha community, and beyond, look forward to our shows with great anticipation each year. Last year's attendance was over the 2,500 people. When the doors to the show open on March 2 at 10 AM

the hall will quickly fill with people ogling orchid displays and swarming to the vendors' sales tables. For vendors we have at this point, Bird's Botanicals, Natt's Orchids, Iowa Orchids, Orchid Inn USA, The Plant House, and Paradigm Gardens. The Central Iowa Orchid Society and the Lincolnbased Meeting of Orchid Friends are two of the societies that will have exhibits.

Now, with all of that outside support, what is YOUR involvement in this effort? It's time to roll up the sleeves and get involved. We have plenty of opportunities for you to shine over the course of the three-day show. We will have volunteer sign-up sheets at the meeting Wednesday for setup early Friday morning, a sheet for setup Friday evening, Saturday morning clerking during the ribbon judging session, staffing of the information table on Saturday and Sunday, and show cleanup on Sunday late afternoon. In addition to that we need donations (mostly monetary) for the hospitality room (we will be using the room adjacent to the one we have been using for the past few years). And we need YOUR plants for Society display. Or perhaps someone would like to have their own display. A display could be as little as one to five plants. Additionally, there are categories for art, collectibles, and orchid arrangements. The meeting program will cover how to groom your plants for the show and how to enter them for ribbon judging.

So give some thought and signup—it only happens once a year. Thanks.

CONSERVATION CORNER

ZOO IN THE NEWS

The Omaha Henry Doorly Zoo is not only about animals, the Zoo also has a Department of Plant Conservation, with Marge From as Director. The latest issue of "ZooPrints" has an article about conservation activities that the department is involved in.

The Department is heavily involved with the conservation of orchids native to the island of Madagascar. They have raised orchids from seed collected on field expeditions since 2000 under permits from both the Madagascar and U.S. governments. They report that the Department for Plant Conservation has reintroduced more than 800 Malagasy orchids to their natural habitat in the Madagascar rainforest.

Also 600 orchids from the Zoo's laboratory were sent to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. in January 2012 and are now part of the U.S. national orchid collection and will be included in displays at the Smithsonian and the U.S. Botanic Garden when they reach blooming size.

The Department is also involved in the propagation of the Bermuda fern (Diplazium laffanianum) which has been reduced to only five living specimens.

The How and Why of Water

More orchids are killed by incorrect watering than by any other reason. There are two separate components to proper watering; when and how. The vast majority of orchids grown by hobby growers are epiphytes, growing on trees above the ground where the light is more plentiful. These plants are adapted to having their roots exposed to light and air so in addition to water, orchid roots need air. The central core of an epiphytic orchid root is covered with a spongy material called velamen designed to store water. When this spongy material remains wet too long, the central core suffocates and begins to rot. Once the roots begin to rot, the plant can no longer take up water properly and a whole host of problems begin. At worst, root rot will spread upward into the rhizome and cause the death of the plant. In other cases, the loss of roots prevents the plant from absorbing sufficient water to maintain the plant in good condition and the leaves will take on a wrinkled appearance. Unfortunately, the symptoms of over-watering and under-watering are superficially similar and the tendency is to increase watering rather than inspect the roots. Over-watered roots will be brown and mushy while those on under-watered plants will be white or gray and obviously dry. Let's look first at when to water.

When do I water? Orchids should be watered just as they dry out. This rule applies to all orchids with slight variations depending on whether your plant has pseudobulbs (thickened stems that are designed to store water) or not. Orchids such as cattleyas and oncidiums should be allowed to just dry completely between waterings while orchids such as phalaenopsis and vandas that have no water storage organs should be watered just before dryness occurs. For vandas, this may mean daily watering during the warm summer months. Vandas and ascocendas that are properly watered will have actively growing root tips at all times. If the root tips on your plants dry up and seal over, you are not watering often enough.

There's unfortunately no magic formula; i.e., water a plant in a 6" pot every 7 days and you'll be trouble free. This is because your growing area is different from anyone else's. Humidity, air movement, potting medium (type and age) and light levels all play a role. There are several ways to determine when a potted orchid is almost dry: 1) the surface of the potting mix will appear dry; 2) dry pots will feel lighter when lifted; 3) clay pots feel dry; 4) a wooden stake or skewer inserted into the potting mix will come out almost dry. If in doubt, a finger inserted into the potting mix is perhaps the best tool to determine the moisture content of the potting mix. It will cause no harm to the plant. And remember, fresh potting mix will always dry out faster than the old medium.

How do I water? How to water is just as important to proper culture as when to water. When orchids are watered, they should be watered copiously. Water should be provided until it runs freely from the drainage holes. This serves several functions. First, thorough, copious watering is necessary to soak the potting medium. In addition, thorough watering helps to flush away the salts that naturally accumulate in the potting medium from the dissolved salts in our water supplies and the fertilizers applied for good growth. Also, this is your opportunity to examine how the potting mix behaves. If you cannot pour water rapidly through the pot, the potting mix is too dense and you run the risk of starving the roots for air. If you see finely divided material that looks like coffee grounds in the water coming from the drainage holes, your potting mix is breaking down and it's time to repot into fresh medium. At a minimum, try to thoroughly water your plants at least once a month.

Finally a couple of notes about mounted plants and those like vandas that are grown in baskets without additional potting medium. First, avoid dunking these plants in buckets of water. This practice very easily spreads diseases. If one plant has a disease, all those dunked in the same bucket of water will have been exposed as well. Also, two short waterings a few minutes apart are much more effective than one long watering. Once water runs off the plant, the roots will have absorbed essentially all they can at that time and excess water simply runs off to the ground. The proper technique is to water your plants and then a few minutes later water them again, always beginning with the first plant you watered. This allows time for the roots of the last plant watered to finish absorbing water before you wet them again. Roots that are completely saturated will be a solid color while those that are not will appear mottled.

Ron McHatton, AOS Director of Education

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Transporting Blooming Orchids By Susan Jones

During this time of year unpredictable and often inhospitable winter weather makes transporting flowering orchids a tricky matter. A shock of cold, dry air can quickly damage and even blast an orchid bud or bloom, a particularly heartbreaking event if one is on the way to have the flower judged. When carrying your flowering plant to a show, home from a nursery, to judging or even to give as a holiday gift, taking a little bit of precaution against potential cold damage can prevent a lot of disappointment later on.

An orchid's flowers and buds, as the most vulnerable parts of the plant, are easily damaged by environmental stress. Some of the more cold-sensitive varieties may even drop leaves if the exposure and shock is of sufficient severity. Phalaenopsis and vandaceous orchids (neofinetias are a bit hardier than most, but their blooms are still sensitive) are among the least tolerant of chills. Other orchids that are most often affected include those with flowers of more delicate substance. The thicker, heavier and waxier an orchid's floral tissues are, the more resistant to cold damage they will be.



Be sure to have plenty of boxes and packing material for transporting orchid plants.

Tips from a Pro Long-time orchid grower, Connecticut Orchid Society member and one of the technical editors of Orchids magazine, Ann Jesup provided the following savvy ideas for ways to minimize disaster en route to an orchid society meeting, show or judging at a presentation to the Society.

Start with a good quantity of packing materials, she advises. Have on hand a variety of boxes of different sizes, including some insulated styrofoam boxes to shelter your plants from inclement weather. Padding is also important. she suggests waxed floss paper (also known as "spaghetti"), shredded paper, polyester batting and styrofoam peanuts as useful materials.

For protection against brief exposure to the elements, the plastic bags in which newspapers are delivered make an ideal sleeve to slip over a smaller plant. Dry-cleaning bags supported by wire hoops can help protect larger plants or those with tall inflorescences from freezing or drying out in winter weather.

Insulating Plants Newspaper is an effective, easily available and inexpensive insulation material. If plants must remain in an unheated area for any length of time during inclement weather, a cardboard box lined with newspaper will help retain heat around the plant. Foam packing peanuts may be added to stabilize and protect the plant in the box, but provide little in the way of insulation or heat retention.

For extreme situations in which prolonged exposure is anticipated, a heat pack can be placed under protective insulation in the bottom of the box. Disposable chemical heat packs are available in different lengths of effectiveness — the most commonly available last six to eight hours, but other durations are available. They can be ordered on line (enter "disposable heat packs" into a search engine to find a vendor). Some orchid vendors who use them for shipping may also be persuaded to sell some of their stock.

Another consideration is staking your plant's inflorescences. This can not only improve the overall appearance of the blooms, but will also help keep the spike and flowers stationary and less susceptible to injury during transportation. The proper time to stake an inflorescence is when the flowers are beginning to develop. This helps ensure that the buds are oriented properly once they open. For aesthetics' sake, Jesup suggests attempting to keep the stake unobtrusive. Placing the thinnest stake possible as close to the foliage as is practical helps to avoid distracting attention from the blooms themselves.

Finally, when the temperature is low, warm up your vehicle in advance of transporting blooming orchids to minimize the length of time your plants will have to endure the chill temperatures. Plan your trip so the plants will spend the shortest possible time in transit, and never leave orchids sitting in a hot or cold car.

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, January 9, 2013

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 for the November 2012 meeting and the December 2012 holiday party were approved.

Treasurer's report. Treasurer Sandy Rome gave a report on the transactions and the amount of money in the treasury for November and December 2012.

Home and Garden Show. Jim discussed the 2013 Home and Garden Show at the Century Link Center. The volunteer signup sheets were circulated. Plants will be purchased locally for resale.

Annual Orchid Show. Jim discussed the show which will be held March 2 and 3. Signup sheets for a variety of tasks were circulated. Jacque Lewzader discussed what was needed for the hospitality room and circulated a signup sheet for monetary donations and food donations.

Upcoming programs. Eric Stoiber discussed the programs for the February and March meetings. At the February meeting we will go over show matters (entering plants, etc.). The March meeting will be the annual repotting session. The March meeting follows the annual show and having the repotting session immediately following show would be helpful for any new members who joined at the show.

Announcement. Members were advised that John Dolen was in the Intensive Care Unit. More information will be passed on as it comes available.

Table skirts. Jim displayed the skirts he purchased from a business on ebay. The one problem noted was that the material was too sheer and some sort of backing would be needed to make them useful.

IRS application. Roberta discussed the activities by the board over the holidays regarding the IRS application. The IRS had requested more information. Weather caused the cancellation of the December board meeting but Roberta drafted a response, coordinated the reply with the board and submitted the reply to the IRS ahead of the due date.

OSGKC show. The Kansas City show is the same weekend as our Home and Garden Show. Consequently we have not made plans to participate in the KC show. However Roberta asked if anyone was interested in doing so, to talk to her about doing so.

Refreshments were provided by Jacque Lewzader provided refreshments.

Raffle plants were provided by Robert Mann.

Meeting adjourned

Program. The program was a work session to prepare for the Home and Garden Show and the annual orchid show. Bulk potting mix was bagged, Society brochures folded, judging books reorganized, etc.

wiceting adjourned.		
Respectfully submitted, Jim Pyrzynski, Secretary		

Greater Omaha Orchid Society Board Meeting January 23, 2013

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

Sale plants & Home & Garden Show. Ron Fechner showed the plants that he purchased for the event from Trader Joe's: 6 large oncidium intergenerics, a 12 phalaenopsis miniatures, all in bloom. The plants cost \$174. Jim discussed the event. We had not received our show package from Mid-America Expositions. He visited their office earlier in the

day and obtained the materials. Some were emailed while he was there but he took hard copies with him (the emailed versions never were received either). He will return the completed forms to Mid-America Expositions on Friday. The timing of the show precludes our participation in the OSGKS show and there was some concern that they may not participate in ours if we do not participate in theirs. Consequently it was suggested we closely review the value received from the event. One suggestion was to mark the dollar-off postcards for our annual show in such a way that we can track how many came from the people who attended the Home & Garden Show. Roberta asked that Jim email members requesting plants for the display at the Home & Garden Show.

Annual Orchid Show. Jim discussed the show. Show applications have been received from 3 vendors (Natts, Birds, and Paradigm) Sam Tsui emailed that he had been out of town but would be attending. The due date for vendor applications is February 1 so a few weeks remain. Central Iowa and MOOF (the other Lincoln group) have sent in society exhibit applications. John Dolen. Jim advised that John Dolen has been diagnosed with Guillain-Barre Syndrome. Joe Lankton is taking care of his plants. There is a possibility he may visit the show in March.

Lauritzen Gardens Spring into Spring. The event will be May 17. The board recommended participation. The matter will be brought up to the membership.

Tax and treasurer matters. Sandy Rome advised that the computer has been updated so that it will be ready for the next treasurer in September. Nebraska sales tax was paid on time. There was no further word from the IRS on our 501(c)(3) application.

Programs. Eric went over some of the program possibilities for 2013. Ron Midgett from the Rocky Mountain region could is available to give a program in November (on Cattleyas). Joe Lankton will give program – date to be determined. The run down for the remainder of the year: February, show entries; March, repotting; April, compot breakdown with a show and tell some months down road. May, possibly Dr. Weber (UNO); June, possibly Carlos Fighetti. July, picnic/auction. September, annual meeting with black orchid DVD. October, Joe Lankton. November, Ron Midgett. December, holiday party.

Meeting adjourned.

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