The Informer

Newsletter of the Greater Omaha Orchid Society

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

OFFICERS

President:
Roberta Ginavan
(712) 487-3085
Vice President:
Marilyn Hawes
(402) 468-4553
Secretary:
Jim Pyrzynski
(402) 734-4112
Treasurer:
Sandy Rome
(402) 714-1284
Board Members:
Jacque Lewzader
402-573-2217
Linda Schroeder
(402) 990-5501
Eric Stoiber
(402) 206-4554
Past President:
Jack Thraen
(402) 571-7434

Newsletter Editor:
Jim Pyrzynski
Articles may be mailed to Jim at 2107 Alberta Ave., Bellevue, NE 68005 or emailed to: jpyrzynski@cox.net
Submission deadline for the April Informer: April 4, 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 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.

IN THIS ISSUE

March meeting
pg. 1
Membership renewals
pg. 2
Thank you
pg. 2
It's show time
pg. 2
Evaporation and humidity
pg. 2 - 3
AOS Monthly Schedule
pg 3 - 4
Monthly Reports
pg. 5 - 6

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)

March 9, 2011
7:00 PM new growers group
7:30 PM Program - Orchid Conservation, Marge From, Henry Doorly Zoo
Refreshments: Carol and Dick Behrens.

March 23, 2011
7:00 PM
Board meeting, location TBD

April 13, 2011
7:00 PM new growers group
7:30 PM Program - Annual repotting session
Refreshments: Jim Pyrzynski

EVENTS

March 12-13, 2011
Illowa Orchid Society Show, Wallace's Garden Center, 2605 Devils Glen Rd., Bettendorf, IA. Contact: Suzanne Dennis, 9 Chrisop Ct., Colona, IL 61241; (309) 441-6038; minicatt@mchsi.com.

March 19-20, 2011
Springfield Orchid Society Show, Springfield Grene County Botanical Society, 2400 S. Scenic, Springfield, MO. Contact: Nathan Bell, 456 Shockley Rd., Hollister, MO 65672; (660) 888-0225; nbell@cofo.edu.

March 26-27, 2011
Greater Omaha Orchid Society Show, Lauritzen Gardens, 100 Bancroft St., Omaha, NE. Contact: Jim Pyrzynski, 2107 Alberta Ave., Bellevue, NE 68005; (402) 734-4112; jpyrzynski@cox.net.

April 15-17, 2011
Oklahoma Orchid Society Show, Will Rogers Park Garden Exhibition Ctr, 3400 NW 36th St., Oklahoma City, OK. Contact: Jana Butcher, 13505 Fox Creek Dr., Oklahoma City, OK 73131; (405) 209-7657; w.butcher@cox.net.

Saturday, April 23
9 a.m. to 4 p.m
Spring Affair 2011, a fund raiser for the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum. Lancaster Event Center in Lincoln, 84th and Havelock Call Connie Paxton at 402/472-2971 or email cpaxton1@unl.edu

MARCH MEETING

Margaret From, the Director of the Henry Doorly Zoo Department for Plant Conservation, will be the guest speaker for the March meeting. Marge is also a GOOS member and has been active in the preservation of orchids both in tropical countries as well in the temperate regions. Marge will discuss current developments in the orchid conservation arena.

Here in the Midwest Marge has been active in the propagation of the federally threatened Western Prairie Fringe Orchid, Platanthera praeclara. Under her direction the department accomplishments include:

Development of essential protocols for threatened species.

Micropropagation and tissue culture of threatened species to produce large numbers of threatened species to support restoration projects.

Development of methods for the successful transfer of propagated plants to restoration projects.

Development of cryogenic methods for long-term seed and spore storage of many endangered plants.

Training of scientists from home countries where

many of the endangered species are native.

Direct participation in species restoration projects in North America, Bermuda, and Madagascar.

The business portion of the meeting will include a discussion of the preparations for our 24th annual orchid show and sale, March 26 – 27 at Lauritzen Gardens (see article on this page of this newsletter).

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

For those who have already renewed – THANK YOU! For those who may have forgotten to renew, a renewal form with the header FINAL NOTICE accompanied your copy of this issue of the newsletter. In accordance with the by-laws, memberships expire the day after the February general meeting (which was February 9 this year). So if you wish to remain a member please complete the show application and mail it in (or bring it to the meeting). Otherwise this will be your last issue of The Informer.

THANK YOU, MERCI, GRACIAS

The February meeting was an unqualified success. Those who attended combined their efforts to reduce the mountains into molehills. Two large (approximately 50 lbs each) of bark potting mixed were reduce to 41 sale bags, 76 "Your First Orchid" books were labeled with a price tag, 250 tri-fold GOOS brochures were folded, over 400 award ribbons were organized and counted, the nine judging binders were reassembled with pages in proper order and old show tags removed, nearly 5 yards of fabric were turned into pot wraps for displays, and at least 160 books were labeled with GOOS contact info for distribution at the orchid show, Home & Garden Show, etc.

The results of this effort brought us a lot closer to being ready for upcoming events like our booth at the Home & Garden Expo, our annual orchid show and other upcoming events. THANK YOU!

IT'S SHOW TIME

Our 24th annual orchid show and sale is less than a month away. We have a great list of volunteers for show setup on Friday (March 25) evening and cleanup on late Sunday (March 27) afternoon but we could use more volunteers for clerks during the morning judging. We have several AOS judges coming that normally are unable to come to our show. They can bring additional insights into what constitutes a awardable plant. So if you are really want to learn about orchids, clerking is one way to do that. Yes, you'll have to get up in the dark and be at the Gardens at 6:30 AM but it's only once. Give it some thought and contact Jim Pyrzynski (402-734-4112) or sign up at the meeting. There are also a few openings at the information table on Sunday.

The other area where we need some additional support is – Hospitality. We need either items to be donated or some monetary donations to acquire the items. A signup list was emailed February 26 and will also be available at the March meeting. Otherwise contact Jacque Lewzader (jlewzader@msn.com or 402-573-2217) or Jim Pyrzynski.

Currently we have seven vendors for the show: Natt's Orchids, Orchid Inn, Bird's Botanicals, Fantasy Orchids, Michel Orchid Nursery, The Plant House, and Iowa Orchids. Many of these vendors have websites and you can see what they have to offer. If you see something you like, contact them to pre-order the plant. Thanks again for your support.

FROM FIRST RAYS

Evaporation and Raising the Humidity of Your Growing Area

The efficacy of humidity trays and hand misting of in-home orchid collections has been debated for years, and there has not been a great deal of actual testing to confirm or debunk the theories. Let's forget conjecture on misting and humidity trays, and think of it scientifically.

Let's say we have a 10' x 10' x 10' "room" (size selected for calculation purposes). At 74°F (also selected for math simplicity), that volume of air can hold one-half pound of water to give 50% RH. One-half pound of water is about a cup in volume. If the room was totally sealed off, it would be easy to keep the humidity up. Unfortunately, that room isn't totally sealed from the environment, as there are other rooms in our houses, no house is perfectly sealed, and our walls do "breathe" by design. That more-or-less infinite air mass around us and the laws of nature try to spread that cup of water uniformly over the universe, so we have to replenish the supply to keep up.

Replenishing the volume or mass of water in the air is dependent upon evaporation rate, which in turn is dependent upon the air and water temperatures, the current humidity level and the surface area of the water source. Look at it this (very simplistic) way: individual water molecules are energetic and naturally move around and "vibrate". As they do, they collide with other molecules, so their motion is blocked and they "hand off" some of their energy, while getting more from molecules that run into them. The density of the molecules in the air is lower than in the liquid, so at the surface, where there are fewer other molecules to run into, some of those water molecules will have enough energy to "break away" from the liquid and enter the air - as humidity. Unfortunately, that process is not exceptionally fast - place a cup of water on the counter and see how long it takes to totally evaporate. Also, as a water molecule "escapes" into the air, it takes its allotment of energy with it, reducing what's in the water, thereby cooling it and reducing the future evaporation rate.

If we heat the water, we give those molecules more energy, so the escape (or evaporation) rate increases. Hence the "warm air" humidifier. Our only other practical alternative to heating is increasing the surface area.

As this was composed, there was a cup of water on the desk. Its surface area was only about seven square inches, so we wouldn't expect much evaporation. If we pour that water in a stan-

dard nursery tray, we increase that surface area (where the molecules might jump out of the liquid) by almost 35 times to about 250 square inches. That seems like a great increase, but is it a significant one? Unfortunately, no. A tray of standing water still takes a long time to evaporate. The common practice of adding pebbles to the tray so they are kept wet by capillary action may increase the surface area by two- to three more times, but it's still relatively meaningless. So, to get a substantial surface area, let's atomize that cup of water.

Our cup of water is about 237 ml, or 237 cubic centimeters in volume. If we atomize that to 1 mm diameter spherical droplets (much larger than what atomizing humidifiers do in reality), we create over 4.5 billion droplets, having a surface area of almost 22 million square inches! Yeah...that ought to evaporate more quickly than a tray.

Hand misting may be better than putting water in a tray, but the volume has to be substantial, so would have to be done very frequently - doing so in the morning before going to work has only transient and relatively meaningless benefit. A room humidifier can put several gallons of water into the air in a day, so you can see that a few pumps from a hand-held quart mister really won't do much. It is also important that it be done into the air, not onto the plants, as all that does is wet the leaves, making a film with less surface area, and it improves the growing conditions for bacteria, molds, and fungi.

http://www.firstrays.com/

American Orchid Society Monthly Checklist for March and April

Cattleya

Although March is, in many parts of the country, still a cold and blustery month, the lengthening days and warmer temperatures allowed by increased light are long-awaited harbingers of the coming change of season. Some of the best standard cattleyas of the year will be in bloom, or will be blooming soon. The last of the winter-flowering hybrids will join the earliest of the spring hybrids in a wonderful display. Be on the alert for senescing sheaths that need removal. If these yellowing sheaths are not removed, the moisture they trap can lead to bud rot. Careful removal of the sheath will allow the buds to develop, although they will need additional support. Changing light conditions can also be a problem in March and April. An exceptionally bright day, especially immediately following a rain, can lead to sunburn of the foliage if shading is not attended to properly. There can still be periods of dull days where spikes can weakened owing to the lower light. Lengthening days will mean increased metabolic rates necessitating increased water and fertilizer. The plants will indicate needs by drying more rapidly, which means more frequent watering and fertilizing.

With the passing of the season for winter bloomers, and the beginning of the season for spring bloom, it is also the time to be on the lookout for plants that will need potting after they bloom. Immediately after blooming has proven to be the best time to repot winter- and spring-flowering cattleyas. In most cases, they will be ready to grow roots, so if potted at this time, they will root right into fresh mix with little or no setback.

Cymbidium

Plants should be putting on a spectacular show this time of year. Adjust all staking and twist-ties and be on the lookout for aphids, slugs and snails. Give adequate water because flowering strains the plants. As new growths appear later, increase the nitrogen level in the fertilizer. Should a plant look healthy but not be blooming, try increasing the light during the next growing season. The number-one reason for no flowers is lack of light.

Dendrobium (Australian)

These hard-cane dendrobiums will be at their flowering peak now. It is not unusual to see a specimen of this type in an orchid show boasting 1,000 flowers. The secret with this group -- bred primarily from Dendrobium kingianum and Dendrobium speciosum -- is to provide ample water, fertilizer and light during the growing season.

Lycaste

This genus of superb orchids will be coming to the end of its flowering season. Soon you will see the beginning of new root growth, which is an excellent time to repot into fresh media. As new growth emerges, provide ample fertilizer and water. A sign of good culture is an increase in the size of psuedobulbs with each successive year.

Miltoniopsis
This marks the beginning of the flowering season. Amazing displays of color will dazzle the grower over the next few months. Prepare your plants for optimum display by staking spikes (if needed) and cleaning off the older yellow foliage. Do not miss the wonderful fragrance as the flowers unfold.

Paphiopedilum
March is the beginning of the season of heaviest potting for lady's-slipper orchids. However, it is a month where the volume of plants needing attention is still small. It is an excellent month to take the time to work with your paphiopedilums before the pressure of other potting prevents your doing the thorough job you should. Look at each plant: Is it clean of dead and dying foliage? Is it weed free? Does it need potting? Is it in spike? Does it have an insect problem? Cleaning and restaging your paphs is one of the most satisfying tasks of the orchid year. Cleaned and potted paphiopedilums look happy.

The summer-blooming types will be showing the first of their buds in March and April. Be on the lookout for the buds, as well as any insect pests that may have found their way into the crowns of your plants. It is especially difficult to clean mealybugs, in particular, once they have become established in the plant. Better to get to them before they get a good toehold.

Increasing light levels should give emerging spikes the strength they need to grow straight and strong. Do not be too anxious to stake the spikes, because if they are staked too soon, the flowers may develop a "nodding" stance, where the dorsal will not stand upright. If the spikes seem to develop at an angle, let them, and stake after the flower has hardened for best carriage, especially on the hybrids with fairieanum background.

Phalaenopsis
In most of the country, March is the peak blooming month for phalaenopsis. Staking needs to be carefully attended to, so that the flowers will be displayed at their best for orchid shows and judging -- even those intended for your home will look best if properly staked. One of the most decorative aspects of phalaenopsis spikes is the way they gracefully arch. If not staked properly, the spike will lack this grace and will not be as pleasing. Most growers like to have the final support just below the first flower, allowing maximum support, without sacrificing the beauty of the arching spike.

Rapid-growing spikes and open flowers place extra demands on the plant. Careful monitoring of watering and feeding will give the plants the energy they require to give their best floral display. Remember, too, that the lengthening days will also increase the frequency at which plants need water.

Beware of the invasion of sucking pests that accompany the flowering season. Flowers and spikes are favorite targets of mealybugs and scales. Be on the look out for their presence, often indicated by the appearance of sooty mold resulting from the exudate of the bugs, and treat before flowers or buds are too advanced. If flowers and buds are too far along, the chemical treatment may damage or abort them.

Pleurothallids
Members in this large and increasingly popular group will be looking their best now. If plants are not in flower, the next few months provide an excellent time to divide if needed or repot into fresh mix. Taking care of these tasks now will allow enough time for your plants to become established before the hot weather arrives.

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

Copyright 2008 American Orchid Society, www.aos.org. All rights reserved

REPORTS

Greater Omaha Orchid Society General Meeting
February 9 12, 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. Vicki Shallow introduced her sister Rita who was visiting from Wisconsin.

The minutes of the January meeting were approved.

Sandy Rome gave the Treasurer's report.

Qwest Home and Garden Show. Jim Pyrzynski discussed preparations for the Home and Garden show (March 3 – 6). The signup sheet was circulated.

Annual Orchid Show. Jim Pyrzynski distributed flyers for the show and signup sheets for the various activities. Jim urged members to sign up to be clerks during the show judging. He also listed the various vendors that will be coming and suggested members visit their websites to view the orchids they carry and might want to pre-order.

Show Hospitality. Jacque Lewzader went over the show hospitality preparations and what is needed for this effort. A signup sheet was circulated.

GOOS By-laws and Articles of Incorporation. Roberta read the proposed changes to the By-laws and the Articles of Incorporation that are needed to bring the society in line with the latest tax guidelines. This was the second and final reading of the proposed changes. Votes were taken on each proposed change. The changes were approved.

Lauritzen Gardens Spring into Spring. Roberta discussed the annual event at the Lauritzen Gardens and advised that board members had volunteered to staff the event May 13 – 15 to represent the Society. She asked for a vote of approval. Approved.

Library. Roberta discussed the status of the Society library. Ann Donovan has agreed to be the librarian with the assistance of Robert Mann. There were some costs for check out cards, etc. which had not been budgeted for. Roberta requested a vote of approval for a $50 expenditure for these supplies. The request was approved.

Program. The program for this meeting was "show preparation activities." Jim Pyrzynski brought in large (50 pound) bags of bark potting mix for rebagging into smaller, sale bags; "Your First Orchid" to be labeled with priced tags; award ribbons which needed to be organized an counted; the Society tri-fold membership brochure which needed folding; and the show judging books which needed to be reorganized. Roberta brought in orchid magazines which will be distributed at the various show events which needed labels with information on the Society; show exhibition fabric for the Society display which needed to be turned into plant wraps. Quick work was made of the varied tasks.

Raffle Plants were provided by Norm Larson.

Refreshments were provided by Roberta Ginavan.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Pyrzynski, Secretary

Greater Omaha Orchid Society Board Meeting
February 23, 2011

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

Guest speaker arrangements. Roberta discussed the possibility of coordinating with the Denver Orchid Society and the Utah Orchid Society on bringing guests speakers by sharing the costs. Possibly the Orchid Society of Greater Kansas City could also be brought in to the loop. There is a possibility of bringing an international speaker with these resources.

Qwest Home and Garden Show. Jim advised that the plants from Carmela's arrived today and have been delivered to Jack & Vi Thraen's residence for unpacking. There are 45 plants in the shipment. Jim also advised that he had

received the shipment of Bletilla Yokohama 'Kate' last week. There were 2 flats of 72 plants each. He has repotted one flat into individual 2 ¼ pots and labeled them so that they are ready for sale. With the number of Bletillas available Jim suggested that we give a free plant to new members signing up at the show and at the April meeting. The plants will also be sold at the Lauritzen Spring into Spring in May. The parking passes arrived today also and board members were given their passes at the meeting to save on postage costs.

Lauritzen Show. Additional vendor applications were received since the last board meeting. Jim went over the list: Natt's Orchids, Orchid Inn, Bird's Botanicals, Fantasy Orchids, Michel Orchid Nursery, The Plant House, Iowa Orchids. The total number of sales tables is 16. Marilyn thought that Ecuagenera may still attend and Jim had a discussion with Paradigm and they also indicated they may participate also. There was a suggestion that sheets with the meeting schedule be available at the information desk and that a large sign at the exit would give information on the next meeting date and program. Roberta plans to give a Best of Show President's award. Marilyn will give a GOOS Memorial Award and she will assume responsibility for obtaining the physical award.

Show Hospitality. Jacque discussed the hospitality preparations for the show. She requested that Jim scan the list and email it out to the membership for more contributions – either monetary or actual items needed.

Lauritzen Spring into Spring. Board members have agreed to staff the event but there will be signup sheets for additional volunteers at the April general meeting.

Library Update. Roberta discussed the monetary value of some of the books. Some are going for several times their original price since they are now out of print. Date due cards will be in every book and the Librarian (Ann Donovan) will monitor which ones are on loan. A loan period of one month was suggested. The books will be listed on the Society website with the note that they are for use by members only.

February Program. There was a consensus that the February program (show preparation activities) went well, people mingled and helped out in other areas when their tasks were completed. This type of format might be useful for other programs.

Banking Issues. Sandy Rome went over the amount of money in the checking account and recommended that only the amount estimated to be needed to finance the year's activities be left in checking. The remainder should be placed in CDs. There was also a discussion of the bank's requirements for signers and cosigners for the CDs, the access to the safe deposit box, and the post office box. The limits on access are there to ensure the accounts are secure.

AOS website. Sandy also discussed what was available on the AOS website to non AOS members. Some items about GOOS on the AOS website may need updating and will require further review. Sandy has established a yahoo.com email address for GOOS and posted that on the appropriate location on the AOS website. This item will be discussed further at the next meeting and Sandy will bring more info at the time.

Incorporation. Roberta advised with the passage of changes to By-laws and Articles of Incorporation, that the next step will be to submit the revision to the Articles to the State of Nebraska.

Membership. A few more memberships were in the post office box and were given to the treasurer for posting. There are still some members who have been longtime members who have not renewed. Jim advised that this month's newsletter will contain a "final notice" renewal form for those who have not renewed. (Memberships expire the day after the February meeting but there are always some who renew late.)

Conservation discussion. The list of goals and activities were discussed. Some issues will be passed on to Marge for possible use in the March program. Some possible speakers were discussed for the Speakers Day suggestion but it was felt that a Day on solely conservation talks would not work and probably would not fit with the goals of any societies that we may want to coordinate with. There was more rambling discussion of some of the suggestions from the September 2010 meeting. A suggestion was made to pare down the list via an internet dialog rather than spending more time at the meeting. Jacque recommended that we pick only one or two and do them well.

Meeting adjourned

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Pyrzynski, Secretary