



The Informer

Newsletter of the Greater Omaha Orchid Society

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

November 13, 2013

**7:00 PM GROWERS
GROUP & Plant sale**

7:30 PM Program: Guest
speaker, Ron Midgett; topic
Cattleyas

Refreshments: Marie Ann
Smith

November 20, 2013

Papillion Library
6:45 PM Papillion Library
Board meeting

December 11, 2013

**HOLIDAY PARTY
6:00 PM
Piccolo's Restaurant
2202 South 20th Street
Omaha, NE**

EVENTS

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.

March 1 – 2, 2014

Northeastern Wisconsin
Orchid Society Show

Holiday Inn Neenah
Riverwalk, 123 East
Wisconsin Ave., Neenah, WI.
Contact: Milton Wittmann,
920-788-7413, orrwitt@aol.
com

March 29 – 30, 2014

Greater Omaha Orchid
Society 27th Annual Orchid
Show & Sale. Lauritzen
Gardens, 100 Bancroft St.,
Omaha, NE

Contact: Jim Pyrzynski, 402-
734-4112, jpyrzynski@cox.
net

April 29 – May 4, 2014

2014 Spring AOS Members
Meeting and Show

Doubletree by Hilton,
7800 Normandale Blvd,
Minneapolis MN, Sponsored
by the Orchid Society of
Minnesota, Contact; Kim
Livingston, 952-831-8135,
thelivingstons@comcast.net

GUEST SPEAKER RON MIDGETT TOPIC: CATTLEYAS

November brings our final
guest speaker for the year
– Ron, Midgett of New
Earth Orchids in Santa
Fe, New Mexico. Ron had
his first encounter with
orchids about 40 years
ago when he saw some
“strange” plants 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 estab-
lished a full-service orchid
nursery for Santa Fe and
New Mexico. Ron serves
on the American Orchid
Society Membership Com-
mittee. He has also served
as chairperson for AOS
judging at New Mexico
Orchid Guild Shows.

A little about Santa Fe, it is
situated at an elevation of
about 7,000 ft. above sea
level, it receives an annual
rainfall of about 15 inches
per year (most during the
summer monsoon), and it
is one of the top 101 cities
(with a population greater
than 50,000) that has the
lowest humidity. These
conditions must present
some challenges for grow-
ing orchids just on a hobby

basis, let alone as a commercial grower.

Ron's talk will be on Cattleyas and he will be bringing plants to sell. Cattleyas are still popular orchids, they were "The Corsage Orchid" some time back and still are to some extent these days. The flowers can be very large and colorful, fragrant, and fascinating. Prior to the meeting, Joe Lankton will give an abbreviated Grower's Group talk on Cattleya culture so that their will be time to see what's for sale and make purchases.

We will have dinner with Ron at the Farmhouse Cafe (by Manglesen's, at 84th St. and a S. 82nd St.) at 5 PM. If you are interested in attending, contact Jim Pyrzynski (402-734-4112 or email jpyrzynski@cox.net) NLT Tuesday, November 12.

DON WE NOW ...

The holidays are approaching and it's time to make plans to be part of our festivities at our annual Greater Omaha Orchid Society Holiday Party. This year the party will be at Piccolo's Restaurant, 2202 South 20th Street, Omaha. The date and time is December 11 (the second Wednesday of the month (our usual meeting evening) at 6:00PM.

The menu will be a choice of: Orange Roughy, \$28.00; Sirloin steak (8oz), \$26.00; or Chicken, \$18.00. Entrees include: Soup, salad, baked potato, mostaccioli, bread & butter, tea or coffee. Desserts are not included but can be ordered. The prices above include tax and tip.

We'll have our usual gift exchange (with a twist) for

those who choose to participate and a merry time for all. So mark the date and make your plans to attend now.

PROGRAMS FOR 2014

Looking ahead to 2014, the programs for the year are taking shape. January will be a potluck with food provided by the board and the entertainment will be the movie that was not shown at the September meeting: The Black Orchid. February's program will be something different – a competition between two groups to do an orchid display. The program for the March meeting will be a panel discussion with members who grow their orchids under differing conditions. We will be looking for volunteers for this program.

SAD NEWS

Howard Gunn, our guest speaker for the October 2012 meeting, passed away October 27 in Sacramento. Howard started raising orchids in 1965. He was a founding member of the Paphiopedilum Guild. He, accompanied by his wife Joan, was a world traveler in the service of orchids. He made trips to observe orchids in the wild on the west and east coasts of Mexico and in Ecuador. He and Joan attended World Orchid Conferences in Tokyo, Miami, Rio de Janeiro, Glasgow, Vancouver. They also traveled to far-flung places such as China, Thailand, England, Germany, Egypt, and South Africa. His knowledge and expertise will be missed.

ORCHID DIGEST

For the Phalaenopsis lovers, the latest issue (Oct – Dec 2013) of Orchid Digest is devoted to the genus. For a preview of what may be coming down the road, Mark Skrull discusses new

trends in breeding. In Taiwan, harlequin breeding continues to show improvements in flower form and character. Color saturation and depth has been improved as well as the size and shape of the flowers. There are new patterns such as splash petals, and spots. A new trend is the Big Foot Phal. This trend uses the tripetalum, petaloid or big foot breeding as a new basis for hybridizing. The results are intriguing – just look at the photos.

Maybe some think that big white Phals are passé but not yet in the opinion of Steve Gonzalez-Costa. He discusses the early development of the type and the various background species and what they contribute. One source of some confusion is the use of *P. amabilis* and *P. aphrodite* which have very similar flowers but are really quite distinct species. Information on the culture of big white Phals is included.

Forget the blue-dyed Phals at the grocery store. They will be white on their next bloom. Now there is an emerald Phalaenopsis (sell it for St. Pat's Day). Its name is Phalaenopsis Emeraude and it has grace inflorescences of beautiful, round flowers of pale green. Look for it soon.

Peter Lin of Big Leaf Orchids in Southlake, Texas discusses novelty Phalaenopsis. What's makes them a "novelty?" For Lin the novelty types are those with bright color and fragrance. For the late Eric Christenson, novelties were those that were not the standard large-flowered crosses. For Lin the novelty types are collectables because they are not readily available in the trade. He also likes the intensely colored flowers.

But if you are going to try to grow some of the Phalaenopsis species (as opposed to the hybrids), read Paul and Ann Tuskes article on their culture. They discuss which species are adapted to different growing situations (e.g., cool dry winters vs. light moist moderate winters).

Rounding out the issue, there are some articles of botanical interest. Check it out, it's in the library.

NEBRASKA NATIVE ORCHID

The November issue of NebraskaLand, a publication of the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, has an article by State Botanist Gerry Steinauer on a rare and lovely Nebraska native orchid, the small white lady's-slipper, *Cypripedium candidum*. The article discusses surveys of the orchid that were conducted along a highway in Pierce County, Nebraska in 2011 and in 2013. In the recent survey nearly 500 plants were found scattered along a six-mile stretch of the highway right-of-way. This area receives little mowing and is not grazed. It's not ideal habitat but the plants survive. However they do not occur where the right-of-way borders cropland, possibly herbicide drift from the fields could be a factor.

In 2012, an early spring prescribed burn, prior to the emergence of the orchid, was conducted on a limited area. The purpose was to remove excess accumulated plant litter and to set back non-native grasses (such as smooth brome) which compete with native plants including the lady's slipper. More prescribed burns will most likely be performed in the future. And, just possibly, these plants may serve as a seed source for establishing new populations in more natural habitats

Editor's Note: Two GOOS members (Tim Janssen and Jim Pyrzynski) assisted State personnel in conducting the 2011 survey.

COLLECTOR'S ITEM *Cattleya percivaliana*

Cattleya percivaliana was discovered in 1881 by William Arnold, a collector for the firm of Sanders. The plants were found in the Venezuelan Andes. When originally described by Reichenbach a year later, it was given only varietal status. Reichenbach favored the concept that all of the labiate cattleyas were merely varieties of *Cattleya labiata*, a concept which persisted well into the twentieth century. In 1883 James O'Brien gave it specific status in the same publication in which Reichenbach first mentioned it, *Gardener's Chronicle*.

Cattleya percivaliana is primarily a Venezuelan species from the northwestern mountains although it has been reported from neighboring Colombia as well. The species is generally found between 1400 - 2000 meters but seems to be adaptable to lower elevations. Indeed, even growers in warm sea-level South Florida can grow *C. percivaliana* without problems. It usually grows as an epiphyte, but is also found growing lithophytically on rocky cliffs where it receives nearly full sun.

Generally, *Cattleya percivaliana* is a somewhat smaller plant than other labiate cattleyas with the total height around a foot. Flowers are produced 2-6 in the autumn or winter. In nature, they bloom earlier but we always see them at Christmas and the species is often referred to as the "Christmas Orchid". The form of the flowers is generally better than the typical form of other labiate cattleyas; they are fuller and flatter although sometimes smaller. The full form of the flowers has been an attraction to hybridizers, *C. percivaliana* has been used as a parent more than 130 times. Although the typical color is pale orchid lavender, there are numerous other color forms and several awarded grexes with *C. percivaliana* 'Summit' FCC/AOS perhaps being the most widely known. Some varieties are known as "grandifloras" and suspected to be tetraploids. Another notable "Perci" is the albescens *C. percivaliana* 'Sonia de Urbano' which has several awards in its native country. The flowers have the faintest trace of color offset by an old gold lip. *C. percivaliana* 'Carache' is a well-known semi-alba grex with a richly-colored lip, the lip color approaching burgundy wine.

Cattleya percivaliana is a rewarding, easy-to-grow species that belongs in any collection that includes cattleyas. Here in South Florida we grow the species in 6-8" clay pots using lava rock as a media. Farther north fir bark might be more appropriate. We water the plants 3 or 4 times a week during the growing season and a day less during winter. They are grown bright with only about 30-40% shade. Labiate cattleyas can also be successfully grown mounted providing that you supply ample water. - G. Allikas



C. percivaliana
'Summit' FCC/AOS



Although *Cattleya percivaliana* 'Sonia de Urbano' appears to be an alba form, it actually has a faint trace of pigment.



C. percivaliana 'Carache'

AMERICAN ORCHID SOCIETY CULTURE SHEET

Cattleya KAT-lee-ah

Cattleyas are among the most popular orchids. Their culture is often used as the basis for comparison with other types of orchids. Cattleyas and their related hybrids come in many colors, shapes, forms and sizes. Culture varies only slightly among most of these. This sheet is a general guide to basic cattleya culture. Like many other cultivated orchids, cattleyas are epiphytes, or air plants. They have developed water-storage organs, called pseudobulbs, and have large, fleshy roots covered with a spongy, water-retentive velamen. They are accustomed to being dry at the roots between waterings, and therefore should be potted in freedraining media.

Light is the most important factor in growing and flowering cattleyas, whether in a greenhouse or in the home. Bright light to some sun should be given to the plants, with no direct sun in the middle of the day. This means an east, shaded south (as with a sheer curtain) or west window in the home, and 50 to 70 percent full sun in a greenhouse (3,000 to 5,000 foot-candles). Leaves should be a medium green color, pseudobulbs erect and requiring no staking.

Temperatures should be 55 to 60 F at night and 70 to 85 F during the day. Seedlings should have night temperatures five to 10 degrees higher. A 15- to 20-degree differential between day and night is recommended, especially for mature plants. Higher day temperatures can be tolerated (up to 95 F), if humidity, air circulation and shading are increased. Water should be provided in two ways: in the pot by watering and in the air as humidity. Watering in the container is dictated by many criteria: size and type of the vessel, temperature, light, etc. Mature cattleyas need to dry out thoroughly before being watered again. Seedlings need more constant moisture. Compare the weight of a dry pot of the same size and type of mix; it can indicate if a plant needs water by the relative weight - light means dry, heavy means wet. If in doubt, it's best to wait a day or two until watering. Plants in active growth need more water than plants that are resting. Water below 50 F may injure plants, as will water softened by the addition of salts.

Humidity should be 50 to 80 percent for cattleyas. This can be provided in the home by placing the plants on trays of gravel, only partially filled with water so that the plants do not sit in the water. Air should always be moving around the plants to prevent fungal or bacterial disease, especially if high humidity or cool temperatures exist. In the greenhouse, the humidity is best increased by use of a humidifier. Evaporative cooling increases humidity while cooling the air. Fertilize on a regular schedule. In fir bark, a high-nitrogen (such as 30-10-10) formulation, or a similar proportion, is used. Otherwise, use a balanced fertilizer. When in active growth, plants need fertilizer at least every two weeks, and when not actively growing, once a month. Fertilizer can also be applied with every watering at one-quarter the recommended dilution. Thorough flushing with clear water every month is recommended to prevent the buildup of fertilizer salts.

Potting is necessary when the rhizome of the plants protrudes over the edge of the pot or the potting medium starts to break down and drain poorly (usually after two to three years). It is best to repot just before new roots sprout from the rhizome, after flowering or in the spring. Mature cattleyas are usually potted in coarser potting material than are seedlings. Until a plant has at least six mature pseudobulbs, it generally should be put into a larger pot and not divided. If dividing a plant, three to five pseudobulbs per division are required. Select a pot that will allow for approximately two years of growth before crowding the pot. Pile mix against one side of the pot and cut off any dead roots. Spread the firm, live roots over the pile, with the cut rhizome against the side of the pot. Fill the pot with medium, working it around the roots. Pack firmly and stake if necessary. Keep the plant humid, shaded and dry at the roots until new root growth is seen.

REPORTS

Greater Omaha Orchid Society General Meeting, October 9, 2013

The meeting was called to order by President Stoiber at the Douglas/Sarpy County Extension Office at 7:42 p.m. following Joe Lankton's introductory "Learners" session at 7:00 p.m. attended by 27 members. "Show and Tell" table displayed an especially colorful variety of 15 orchids from members.

Eric Stoiber introduced Joe Lankton who gave a 30-minute presentation on "Paphiopedilums You Should Own and How to Grow Them." with experience since early 1980's, recommendations included henryanum 'September,' liemianum (sequential bloomer), delenatii, Maudiae "The Queen"--"easy to grow," hysinying Citron/Alien. Multiflorals require lots of light; black pots warm roots: Julius, Johanna Burkhardt. "Be patient. Don't buy a seedling. Takes 6-7 years to bloom!" Complex: Lippewunder (buy in bloom), Hampshire Zoo, Icy Icy Wind (whites), Brachypetalum (favorites), Omaha's Best, Hat Trick (heavy thick orchids), Hsinying Luke (flowers last/bloom 3-4 times a year). Parvisepalum Hybrids: tall, thick, raspberry-scented. Watch. Some are illegal in the USA. Very large. Norito Hasegawa: good story; good friend. Culture: adaptable; lower light; high humidity; keep moist. Repot regularly in bark-based mix. Orchiaata noted and discussed.

RECIPE: Paphiopedilums Potting Mix

5 parts fir, 5 orchiaata
10 parts small orchiaata
2 parts oyster shell
5 parts coconut shell
1 part sponge rock
1 part small diatomite rock
3 parts medium diatomite rock
1 part sand
2 parts small charcoal

Some grow in leaf litter or on limestone cliffs; top with lime 2x a year.

After a 15 minute question period, President Stoiber thanked Joe and addressed the members for the business meeting.

Minutes: No comments or changes were made to minutes in The Informer.

Treasurer's Report: Aaron Bugjo reported on current status; report passed through membership. No questions; no comment.

Holiday Party: December 11th. Board member Jacque Lewzader reviewed restaurant options; will pursue finalized three, determine best option, and select menu for announcement at November 13th meeting.

Vice President Pyrzynski reported on the ST. Cecilia Flower Festival January 24-26, 2014. As five committee members are needed to assist with this, a sign-up sheet was passed to membership.

November 13th Speaker: Ron Midget from New Earth Orchids, Santa Fe, NM will present on Cattleyas. It is best to call him for orders. <http://www.newearthorchids.com> Don't miss it!

June 4, 2014 meeting date announced by President Stoiber, due to need for bumping by Extension Office. Mark your calendars.

After thanking Sandy Rome and Elsie for refreshments, President Stoiber noted Silent Auction items starting at \$10. Master Gardener Barb brought \$11 Wildflower calendars for sale.

Following an interesting Show and Tell, President Stoiber adjourned the meeting at 9:09 p.m. while announcing that members are welcome to attend the upcoming board meeting (October 23/Papillion library - 6:45 p.m.) and ask questions at the end of the board meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Marie Smith, Secretary

Greater Omaha Orchid Society Board Meeting - October 23, 2013
Sump Memorial Library, Papillion, NE.

President Eric Stoiber called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Attending: Jim Pyrzynski, Aaron Bugjo, Roberta Ginavan, Jacque Lewzader, Linda Schroeder, and Marie Smith.

1. Vice President Pyrzynski suggested The Farmhouse restaurant on 84th Street near the County Extension Office for dinner with November 13th speaker, Ron Midgett. Board agreed. Jacque will contact restaurant. Eric will provide transportation/accommodations for Speaker Midgett. Orchid pre-orders: contact Eric.

2. December 11th Holiday Party: Piccolo Pete's, 2202 S. 20th St., South Omaha. Choices: Chicken (4 pc.) @ \$18; Sirloin Steak (8 oz.) @ \$26; or Orange Roughy @ \$27. Tax/gratuity included. Meals include Soup, Salad, Baked Potato, Mostaccioli, Bread, Butter, Coffee or Tea. No desserts. No checks. Jacque Lewzader will bring chocolate-covered cashews, pleasing all.

3. St. Cecilia Flower Show, January 23-26th: President Eric Stoiber discussed the St. Cecilia Flower Show Committee with Twilla Westercamp prior to the meeting and asked her to chair the committee. At the board meeting he listed the other committee volunteers: Marilyn Hawes, Sandy Rome, and Aaron and Kelsey Bugjo. Treasurer Aaron Bugjo will contact Sandy Rome regarding status on possible state permits or licenses to purchase from wholesaler for resales. Aaron has some contacts with companies which may be able to provide cut flowers and other supplies needed for the show (e.g. DFW (Denver Wholesale Floral)).

4. Kansas City Show, February 6 - 9th: Treasurer Bugjo volunteered to transport and return things to/from K.C. and will remain throughout the entire 5 days. President Stoiber offered assistance with set-up for the table top and back drop. Vice President Pyrzynski suggested that lighting needed to be addressed. Jacque suggested pole lights. "Natural Light" bulbs that do not heat up are needed. Skirting is provided at K.C.

5. GOOS March 29-30th show at Lauritzen Gardens and Dates for Future: Using an extensive list of Easter dates well into the future, and current status of several judges who are/are not available (with Sam in Germany), Vice President Pyrzynski indicated that after March 22nd, the GOOS show has chances of bumping into Easter. He would like to establish a set date each year, rather than jump around. No determination was made; up for recommendation.

6. 2014 Programs: lively discussions regarding "in-house" winter programs. Results: after November's speaker, Ron Midgett, and Grower's Group Joe Lankton discuss how to best care for orchids coming in for sales that day:

January-"Black Orchid" Movie Night, with the board providing sandwiches, chips, dip, pre-popped popcorn, and soda/coffee.

February-"Display Challenge!" with critique by Joe/"Judges in the house" after members are split into two groups to set up two displays using an assortment of items brought in. Any "Show and Tell" orchids present may become display stars!

March-"Growing Orchids Indoors" panel with PowerPoint slides on the variety of indoor growing environments/lighting. A maximum of four members shall be requested to volunteer from the General Meeting. As we have new members, an interesting mix may present. Eric volunteered to take photos for the PowerPoint of speakers' indoor habitats.

Roberta shall provide a list of three paid possible speakers by review of the Denver schedule for 2014, and report in November.

Award Recognition: The board and officers congratulated Roberta as the recipient of the "Orchidist of the Year" award presented to her during M.A.O.C's Dayton, OH show held at the Dayton Art Institute October 19-20th. Great news for Nebraska, Omaha, and GOOS members sharing in the joy!

7. Due to holidays, the GOOS board shall meet November 20th, and December 18, 2013.

Note: GOOS By-laws need an addendum, since 501(c)(3) status, adding to the Treasurer's duties to ensure that taxes are filed.

President Stoiber adjourned the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marie Anne Smith