



The Arizona Orchidist

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The Orchid Society of Arizona, Inc.
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NEXT OSA MEETING

The January meeting will be
held at the
Arizona State Veteran Home
Liberty Hall
4141 North 3rd Street

The next regular society meeting will
be Monday, January 2, 2006 at
7:00 p.m.
OSA meetings are open to all
plant enthusiasts

This month beverages
will be provided by:
Wilella Stimmell
snacks by
Julie Langston and Julie Rathbun

OSABOARD MEETING

The next OSA board meeting
will be held at 1 PM
Sunday, January 29, 2006
at the home of Barbara Parnell
Board meetings are open to all OSA
members
Please call Barbara at (480) 948-0714
for directions

Grower on Call

Bob MacLeod
(623) 935-4059

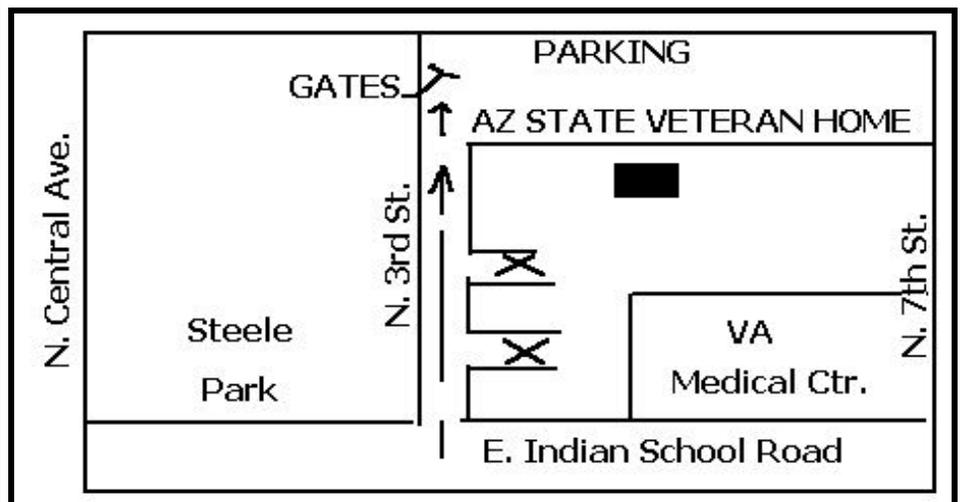
January Program

REPOTTING SESSION

Among the many amenities afforded our charges, a new pot with new mix is perhaps the one we dread the most. We're here to make fun of that or, if that's not possible, Aaron will make fun of the audience. We'll offer up a few entrees, but feel free to bring in your own plants if you'd like. Sometimes it's just better to allow someone else to do the dirty work.

Bring your plant, a fresh, clean pot or two, your medium of choice, and- if you intend on dividing it, a sterile cutting tool. Unused single-edge razor blades are good; if all goes well, I'll bring my own, but if you have a box, bring 'em on in. A newspaper (to help clean up the mess) is recommended. Bring the "National Enquirer" if you have any of those % # \$ @ ^ % @ moth-white phalaenopsis that need working over.

Aaron Hicks



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From the President's Desk

Julie Rathbun

It's the start of a new year and the beginning of my term of office as your new OSA President. So far, I have confidence that board members will offer to help me even if I don't ask for assistance. I love orchids and being a part of an orchid society that is more interested in serving the community than in serving itself. For those of you who don't know, I own and am responsible for the care and feeding of three quarterhorses. I participate in horse shows with two of my horses. (My third horse is still a "baby".) I also breed Yorkshire terriers, and I mend horse blankets for customers. But as important as dogs, horses, and sewing are to me, even more important is helping my husband, Fred, regain his health after he had a blood infection that damaged his heart and traveled to his artificial knee. In the past 7 weeks, Fred has been in and out of 3 hospitals and 2 nursing homes. I won't be able to breathe easily again until Fred's new artificial knee is implanted. Thanks to all OSA members who sent Get Well cards to Fred. He enjoyed receiving your good wishes. And I appreciate the moral support that you've given to me.

Thanks to **Doug Baldwin** and **Aaron Hicks** for presiding over our live December auction. They made the annual event lively and fun for everyone! Thanks to **Barbara** and **Harry Parnell** for helping with the silent auction tables. Thanks to **Julie Langston** and **Ramona Jungwirth** for taking charge of the many food donations on our expanded refreshments' tables. Thanks to our Treasurer, **Wilella Stimmell**, for keeping track of the winning bid for EVERY OSA inventory plant that was sold and for tracking the winning bids for all donated items. And **thanks to all who donated** orchids, orchid-related and non-plant-related items for both the live and silent auction, and a wonderful variety of food. Your donations were greatly appreciated! And last, but certainly not least, **thanks to all of you who purchased auction items!**

This year will be the first time in the past several years that OSA will NOT participate in the Chinese Festival that is held at the Chinese Cultural Center in Phoenix. Two of us usually travel to Gubler Orchids in Landers, CA, and purchase plants for sale at the Festival. This year the Festival will be held January 27-29. A buying trip would have to be done at least two weeks before the Festival, and I hope that at that time, Fred will have his knee surgery. In case you're interested, I was NOT the person who requested that we not participate in this year's Festival. I attended the November 27th board meeting, and board members recommended that we not participate because of Fred's health. (I admit that I breathed a sigh of relief that I didn't have one more activity to worry about - the trip itself and housing plants for the festival.)

I'm working on trying to find members who will commit to serving as Refreshment Coordinators. You will notice on page 1 of this newsletter that Julie Langston and I will be bringing snacks and Willie Stimmell will be providing the beverage for the January 2 meeting. I hope to have a sign-up sheet ready to pass around at the January meeting. And while I'm on the subject of refreshments, I'd like to thank Julie Langston and Ramona Jungwirth for serving as Refreshment Coordinators for the past two years. They did an outstanding job! They continued a pattern established by Janet Jurn, the Refreshment Chair who preceded Julie and Ramona. Some of us remember a time when the only refreshments at monthly meetings consisted of popcorn, coffee, and hot water for tea. Julie and Ramona provided monthly BANQUETS and worked hard to ensure that the refreshment table was attractive and loaded with a variety of foods. My mother used to tell me that if you didn't have something nice to say to somebody, than you shouldn't say anything at all! If any member doesn't like a particular FREE beverage or snack at a meeting, then bring your own beverage or snack to the next meeting. But DON'T mention ANY criticism to the Refreshment Coordinators. To criticize volunteers is TACKY!

The **Show Chair** for our **November, 2006 show** is **Barbara Parnell**. Thanks, Barbara!! Show dates for 2006 have been moved forward to get away from the Veterans' Day traffic and conflicting major events. Our **2006 show dates** are **November 4 and 5**.

Special thanks to **Jim Gordon** for permitting us to copy our monthly newsletters on his office copy machine. Thanks, Jim!!

Continued page 3

Continued from page 2.

Please remember that ALL OSA board meetings are open to ALL OSA members. Each meeting begins with a Treasurer's Report. Feel free to attend board meetings. It's sad that very few OSA non-board members attend board meetings.

Our regular monthly meetings are limited to two-hour meetings at Encanto Park Clubhouse. A staff member of Phoenix Parks and Recreation is in the building during our meetings. If our meetings run longer than 9 PM, the staff member is required to stay in the building until we have departed. He does NOT receive over-time pay from the city. In order to add something to the agenda for our monthly meetings, something that is now included would need to be eliminated so that we don't exceed the two-hour time limit. Would any member like to see Show and Tell (our display table) be eliminated? I don't think anyone would want to eliminate the display table.

I hope that we have excellent attendance at our January 2 meeting. Remember that this meeting will be held in Liberty Hall at the Arizona State Veteran Home. A map to the location is included in this newsletter. ASVH is our "home away from home"!

Happy New Year!
Julie

Member News

On the Mend: Tommy Anderson (quadruple bypass); Kaila Bacik (knee injury); Jim Johnson, OSA Life Member and our Webmaster (extremely nasty spider bite); and Fred Rathbun (see President's submission). Please notify our Editor if you know of a member who has been ill.

Welcome New Member: Sunny Yocum

Attention Snail Mailers:

For those who might not know, the first class **postage rate** will be **increased** from 37 cents to 39 cents, effective as of **January 8, 2006**.

Arizona State Veteran Home Wish List: soda pop (both diet and regular Coke, Pepsi, and Sprite), flavored water, sugar free chocolate bars, and 36-count boxes of microwavable popcorn (butter flavor only) Please don't forget the ASVH when you do your shopping.

The *Arizona Orchidist* is published monthly by the Orchid Society of Arizona, Inc.
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<http://welcome.to/orchidsocietyaz>
Or to any of the Board Officers or Trustees:

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The Orchid Society of Arizona, Inc. is a non-profit 501 (C) (3) organization dedicated to community service and the study of orchids. It is affiliated with the American Orchid Society, The Orchid Digest Corporation, the Arizona Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. The Nature Conservancy.

2006 COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM SCHEDULE

By Wilella Stimmell, CSP Coordinator

A new year of community service has begun! Our first program on the schedule will be presented for WEEDERS GARDEN CLUB, in Chandler, on January 12. The meeting location will be in a member's home.

In previous years, the **Equestrian Special Olympics**, sponsored by the Western Saddle Club and the City of Phoenix, has been scheduled for January. Last year, due to rain, the event was cancelled. This year the event has been moved to **March 11**, and OSA will again participate. Details about the event will be included in our March newsletter.

On **March 1 and 2**, OSA's school program team will travel to Payson and present hands-on programs for 3rd grade students at the **Payson Elementary School**. **Teddy Cohen** has been working with the Mayor of Payson on scheduling the programs. Watch for details in our March newsletter.

If you know of any schools where the teachers would be interested in OSA introducing their students to orchids, feel free to speak to the teachers and ask them to contact me to schedule a date for programs. OSA operates on a first come-first serve basis. Because I need to find out which program team volunteers are available on a particular date, we need at least a month's advance notice in order to schedule a date for programs. (As I write this, two dates in February and one date in April are available.)

As of October 19, 2005, OSA had introduced 2900 Arizona school children to orchids and conservation!!

In Memoriam

For those of you who remember former OSA member, **Jay Munn**, it is with sadness that we report his death on November 5, 2005. Jay's ashes will be interred in the Arlington National Cemetery on December 29, 2005.

In 2003, Jay's health started to decline, and he and his wife, Mercedes, moved from Phoenix to Federal Way, WA. Prior to moving, Jay donated a large number of books to the Northern Arizona VA Health Care System. Jay had a sense of humor about moving into an assisted living facility. He referred to it as a PMS facility (Pre-Mortuary Storage facility). In August, 2005, Jay and Mercedes again relocated - this time to Cincinnati, Ohio where they were close to their daughter, Vicki.

When Jay was an active OSA member, he loved to help with our school programs! In October, 2001, Jay decided to take his wife, Mercedes, to the Morongo Basin Orchid Festival and help us present hands-on programs for children who attend the festival. (Mercedes had no idea that Landers was not a vacation spot.) Only Jay would have had the nerve to tell his wife that he was taking her on "vacation"! (Mercedes enjoyed the experience even though it wasn't quite what she expected from a vacation.) The last time Jay was able to help with our school programs was on Oct. 10, 2002, when we presented our hands-on programs for 1st grade students at Kyrene de la Esperanza Elementary School in Phoenix. Even though his health had already begun to fail, Jay remained a "team player"! After he moved to Federal Way, whenever Jay phoned, the FIRST thing he wanted to hear about was our school programs.

(If any members would like to send a note to Mercedes, let me know. I would be happy to give you her mailing address.)

Rest in peace, Jay. You touched our lives, and we will miss you.

W. Stimmell

OSA 2006 Membership Dues

If you have not yet paid your 2006 membership dues, a renewal form has been included in this newsletter. PLEASE DO NOT PAY YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES WITHOUT FILLING OUT A RENEWAL FORM TO ACCOMPANY YOUR CHECK. Any changes in your snail mail address, e-mail address, phone number, or growing environments, etc. should be indicated on your renewal form. Suggestions for speakers are passed along to our Program Chair, and suggestions for in-house programs are passed along to our 1st VP. Also, if you would like to receive your newsletter via e-mail, please indicate your desire on your renewal form or contact our Editor, Keith Mead, at kjkm@comcast.net

2005 Vanilla Crop Brings A Bright Outlook For The Industry

It is with the greatest pleasure and relief that we are able to announce that vanilla prices “have finally returned to planet Earth,” says Craig Nielsen. In fact, the global outlook for supply and pricing of vanilla beans is the best it has been in the past five years. [The 2005 harvest will be sold in 2006. Source: Matt Nielsen, COO Nielsen-Massey Vanillas, Dec. 2, 2005]

After the rages of cyclones, political uproar, and uncharacteristically low crop yields in past years, the 2005 vanilla crop is expected to exceed the demand of the marketplace which will have the effect of driving the price down for the first time in half a decade. In fact, worldwide production of vanilla is estimated to be around 2000 tons this year, with demand expected to be 1200-1400 tons.

And, the quality of this year’s crop is predicted to meet or exceed expectations. Madagascar, the dominant supplier of vanilla beans, with about 60% of the world’s crop on a normal basis, also has one of the highest quality crops. This year’s estimate is that Madagascar will produce 1300 to 1400 tons of vanilla beans. This number includes about 200 tons of inferior beans that blew off the vines during Hurricane Galileo.

The remaining 1100-1200 tons of Madagascar beans are expected to be of superior flavor compared to the beans of the last few years. And, the quantity of the beans is expected to continue to increase over the next few years as newly planted vines mature and produce.

Other vanilla-growing regions are also expected to produce higher quality beans in the future, which means that Madagascar may no longer be the preeminent vanilla supplier.

Newcomers Papua New Guinea (PNG) and India are producing vanilla beans of both varieties: Vanilla Planifolia and Vanilla Tahitensis, which have a tendency to cross-pollinate, resulting in neither a true Madagascar-type nor Tahitian-type flavor profile. However, improved growing, curing and production control practices, along with advances in infrastructure, may well prove that these newer regions will soon produce vanilla crops that rival Madagascar and Tahiti.

Uganda is also a new player in the vanilla business. After dictator Idi Amin decimated the industry, it has recently been revitalized, with promising results. In fact, when some issues concerning curing and quality control have been addressed, it is estimated that Ugandan vanilla may match Madagascar vanilla in quality, though not in quantity, produced.

Long-time players Mexico, Indonesia and Tahiti are also producing quality vanilla beans. Mexico’s crop, with a flavor profile similar to that of Madagascar, produces far fewer tons than Madagascar, thus are traditionally priced slightly higher.

The outlook for 2005 and beyond is promising for the quality, availability and pricing of vanillas throughout the world.

*Reprinted from “The Vanilla Vine” newsletter with permission of Nielsen-Massey Vanillas Inc.
http://www.nielsenmassey.com/vanillavineIssue1_2005.htm*

Special Thanks

To the Following Businesses for Donating Items for our December, 2005 Fundraiser:

BOTANICA LTD.

3112 S. Third St. West
Missoula, MT 59804
(406) 721-3256
E-mail: billn@bresnan.net
<http://botanicaltd.com>

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(706) 742-5065
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Dundee, IL 60118
(847) 428-8500
E-mail: oakhillgardens@sprintmail.com
<http://www.oakhillgardens.com>

By donating plants to OSA, these generous businesses supported OSA's community service agenda!

THANK YOU LETTERS RECEIVED

Our November speaker, **Marge From**, and the two Malagasy graduate students who are in training at Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo, sent us thank you letters. Copies of the letters will be available at our January 2 meeting, but in the meantime, you might like to read an excerpt from Marge's letter.

"Your outreach program to the Arizona school children is a source of inspiration, and I congratulate your society for doing it. In fact, some aspects of what you do may serve as a model for...us at the zoo, when we speak to the school children in Ranomafana [Madagascar]. ...So your program for Arizona school children could also have a positive effect on Malagasy children.

But most importantly of all, you have my sincere gratitude for the warmth and kindness you gave to Rence and Tahiana. You made great ambassadors of friendship to these two young people from a country so far away."

Choosing Potting Media

"What's the best potting medium for my orchid?"

The correct answer to that is that there *isn't* a single, best medium! Instead, when choosing a medium, one has to take a "holistic" approach and look at a variety of factors, including:

The growing conditions the plant prefers.

The plant's water storage capabilities.

How well does the plant take to repotting, that is, being disturbed.

What kind of conditions are you easily able to provide.

How fastidious are you about watering and feeding, or at least what are your capabilities.

All of those factors should be considered when choosing a medium, and should be reconsidered for each type of plant you grow.

First of all, think about the **conditions the plant experiences in nature** (if it's a hybrid, think about the species in its breeding background, especially recent ones). Right off the top we may be baffled, as orchids in nature usually have no potting medium at all, but are *epiphytes*, living attached to the bark of host trees! Look a little closer though, at the environment those roots, dangling in air, see.

Water Supply: Is the plant from a rainforest, constantly bathed in rain or fog? Is it instead exposed to seasonal monsoons followed by relatively dry periods, or does it get typical, random rains such as seen in many temperate climates?

Air Movement: Heavy and wet, cool and buoyant, or parching, arid winds?

Growing Location: Is the plant from a bog, where it constantly has "wet feet," or is it in leaf litter on a forest floor, in a densely-leaved host tree, nestled in the detritus of fallen leaves, or up at the top where the wind and sun dry it out rapidly?

Typical Temperatures: Is the plant from a hot, intermediate or cool environment? (The choice of medium can help you grow a plant that otherwise might not do well in your environment.)

Next, let's look at the plant's physical structure, and how it relates to **the plant's water storage ability**.

Plant Structure: Those with **pseudobulbs** can generally store water for longer periods of time than those without.

Take a close look at the leaves as well, before concluding your evaluation. Those plants having thin, strap-like leaves, such as oncidium and cymbidium, will lose their stored water faster than those with shorter, thick leaves, such as cattleyas. Plants that don't have pseudobulbs have in some cases developed **thick, fleshy leaves** (phalaenopsis, for example) as their water storage scheme, but that's obviously not as effective as pseudobulbs. Others that have neither pseudobulbs nor thick leaves, such as phragmipediums, are going to need a steady supply of moisture.

Root Structure is another important aspect in deciding on the medium. The factors to consider are the **extent of root growth** (long versus short, branched versus single), the **thickness** of the roots, particularly that of the **velamen layer**. A very extensive root system suggests that the plant has to work hard for its water and nutrition, so wants to gather as much as it can when it is available. By contrast, a short root system suggests easy and/or frequent availability of them. **Velamen** - that layer of white that covers healthy roots - is actually dead tissue that acts as a sponge to rapidly absorb water and nutrients, so they can be passed onto the plant. Thick velamen is generally found on plants that like to grab a lot of water, but prefer to have their roots dry rapidly. Vandaceous plants are good examples.

Don't take that to mean that roots with thin velamen like to stay moist - you need to couple that with the plant's storage structure, mentioned above. Oncidiums, for example, tend to have thin velamen on thin roots, but their root systems are quite extensive, and they have pseudobulbs for storage, so they too, like to dry fairly rapidly.

Phalaenopsis, with their minimal storage capabilities, tend to have thick roots to add to the "reservoir," so do well in a damp, but not sappy environment.

As to **how well a plant tolerates repotting**, that can generally be judged by the plant's growth rate, with slow-growers being less tolerant of disturbance than others. Some plants, notably paphiopedilums, seem to actually enjoy repotting, often putting on a growth spurt immediately afterwards!

Your growing conditions play a most significant role in deciding on a medium. If you have no problem providing a constantly humid environment due to your climate or if you grow in a greenhouse, the moisture retention on the part of your media is less of a concern. Ambient temperatures play a role here, as well, as warmer temperatures tend to increase the evaporation of water, and along with the drying rate of the medium.

Your **personal tendencies**, and how much time you can- or prefer to spend watering your plants is another significant factor in choosing a medium. If you're a "busy bee" who likes to pamper your plants, then an open medium that doesn't hold a lot of water may be a good choice. If, on the other hand, you have a large collection and don't have time for such individual attention, or if you travel a lot on business, it might be worth thinking in terms of a more stable moisture holding selection.

Continued next month.

Reprinted with permission. First Rays Orchids

OSA January 2006 Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 <i>OSA MEETING</i> <i>7:00 PM</i>	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10  <i>Christine Franck</i>	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18  <i>Mimi Brophy</i>	19	20	21  <i>Lauren Tackett</i>
22  <i>Savannah Eastridge</i>	23	24	25  <i>Jessica Tackett</i>	26	27	28  <i>Kristin Huisinga</i>
29	30  <i>Benjamin Nelson</i>	31				



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