



The

Arizona Orchidist

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NEXT OSA MEETING

The next regular society meeting
will be **Monday June 1, 2009**
at **7:00 P.M.**

Meetings are held at the
Training Center
at the
Arizona State Veteran Home
4141 N. 3rd St., Phoenix.

OSA meetings are open to all
plant enthusiasts

Refreshments will be provided.

Beverages by

Carol Erwin

Snacks by

Debra Hartill

and

Cynthia Schnitzer (donation)

Refreshment Coordinators:

Barbara Parnell (480) 948-0714

Mary Gannon (623) 878-4173

Carol Erwin (602) 996-1696

Show Planning/Board Meeting

June 28 at noon

at the home of

Barbara and Harry Parnell

GROWER ON CALL

JIM JOHNSON

jim1958@nphs.us

June Program

Genetics of Slipper Orchids

D.Y. Hung has been focused on growing slipper orchids since 2001. While initially somewhat disturbed by their unconventional appearance, something about slipper orchids continued to fascinate him, and he soon became an addicted collector. To fund his costly collecting habit of rare species, he began selling some of his plants. As word spread, other slipper enthusiasts, always hungry for the latest form or variety, started contacting him for more and more plants. Having a Ph.D. in genetics gives him a different perspective on orchids, and he enjoys (gently) explaining aspects of orchid genetics to fellow orchid lovers.

His main website is at www.paphinessorchids.com, and he also writes a blog on slipper orchid topics at www.slipperorchidblog.com.

You can reach him at Paphiness Orchids & Laboratory via email at orchids@paphinessorchids.com, or at 1-888-230-2890.

Bio Notes by D.Y. Hung

Editor's Note: If anyone checks the list of plants on Paphiness Orchids' website, and wants to pre-order a special plant, Dean is offering discounts of 15% to members of OSA. Even if you don't pre-order plants, be sure to check out Dean's slipper orchid blog. It's very interesting and entertaining reading!

At the June meeting, there will be a silent auction of plants from Paphiness Orchids, Cupertino, CA

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From the President's Desk

Julie Rathbun

Although only one guest brought her plants to our May meeting, after several members attempted to answer her questions about what was ailing her plants, the remainder of the program was a free exchange of suggestions about the culture of an assorted genera of plants. It bears repeating: each grower has a growing environment different than anyone else. So what works for one grower might not work for anyone else. If we are truly interested in successfully growing orchids, we need to listen to the experiences of others, but not adopt their culture practices before we experiment with a couple of plants, and to be creative. At one time, I simply couldn't seem to keep Paphs alive, and after several Paphs went to plant heaven, I stopped trying to grow Paphs. Then I bought a couple of Paphs and decided to change their position in my greenhouse. I was pleased that I finally found a spot that Paphs "liked".

Aaron Hicks conducted our May program, and in the process, he shared his experiences - both good and bad - with orchid culture. **Thanks, Aaron!**

During the meeting, I mentioned that we had received a thank you letter from our April speakers: Marge From and Kathy Roccaforte. For benefit of those who missed the meeting and/or didn't pick up a copy of the letter, the contents of the letter can be found elsewhere in this issue.

During our May meeting, I announced that Dean Hung of Paphiness Orchids, Cupertino, CA, will be our June 1 speaker.

I also announced the **date for our annual field trip to the Northern Arizona VA Health Care System greenhouse in Prescott: SUNDAY, JULY 26**. A list of items that the nursing home can use is included in this issue and will also be included in our July newsletter. The list will also be available at our June and July meetings, so you will have several opportunities to view the list. If you want to donate one or more of the items on the list, but are unavailable on July 26, feel free to contact me or any board member. We will arrange to pick up the items, or if you prefer, you can arrange to drop off the items at my home.

Our 2009 membership roster was distributed at our May meeting. If you didn't get your copy, e-mail or phone Willie, and she will e-mail it to you. You may also pick up your copy at the June meeting.

Our June 28th board meeting will be preceded by our second show planning meeting. Please plan to attend! The meetings will be held at the home of Barbara and Harry Parnell. The show planning meeting will start at noon.

See you at our June 1 meeting!

Julie

MAY RAFFLE DONORS

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Doug Baldwin, Bob MacLeod, Lou Ann Remeikis, Wilella Stimmell and non-members Craig Pearson and Mike Sielaff

Can I grow orchids from Seed?

Technically, yes, you *can* grow orchids from seed...but the real question is, do you *want* to?

Unless you've got immense patience and a lot of free time, you probably don't want to.

The seeds of orchids are MUCH tinier than the seeds of most other plants. When an orchid seed pod is opened, a fine white powder, looking somewhat like powdered sugar, spills out (or on a breezy day, blows away). Each fine grain is a single seed.

Growing orchids from seed is more like a science project than an experience in gardening. Orchid seed must be sewn in a special mixture of agar and nutrients, and they require a symbiotic fungus in order to germinate. This means you can not just pour orchid seeds into a pot of soil or fine bark...they simply won't grow.

In addition to the heavy investment in equipment (a hood, sterile flasking equipment, etc.) there is a very heavy investment in time. It takes two to three years to get a seedling that is just a couple of inches tall. Many plants must be 5 to 7 years old before they'll bloom, so you have to be really patient when growing from seed. If you are ready to care for the plants for that length of time, then by all means try to do some flasking on your own. Most people, however, would rather buy a seedling that is already a few inches tall (or wide). This is still a very economical way to acquire lots of plants, and you only have to wait one or two more years (rather than half a decade) for them to bloom.

The Arizona Orchidist is published monthly by the Orchid Society of Arizona, Inc.
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www.orchidsocietyaz.org

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. , and The Nature Conservancy.

To Orchid Society of Arizona Members

I want to thank you once again for your hospitality and support for our recent visit to Phoenix. You were all so gracious and generous to us. Kathy and I enjoyed our time with all of you. It is a pleasure to meet with people who have an interest in orchid conservation.

Willie went out of her way with her arrangements to make us comfortable and welcome, as did Julie and Aaron by spending time with us at Julie's home and later at the Desert Botanic Garden.

And what can we say about your Arizona sunshine? Well, it sure beats gray wintery days in Omaha! April through June are nice months here, and September and October are usually great, too. We would gladly welcome any OSA members to visit the Henry Doorly Zoo if, or when, you might be in the Omaha area.

Enclosed are a few brochures about plant conservation activities here at the zoo, with an emphasis on the Madagascar project, if any of you are interested in why we do what we do. We wish you the best of luck with your society's projects.

Thank you for everything!

Margaret From and Kathy Roccaforte
Lab for Rare & Endangered Plants
Center for Conservation & Research
Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo"

ARIZONA STATE VETERAN HOME DONATIONS

For those of you who contribute funds towards the purchase of soda pop and other snacks for the residents, many thanks for your continued donations. I use the funds in the donation jar (found on the raffle ticket sales table at each meeting) to purchase the items that the veterans enjoy. (Sugar free chocolate bars are more expensive than most of the other items that we donate and the most difficult to locate in bulk at a reasonable cost.) I wish that some of our members could watch the residents' faces light up when they see me with my fully loaded cart!

Each month, after I deliver our monthly donation, Leslie Goin, Manager of Therapeutic Programs, sends us a thank you letter on behalf of the residents. Also, in the first week of a month, Leslie e-mails a list of **volunteers needed** for various activities in the month. I realize that some of our members have day jobs or are otherwise over-extended with extracurricular activities, but if members have any "down" time, let me know. I will be happy to list the activities for which volunteers are needed for any given month. You can also phone **Kristy Meier**, the veteran home's new Volunteer Coordinator. Her phone number is 602-248-1594, Extension 2855.

The residents of the Arizona State Veteran Home have fought for the freedom which ALL of us enjoy, and they deserve our attention. Many of the veterans receive no visitors, and that's sad. A kind word or two to a lonely resident is all it takes to make his or her day enjoyable. Even if we don't volunteer our time, we know that our greatly donations are greatly appreciated. In the words of the Director, Col. Joey Strickland: "Let's make the Arizona State Veteran Home a home where veterans come to live not to die", OSA is helping the residents feel appreciated.

W. Stimmell

NAVAHCS WISH LIST FOR July 26, 2009 FIELD TRIP

For the nursing home -

- *personal size toiletries (nothing containing alcohol)
- *books (nothing war-related)
- *puzzles
- *sweat pants for men
- *small decorative items that will move or make noise for stimulation

For gardening programs for the patients -

- *metal markers that can be placed in the ground so that the patients know what has been planted
- *ceramic, decorative pots - to accommodate large palms, etc. (Southwestern accent colors)
- *macramé plant hangers - at least 3 feet long - to accommodate 12" pots (Southwestern colors)
- *small decorative garden items to place in pots or in the ground
- *wind chimes
- *wind socks
- *flags
- *other decorative items that will brighten the garden area

*****To donate funds in lieu of items, a check should be made payable to NAVAHCS, and on the memo line, write: Acct. #GPF 9017. If you mail the check, send it to: Paula Moran, Northern AZ Health Care System, 500 N. Highway 89, Prescott, AZ 86313-5001**

For benefit of new members: Our annual field trip to Prescott is an all-day trip. (We depart Phoenix in the morning and return in late afternoon.)

Due to health issues, Bill Starkman is no longer the greenhouse supervisor. A local master gardener is responsible for caring for all plants in the greenhouse.

We can choose to tour the greenhouse, check the veggies in the garden adjacent to the greenhouse, and/or check the trees in the orchard for apples and peaches. After we help bring patients to the picnic area, all of us (staff, patients, and OSA members) enjoy lunch which is provided by OSA. (The picnic area is located near the greenhouse.) After lunch, before we hold an abbreviated board meeting, we help return the patients to the nursing home. And after the board meeting, we head back to Phoenix.

Patients, staff members, and OSA members always enjoy this annual event.

OSA June 2009 Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 <i>OSA Meeting 7:00 PM</i>	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 <i>Flag Day</i>	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 <i>Father's Day</i>	22	23	24	25	26 Suz Cramer 	27
28	29	30				



Orchid Society of Arizona

c/o Keith Mead

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