



The Arizona Orchidist

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NEXT OSA MEETING

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

Meetings are held at the

Training Center

at the

**Arizona State Veteran Home
4141 N. S. Herrera Way, Phoenix.**

OSA meetings are open to all
plant enthusiasts

Refreshments will be provided

Beverages by

Karolyn Hall

Snacks by

Barbara Parnell and Seelye Smith

Refreshment Coordinators:

Barbara Parnell (480) 948-0714

Lou Ann Remeikis (602) 803-6889

Jo Anne Waddoups

480-654-9883

Growers on Call

June Bob MacLeod
(623) 810-3967

July Wilella Stimmell
wilellas@att.net

JUNE PROGRAM

"I HAVE THE BEST POTTING MEDIA FOR ORCHIDS"

Have you ever heard an orchid grower say that? There are as many "best" mixes as there are growers. Many have recipes as closely guarded as grandma's sugar cookie recipe and others are more than willing to share. What works for you may not work for others and what works for one genera may be death to another. Our very own Lou Ann Remeikis will help us to sort through all the choices available to us.

Reminder: There will not be a monthly meeting in **July** or **September** due to holiday interference. This **June/July** newsletter is a combined issue, and the **August/September** newsletter will also be a combined issue.

Board Meetings for June and July

June 20 show planning and board meeting at noon at the home of Barbara and Harry Parnell.

July 25 board meeting at 1 PM at the home of Julie Rathbun

May Raffle Donors

Debra Hartill, Bob MacLeod, Diane Norman,
Wilella Stimmell, and the Family of Janet Jurn

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From the President's Desk

Julie Rathbun

For those of you who missed our May 3 meeting, you missed an educational and entertaining PowerPoint presentation by our speaker, Eric Elsberry, co-owner of the Arizona Vanilla Company in Mesa. The program was a new one on the cultivation and curing of vanilla. This was Eric's 4th visit with us, but it was the best program that Eric has presented for us. Included were photos of the largest vanilla processing/curing plant in Mexico.

One of the tidbits of information that Eric mentioned was that vanilla beans in small jars – commonly found in supermarkets – should NOT rattle in the container. The rattling indicates that the beans are not fresh. To illustrate his point, he took one of his vanilla beans and wrapped it around his finger. Fresh vanilla beans should be flexible. Dry (old) beans will break if you attempt to wrap them around your fingers. To keep his vanilla beans fresh, Eric places them in cigar tubes.

During the meeting, I announced that **Diane Norman** had moved to the San Francisco area. Before she moved from Buckeye, she donated ALL of her orchids to OSA! Bob MacLeod brought Diane's plants to the May meeting. As luck would have it, one of her plants was a vanilla plant, and it was the most beautiful, largest vanilla plant that any of us had ever seen! We collectively decided that the vanilla plant should be placed on the silent auction. We had two serious bidders on the plant, and the lucky winner is the new owner of a rare treasure (because of its huge size and health). (According to Diane, the plant had been grown in the southeast corner of her home. Also in the pot was a very large, wood lattice structure on which the vine could attach itself.) Before the end of our meeting, our speaker was so impressed with the plant that he took a photo of it.

It was a real treat to welcome back **Pamela Albright**. We had not seen her for many months, and we were very happy to see her at the May meeting.

Strange things happen with the internet! On May 5, I received a message from a member of the Orchid Society of Southern California in Burbank. She had read Bob MacLeod's article (in our March, 2010 newsletter) on Growing Orchids in Pots without Media. She asked for Bob's permission to use his article in the OSSC June newsletter. So...I printed out her message and handed it to Bob. (Most OSA members know that Bob does not "do" e-mail.) I didn't consider the request an inconvenience – just somewhat humorous that in order for Bob to see the request, it was necessary for me to print the message and give it to him. It's a small orchid world!

Since we will not hold a meeting in July, this issue contains the **board meeting dates for both the June and July board meetings**. The **June 20th** board meeting will be **preceded by our second show planning meeting**. Those meetings will be held at **Barbara and Harry Parnell's home**. The **show planning meeting begins at noon** with the board meeting to follow. The **July 25th board meeting** will be held **at my home**. That meeting starts at **1 PM**. Participation from the general membership would be appreciated at either or both meetings. OSA is incorporated which means that it must operate as a business. At board meetings, there is ALWAYS a Treasurer's report. If you're interested in how we are able to remain financially healthy, attend a board meeting and find out! (Refreshments are served at all of our meetings!) No member needs a special invitation to attend our show planning meetings OR our board meetings.

The date for our annual field trip to the Northern Arizona VA Health Care system greenhouse has been confirmed: **Sunday, August 22nd**. Mark your calendars and plan to join our annual caravan to Prescott. If you can't go with us on the 22nd, perhaps you might want to donate one or more of the items on the VA "want list". The list will be found elsewhere in this issue. Early notice of our trip will give members time to round up items to donate. (Those who DO join our caravan are not obligated to donate anything.) At our August 2nd meeting, I will mention our departure time from Phoenix and our meeting place for the caravan to start our journey (usually my driveway).

Our June 7 meeting will be an in-house program on various potting media. (We had a special request from our new members about the "best" potting medium.) Lou Ann Remeikis "volunteered" to lead the program.

See you on June 7!

COMMUNITY SERVICE REPORT

Wilella Stimmell, CSP Coordinator

On **April 22, 2010**, **Bob MacLeod**, **Julie Rathbun**, **Jo Anne Waddoups**, and **I** presented a hands-on repotting program for Mark Obermayer's 4th grade class at Kiva Elementary School in Scottsdale. Since April 22 was Earth Day, we asked the students the significance of the date. All shouted in unison: "it's Earth Day"! This was our opening to segue into brief remarks about conservation of the rainforest, the native habitat of most of our display plants. We had a wide variety of colorful plants on display. Each student received a culture sheet for his/her phal seedling. "Mr.O." took custody of the culture sheets so that they wouldn't get smudged or lost when the students started to repot their seedlings. I had a hard copy of rainforest information for Mr. O. I told the students that the rainforest information was "homework" for the **teacher**. They laughed when their teacher was given homework!

Three parents helped us with the repotting, and they seemed to enjoy helping the students create mini-greenhouses out of recycled milk jugs. I demonstrated the repotting of one seedling. When the phal seedling was removed from its original pot, I discovered that the seedling had already started a bloom spike. After the students saw how simple it was to repot a seedling, the parents and our program team members helped the other students repot their seedlings. **Vanessa**, the student whose seedling had been repotted by me, helped her fellow classmates repot their seedlings. The repotting was done outside on picnic tables. The old potting mix and the original pots were recycled for another use. Nothing is ever wasted during our programs.

During the repotting session., Mr. O took pictures of the activity. A couple of days after our program, we received a CD with the photos on it. Each member of our program team also received a very clever thank you note from the students. Instead of each student preparing a separate thank you note for each of our 4 program team members, the students divided one sheet of paper into 29 sections with a circle in the middle. From the circle in the middle of the page, lines radiated out to the edge of the paper. Within the lines, each student wrote their thanks to the program team members. So instead of using 116 pieces of paper (29 for each of the program team members), each of us received one thank you note. Four thank you notes certainly demonstrates conservation of paper!

All of the students enjoyed our program, and Mr. O asked us if we would consider presenting a program next year for a new "crop" of his 4th grade students.

To quote **Vanessa**: "Orchids rock!"

On **March 6, 2010**, **Bob MacLeod**, **Julie Rathbun**, and **I** presented an evening hands-on repotting program for handicapped adults at the Washington Activity Center in Glendale. At the start of our program, we asked how many in the group had also participated in the program that we did at the center in 2001. Only 4 people had participated in the earlier program, and of the 4, only 1 person's orchid remains alive.

At this program, Julie recognized one participant because he also participates in the Equestrian Special Olympics. The oldest participant in Thursday's program was 81 years young!

While I briefly discussed our display plants, Julie and Bob removed the phal seedlings from their original pots. After the seedlings had been repotted, the group was invited to examine our display plants. Unfortunately, I forgot to bring a magnifying glass so that the tiny flowers on my *Bulbophyllum falcatum* could be seen. However, one of the staff helpers had a magnifying glass in her purse. Members of the group enjoyed the coconut scent of my *Maxillaria tenuifolia*, but all agreed that the flowers of my *Ansellia africana* had a nasty "fragrance". Thanks to Julie and Bob, we had an entire table filled with a variety of colorful orchids – some with small flowers, and some with large.

(FYI: Julie brought a piece of **vanilla vine** to the program. She said that when the piece broke off of her large vine, the cut end landed on her right forearm. I could clearly see that the white "sap" caused **contact dermatitis**. Perhaps only her skin is sensitive to vanilla "sap", but be aware that other growers might also experience a skin reaction to vanilla "sap".)

The participants thanked us for presenting a program for them. A few of them said that they would use their seedlings as Mother's Day gifts

SPRING IN NEW MEXICO

The first weekend in May brought cloudy skies and gale force winds to Albuquerque. It also brought the annual New Mexico Orchid Guild show and sale to the Albuquerque BioPark.

Activities usually held out of doors moved inside and the show went on.

There were in excess of three hundred orchids displayed in the BioPark Mediterranean conservatory and the Education Building was the venue for orchid related arts and crafts.

The keynote speaker for the weekend was Bryce Augustine of Monsoon Flora. World renowned floral designer Jason Seo of Osuna Nursery lectured on Orchid Power and created arrangements using orchids for his audience.

For the third consecutive year the members of NMOG introduced 100 area children to the wonderful world of orchids through the milk jug greenhouse/Phal seedling program long in use by OSA in Arizona and Landers, CA classrooms.

Wilella reminded me that it was in 1995 that Deacon Bell devised the milk jug greenhouse as a way of introducing orchids to school children.

I believe he would be pleased that not only thousands of Arizona students have participated in programs utilizing his creation, but now it is alive and well in New Mexico !

Keith Mead

Virus

There are 30 known orchid viruses, but when growers say a plant has "a virus" they usually mean one of the two most prevalent: *Cymbidium mosaic virus* (CMV) or *Odontoglossum ringspot virus* (ORSV). Neither causes any obvious signs, but once orchids contract them, the plants begin to limp along—with fewer, shorter-lasting flowers. Then brown spots begin to appear on the leaves, the petals mottle and wilt, and the plant ultimately succumbs.

Tellingly, viruses do not naturally spread among wild orchids, which multiply by producing hundreds of thousands of feather-light seeds, none of which can carry viruses. So the only vector for spreading CMV and ORSV are the growers themselves. In some cases, careless producers have cloned infected plants and inadvertently sold armies of orchids bearing viruses. More commonly, workers spread the virus with their clippers. Unless heated or bleached between each trimming, the blades play the part of a dirty syringe.

Daniel Grushkin for Scientific American

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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.

NAVAHCS WISH LIST FOR August 22, 2010 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.) For the past two years, a local Master Gardener has been in charge of the greenhouse. After we arrive, 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 2010 Calendar

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



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