



# The Arizona Orchidist

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## NEXT OSA MEETING

The next regular society meeting will be

**Monday, March 5th 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

Beverage by

**Barbara Parnell**

Snacks by

**Bob & CeCe Blue**

**Tony Duran & Pat Miller**

Refreshment Coordinators:

Barbara Parnell (480) 948-0714

Lou Ann Remeikis (602) 803-6889

Jo Anne Waddoups

480-654-9883

## Board Meeting

March 25<sup>th</sup> at 1 PM  
at the home of Julie Rathbun

## Grower on Call

Lou Ann Remeikis 602-803-6889  
or remeikis@andiamo-tel.com

## MARCH PROGRAM

Our **March 5<sup>th</sup>** meeting will be an in-house program. If you have a plant that you think might need repotting, please bring it to our March meeting for a consult. Also, during the meeting, if you have a culture question about a newly acquired plant, feel free to ask us how to care for your plant. In the event that any plants remain from the **March 2-4 Home and Garden Show at the University of Phoenix Stadium** we will hold a silent auction to sell them.

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**Randy Ricardi and Karl Wyant**

**Please introduce yourself and make our new members welcome.**

## Dr. Carl Withner

On February 8, 2012, Dr. Carl Withner, aged 93, died at the Whatcom Hospice House in Bellingham, WA. Dr. Withner authored numerous orchid textbooks. His obituary was published in the February 12 edition of the Bellingham Herald. Dr. Withner was an extremely knowledgeable orchid taxonomist, but in January, 1996, when he spoke to OSA, he was very humble and eager to answer our questions. OSA and the rest of the orchid world is saddened at the news of Carl's death.

**Stig Dalstrom**, the Wild Orchid Man, travels to Manitoba, Canada in search of wild orchids. Along the way, he learns the history of the area and encounters the area's famous wildlife: polar bears, beluga whales, many species of birds and orchids. Check it out on youtube .  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i7FP9311x8o>

## IN THIS ISSUE

From The Presidents Desk	Julie Rathbun	Page 2
First Lady Orchids Donated		Page 3
In The News		Page 4
Breaking The Vanilla Ice	Penelope Kilby	Page 5



## From the President's Desk

### Julie Rathbun

Everyone who attended our February 6 meeting enjoyed our speaker, Marge From, and learned a lot about the places where orchids are being threatened. We also saw photos of new species that have not yet been identified. Logging in threatened areas is not the only major factor in the destruction of rain forests. Overpopulation in those areas is also a factor.

Marge's PowerPoint program was on a USB flash drive, so she had no laptop computer to carry on the airplane. Thanks to **Joe Bacik, our computer whiz**, for helping Marge figure out how to use the Training Center's computer system. (When we have a speaker, Joe always has his laptop in his car, and our multimedia projector is also available as a back-up in case there is a problem with the Training Center's equipment. There's never been a problem, but...there's always a first time!)

Attendance at our meeting was excellent! Also, two new members joined our orchid family, and they introduced themselves to our group.

We passed around a sign-up sheet for workers in **our booth at the March 2-4 Home and Garden Show at the University of Phoenix Stadium**. It looks like all shifts are covered, but for anyone who didn't know their schedule when the sheet was passed around, we can always use your help! I'm only a phone call away. I won't be able to check my e-mail until the evenings (remember that I'm working during days at the Arabian Horse Show and am not near my computer, but my computer has been fixed!). Keep in mind that neither Wilella or I will be available via phone or e-mail on February 27. We will leave early in the morning on the 27<sup>th</sup> for Landers, where we will hand-select plants for sale in our booth.

In the past few months, I might have missed mentioning that last September, OSA's Board of Directors decided that since the rest of the world has been using electronic communication, we would e-mail all newsletters to members who have an e-mail address and snail mail newsletters **only** to those members who do not own a computer. Since September, 2011, if you received newsletters via snail mail instead of by e-mail, it was accidental.

More recently, we failed to notice that on Jan. 22, the postage rate for first class mail increased to 45 cents (from 44 cents). I'm sorry that we missed alerting our members to the increase in postage. Although the new stamps are "forever" stamps, if you buy stamps **now**, the new stamps will cost 45 cents each. You will not see mention of the postage rate on the new stamps. If you stockpiled "forever" stamps when they cost 42 and then 44 cents each, you can still use those stamps at no additional cost. (In previous years, when postage rates increased, they were increased in May.)

A report on our February 17<sup>th</sup> Orchids 101 program for the Tempe Garden Club will be included in our April newsletter. (Submissions for the upcoming month's newsletter are due on the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding our meeting, and since our community service program is scheduled for the 17<sup>th</sup>, a report on the program could not be included in this issue.)

Our March 5<sup>th</sup> meeting will be an in-house program. If you have a plant that you think might need repotting, please bring it to our March meeting for a consult. Also, during the meeting, if you have a culture question about a newly acquired plant, feel free to ask us how to care for your plant.

(We also offer repotting and plant-sitting services in exchange for a small donation to OSA. So if you plan a long vacation and don't have a properly trained plant sitter, contact me. To the best of my knowledge, I have the largest greenhouse in our group, and there's always room for a few extra plants. However, although I have a good track record at keeping my plants and OSA's plants alive, I make no guarantee that another member's plants will survive. Evaporative coolers DO fail, and when that happens, "brown stuff" also happens.)

See you on March 5!

Julie

## February Raffle Donors

Ann Cherny, Carol Erwin, Richard Holle,  
Bob MacLeod, Randy Ricardi, Julie Rathbun,  
Wilella Stimmell, and  
the Family of August Lorenzini

Thanks to all !

Washington, D.C. – Chadwick & Son Orchids, Inc. of Richmond, VA, has donated a sizable collection, 27 specimens, of their renowned First Lady orchids, now known as the Presidential Collection, for permanent display at the United States Botanic Garden (USBG). The collection includes plants named after former first ladies Lady Bird Johnson, Barbara Bush, Hillary Rodham Clinton and Laura Bush as well as those recently presented to First Lady Michelle Obama.

“This is one of the most important gifts that we have received in recent years,” said Bill McLaughlin, curator of Living Collections for the United States Botanic Garden. The plants will be grown offsite at the USBG production facility until blooming, and then put on public display at their conservatory across from the Capital. The orchids will bloom at different times throughout the year so there will be new orchids to see almost year round. “All of our plant collections are important, but the orchid collection especially holds significance for generations of both our visitors and our own staff,” says Holly Shimizu, executive director of USBG.

“For the first time, the public can see these famous hybrids, many of which have never been viewed publicly before,” said Art Chadwick, president of Chadwick & Son Orchids, Inc. The father and son team of Chadwick and Chadwick began the tradition of presenting a specially grown hybrid orchid to the First Lady in 1995 with a presentation to Hillary Rodham Clinton. They picked up on a tradition that dated back to 1929, and the presidency of Herbert Hoover, that had dwindled and stopped for many years. A particularly stunning orchid convinced them to renew the tradition and they have continued to cultivate and present outstanding specimens to First Ladies ever since. The process of bringing a hybrid orchid to bloom can take seven to 10 years with no guarantee of success. It remains a highly technical and risky endeavor that keeps the Chadwicks in elite company.

The United States Botanic Garden is one of the oldest botanic gardens in North America. It was formally founded in 1850 with a mission to emphasize the value of plants to humanity. The USBG is part of the legislative branch of government and Architect of the Capitol.

Approximately 1 million people visit the USBG each year. The U.S. Botanic Garden maintains about 12,000 accessions, comprising more than 60,000 plants for exhibition, study, conservation, and exchange with other institutions. Noteworthy collections include economic plants, medicinal plants, orchids, carnivorous plants, cacti and succulents, mid-Atlantic native plants, and ferns. Several specimens date from the original founding collection from the U.S. Exploring Expedition (1838-1842).

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[www.orchidsocietyaz.org](http://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 Arizona Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. , and The Nature Conservancy.

# In the News

## 1) Fungi-filled forests are critical for endangered orchids (public release date Jan. 24, 2012)

“Roughly 10 percent of all plant species are orchids, making them the largest plant family on Earth. But habitat loss has rendered many threatened or endangered. This is partly due to their intimate relationship with the soil.

Orchids depend entirely on microscopic fungi in the early stages of their lives. Without the nutrients orchids obtain by digesting these host fungi, their seeds often will not germinate and baby orchids will not grow. While researchers have known about the orchid-fungus relationship for years, very little is known about what the fungi need to survive.

Biologists based at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center launched the first study to find out what helps the fungi flourish and what that means for orchids. ....the fungi displayed a strong preference for older forests.

Soil samples taken from older forest plots had host fungi that were five to 12 times more abundant compared to younger forests...

All this implies that to save endangered orchids, planting new forests might not be enough. ...”

**Read the entire press release at <http://www.physorg.com/news/2012-01-fungi-filled-forests-critical-endangered-orchids.html>**

## 2) The Changing Amazon - a Nature News Special (published online January 18, 2012)

This year, the world’s largest rainforest will be in the news more than ever. In June, the UN Conference on Sustainable Development will be held in Rio de Janeiro. Discussions will focus on how to protect the Amazon in light of the proposed December, 2011 changes to Brazil’s forest code which would weaken deforestation rules. The new forest code pits farmers against environmentalists, and Brazil’s President, Dilma Rousseff, is generally in favor of pro-development.

**Read the highlights of the article at [www.nature.com/news/specials/changing\\_amazon/index.html?WT.ec id=NEWS-20120207](http://www.nature.com/news/specials/changing_amazon/index.html?WT.ec id=NEWS-20120207)**



# Breaking the Vanilla Ice

Penelope Kilby  
Stock and Land  
February 17, 2012

TROPICAL NORTH Queensland is more commonly known for producing the country's premium bananas, papaya and avocados, to name a few, but it is also home to Australia's first commercial vanilla bean plantation.

Port Douglas farmers Russell and Mary Spanton started Vanilla Australia more than 10 years ago by accident, when their landlord, a Second World War veteran who was part of the first trial of cocoa in Australia, asked them to "grow something"....

"We called the CSIRO and they said nobody grew vanilla in Australia and that they didn't know anything about it," he said. "So we built a greenhouse on a whim."

The Spantons started with 55 vanilla orchid cuttings. Those cuttings have grown to 500 plants and further expansion is currently underway. Vanilla Australia products have now been on shelves for more than three years.

Mr Spanton said there was a lot of misinformation on the Internet about growing vanilla, though through experimentation and organic growing practices, Mr. and Mrs. Spanton produce vanilla beans with some of the highest vanillin content of anywhere in the world. "Our vanilla has four times the vanilla content of most vanilla all across the world.

"And we successfully make the first Australian-made and manufactured vanilla essence in Australia. "Our essence is also one of the very few manufactured without chemical extraction."

Mr Spanton said going down the non-traditional route of growing the vanilla in a greenhouse, and on weed mats out of the direct sunlight, had also helped their product thrive. "We feed our orchids organic matter and use insects instead of pesticides. "We grow them altogether and I think intensifying it into a smaller space as opposed to traditional methods gives us a good product," he said.

The vanilla bean is one of the most labour intensive plants to grow, as flowers open for only one morning in spring and are hand-pollinated. "The flowers open in the morning and close before lunch and will never open again," Mr Spanton said.

"Once they are pollinated the stem of the plant grows rapidly." The beans are then individually picked at about eight to nine months, with a curing process that can take 18 months.....

**\* This article appeared in *Farming Small Areas* March 2012 edition as was edited to available space.**



Russell Spanton, Vanilla Australia,  
Port Douglas, Queensland.

# OSA March 2012 Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1  Sara Heberling	2	3  Ray Waddoups
4  Wilella Stimmell	5 <b>OSA Meeting 7:00 PM</b>	6	7	8	9	10
11	12  Chris Gubler	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23  Sean Bacik	24
25	26	27	28  Julie Rathbun	29	30	31



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