

An Affiliate of the American Orchid Society

FORT LAUDERDALE ORCHID SOCIETY

February, 2010

N • E • W • S • L • E • T • T • E • R

Hear Hyla Levine, February 8th

It is time to think repotting, pest control, and the beginning of the growing season for many kinds of orchids. Hyla's topic will be "**Enhance Your Orchid Growing with the Proper Supplies**" and it's perfect for now. Her topic entails learning about correct potting media, pots, plant food and chemicals. A portion of the program is devoted to repotting techniques. Program chair Wayne Musgrave did well to bring us this knowledgeable speaker.

Hyla is co-owner of Green Barn Orchid Supplies in Deray Beach. She began as a hobbyist who saw a need for accessible and varied orchid supplies. Green Barn customers can visit, ask questions, learn about growing orchids, and of course shop for supplies.

The business is located in a charming 60 year old barn which is, no surprise, painted green. Inside is a broad spectrum of supplies that includes potting media including custom mixes, wires, baskets, plant nutrients and varied chemicals to control pests.

A year or so ago, Green Barn started on-site manufacturing of its own snap together aluminum orchid benches. You will want to hear about them because they solve many of the problems found in the old wire mesh designs.

You will be able to buy orchid supplies at the meeting and the raffle table will be supplied by Green Barn and be largely comprised of orchid supplies.

Future Program Speakers

March: Tariq Sheikh, Beau Monde Orchids

April: Segundo Cuesta, Quest Orchids

May: Jeff Adkins, Adkins Orchids

June: Jose Exposito, Soroa Orchids

July: Wendy Griffin, Indian River Orchids

The subject for March is *Vandas*, but after that the topics are at best a guess. The guesses are: 'Multiple Bloomers', 'Orchids for Broward', '*Phalaenopsis*', and '*Cattleyas*'.

Wayne Musgrave, our program chair, has lined up informative speakers for beginners and humorous friends for long-time growers.

Show Chair's Thoughts

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

As I made my rounds through War Memorial, I tried to personally thank each volunteer that I came across. If I failed to do so, please accept this written appreciation for your efforts. Without **YOU, our show** could not have happened. It took 180+ 4-hour shifts to make the open show work, and there were other shifts during judging, set-up, and tear-down. A number of members were at their venue every day, creating the backbone for our largest endeavor of the year. Their dedication was essential. Even if you were able to cover only one slot the entire weekend, that made the difference in producing a smooth running event. Many vendors commented on what wonderful volunteers we had, and I couldn't agree more. I believe we have the most cohesive group in the country.

If you have never tried volunteering, I urge you to consider it next year. Attending the meetings is a nice way to meet people, but you don't really get to know anyone and make a connection until you have worked side-by-side with them. There is also a sense of accomplishment, walking through the auditorium, experiencing the beauty all around and know that you had something to do with making it happen, offering the Ft. Lauderdale community (and beyond!) something special. We ought to be proud that can create the third largest display show in the country at a time when some others are failing or have ceased entirely! Last but not least, we have FUN! I couldn't help but notice all the smiles and joking around among volunteers.

Furthermore, our yearly show is important for FLOS's survival. Dues and the monthly plant raffle table do not cover our expenses. Income generated from the show allows us to operate as we do.

So, thank you once again for supporting FLOS by your ticket sales and volunteering, allowing us to enrich everyone's lives who has a passion for orchids.

Sincerely,

Chris Crepage

**WE NEED TO ALL THANK CHRIS FOR HER
COMPETANT AND HARD WORK WHICH
MADE OUR SHOW SO SUCESSFUL.**

Sheldon's Warmth and Humor Made a Cold Night Better

When I made up some of the script describing Sheldon Takasaki's being a speaker, I had some things right. He knows about trends in *Cattleya* hybridizing, and he does enjoy Vegas. He has spoken once in South Florida so I was wrong about this being his first engagement.

Sheldon began his talk by telling us that the orchid businesses in Hawaii were being pinched by the economy. He especially hated this. The Carmela staff is comprised of family members, and cutting work hours for blood relatives is not easy.

According to Sheldon the aim of hybridizers today is to produce compact plants that bloom more than once a year. While Floridians and Hawaiians still like *Cattleyas* with enormous blooms, they are not popular in New York where orchids have to be kept inside, and not popular with growers since shipping has become so expensive. The market today is a potted plant market and gone are the days when Fort Caroline Orchids offered Bc. Ports of Paradise for \$250,000 and sold its meiclones for \$400 each. Of course every new orchid did not command such a price, but when one had a new, big, green flower it did.

Sheldon opened his power point program by showing us a space with 1,000+/- flasks, and explained that the next stage would be plugs, not the once familiar community pots. He said that typically a grower would have 75% mericlones and 25 % hybrids in a sales population.

Next came 20 or so screens of 4 *Cattleyas*. The four were the parents or hybrids that were being described. Because of the name changes in our familiar Bcs., Lc., etc. Sheldon only used the cross name. Most bloomed twice a year, had medium sized flowers, and were often fragrant. Names that I caught because I wanted to own them were Majestic Life or Light, Summer Splendor, and Smile Again.

Sheldon and Stan have been with Carmela since the parents opened it in 1960 and the Father, Virgil Takasaki, still works in the nursery 7 days a week and he is 94 years old.

The plant raffle table was one of the most outstanding I remember. It was comprised of many genera. All were blooming, and the number far exceeded what we ask a speaker to provide.

It was a wonderful evening and all who attended must have been grateful to Sheldon for making it pass so fast and with such beautiful flowers. It was further fun to see members bundled in layers of often mismatched 'winter clothing'. D.H.

Awarded January Blue Ribbons

Mary Burtoff - *Den. secundum var. alba*. 'Tokyo'

Vicki Hallock - *Den. Unicum*

Dave Levine- *Bulb. corolliferum*

Joan Lillagore- Bc. Howard's Luck 'Wallude' x Lc.

Mem. Robert Strait 'Carmela', Bc. Mahina Yahiro
'Vlii'

Tony Millet- *Epi. radicans var. Alba*, Darwinara Blue
Charm.

Robert Russotto- *Sophronites cernum*

Mary Schul - *Den. Roy Tokunaga*

Mercer Stowers- *Onc. Kuquat* 'Lakeview'

Refreshment Thanks

Not everybody who brought in refreshments signed the sheet, but we are grateful to these members who did: **Connie Ackerman, Sue and Bruce Muntz, Connie Walker, Tony Millet, Zoe Bejar, Laurie Klink, Nora Dyke, and Ginny Salus.**

Not Good Member News

* Allen and Sabra Cogar lost their house to a fire on Christmas eve. The two things to be thankful for is that they and their pets were not in the house, and they have good insurance.

* Marge Adler is not bouncing back as fast as she'd like from being on the sick-list.

Wine and Jazz at AOS

Wine and Jazz will be a perfect thing to do on February 18th. Your cost is only \$20 or \$25 depending on your AOS membership. An added feature is a special auction for Orchid Mania. They support children with AIDS and the money raised will help the Miller School of Medicine at UM.

How to Avoid Orchid Virus

Manual transmission happens when we use unsterilized tools, pots, tabletops, hands, and re-used water. (NEVER dunk any two orchids in the same bucket of water!) Insects also transmit virus from plant to plant, which is just another reason not to crowd plants on a bench. *Some say that 30% of any collection is virused.*

Ramble South

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Ramble South

The bus is set to leave the Cardinal Gibbons student parking lot at 8:00 AM on Saturday, April 3rd. The cost will again be \$25 per person, and again we will return by 5:00 PM. Yes, there will be wine on the trip home. The last ramble south filled to overflowing, so pay the fee early to be sure that get to go this time. Most know to bring a brown bag lunch, and know that a rain poncho might make shopping dryer. If you need more information call 954-772-4836.

Home Ramble, February 20th

The point of a home ramble is to see how other members grow their orchids. The January cold spell will mean that there will be few blooms to see and some pitiful looking cold damaged plants. You can compare these to your own pitiful plants, so the ramble is still on at this point. **This is not written in stone, if the hosts find that their damage is greater than seen now, the ramble still may be postponed. Get the final word at the February meeting, or check the website after that.**

Congratulations Mary

Mary Burtoff again won the \$50 for the best member-grown plant on the individual table at the show. Again she turned the money back to the society, making penny pinching Bob happy.

(Other show awards will be printed next month.)

Deane Hall, Thank you.

The center fold photographs from the show were taken and arranged by Deane.

Be a Cleaner, Greener, Orchidist!

In your orchid growing area:

* Don't put epiphytic orchids on the ground, ever, ever; you are asking for disease from ground dwelling fungi and bacteria. (If you have to put orchids on the ground as a hurricane prep, at least try to cover the ground with sheets of plastic.)

Scale Insects, the Pests from H---

I've often read that you can control the number of scale insects in your orchid collection, but you can **NOT** get that number down to zero. Of course in biology 101 you learn that man has never eradicated even one of about a zillion+/- species of insects. No wonder a single grower can not eradicate one of the 27 species of scale insects that is found on cultivated orchids. (The 27 species is from the Florida Department of Agriculture)

It is easy enough to recognize an adult female. She is circular or oval in shape and her colors range from light yellowish, to greenish brown, to tan, or dark brown. The males often pass for mealy bugs, they cluster in a cottony mass, often on the underside of leaves or where leaves emerge from pseudobulbs. Unless you get out a magnifying glass you don't see young scale 'crawlers' which are worm-like pink or yellow little critters that can crawl from touching plant to touching plant, or even blow through the air to other plants. Airborne crawlers tend to aggregate where there are no air currents to carry them further along. (It should be noted that aphids, spider mites, and mealy bugs, also tend to cluster where air currents are weakest.)

Scale eggs are held under the shell of the female, and emerge into crawlers when the female dies. Often when we spot brown scale insects they are dead, as we brush them away, we release the crawlers. The crawlers shed their exoskeletons in true insect fashion in order to grow. Some males do not ever develop the typical scale armor of an adult, but develop wings to fly to less related females. It takes about a month for one cycle of scale birth and death, but generations overlap, thus the need to spray at least 3 times at weekly or 10 day intervals.

How do you control if not eliminate scale? First look for yellow spots on leaves. If you look under the spot you may find a cottony mass of males. Isolate this plant and its neighbors and begin control steps. My first control step is to blast the scale off catts with a strong blast of hose water. Then if the potting is old, I repot and discard the old medium which probably has scale insects hidden and ready to attack. Next I repeated spray with rubbing alcohol or a light summer oil, and then if I feel I have not won a temporary battle I spray with Neem oil. Every now and then I find a small plant that is almost obscured under a larger more vigorous neighbor and the small weak plant is heavily infested with scale. I send it off to the great bug-free tree in the sky, to live a better life than I have provided for it. D.H. (Google is my friend!)



Fort Lauderdale Orchid Society
Show, January 2010



Repotting Time is NOW



ALIFLOR

ORCHID MIX



Potting mixes:

You can buy a bag of premix from a number of good places, but unless you grow inside avoid those with bark in them. Bark encourages snow-mold in our humid habitat, and a bit of tree fern or coconut can satisfy your need for something organic. Other good things to go into a mix are charcoal, sponge rock, and Aliflor. (I use tree fern since I have heard that coconut may break down too fast, and I use equal scoops of everything but Aliflor which makes up about 1/3 of my mix.) This is my basic mix and I would add some moss to a mix for phals, phrags, and paphs.

I use Pro-mix for terrestrials, a bag of bargain top-soil is a poor choice since it may be too heavy to allow air to get to the roots for respiration. (One more time, plants use oxygen and release carbon dioxide just as animals do, but they do so at a slower rate. In photosynthesis they turn carbon dioxide into food and release oxygen as a metabolic waste for that process.)

Wobble stoppers:

If your newly potted orchid flip-flops about in the wind, its roots will be injured and the plant will not thrive. Use wire pot clips or coated wire to keep the plant stable. You will not need clips for phals, phrags, and paphs because you will 'snuggle them down in the medium which will hold them in place.

Potting tools:

You will need **clippers** to remove dead roots and yucky stuff from roots. If you don't want to deal with sterilizing clippers, use a new single edged razor blade for each plant. A **screw driver** is also a great tool. You can use it to pop off an old pot clip, and you can go to the old side of the plant and lever it out of its pot.

Repotting continued:

Name tags:

Put your old name tag in the bottom of the pot and insert a new tag in the pot. If you color code, green for 2010, blue for 2011, pink for 2012, you can tell at a glance when a plant is sitting in medium that probably needs to be replaced.

Other:

You can begin to repot in February, and to beat the heat of summer is a plan. Be sure that you repot in clean pots. (Reusing dirty pots is equal to putting on dirty clothes after a shower. If you must use a dirty pot, reuse the one that the plant had been using to avoid the transfer of disease.) If you crock your pots with styrofoam peanuts, avoid toxic pink ones, and avoid the cornstarch type that will dissolve in water.

Caring For Cold Damaged Orchids

The Orchid Doctor and the **New Orchid Doctor** were published in 1988. Hamilton compiled interesting care tid-bits from *The American Orchid Society's Bulletin*, *The Orchid Digest*, *the Australian Orchid Review* and similar publications. Both of Hamilton's works are in our library and this is what I found from the first book on cold:

* Page 13. You can expect bud drop after plants have experienced cold. You can also expect bud drop from pollution and some plants self prune to promote other buds. Ethylene which can come from burning wood or other fuels causes phal buds to drop. Heating your growing space with a charcoal grill might also be a culprit.

* Page 25. Cold damaged orchids may take from 3 to 5 years to bloom again.

* Page 132. Cold will stunt any new growth that has begun on a Cattleya and flowers may discolor if the temperature goes below 45.

** Page 36. To help cold damaged plants recover, water sparingly, don't fertilize for 'awhile', and give the damaged plants more shade than normal.

*Hamilton, R.R. (Compiler) 1988. **The Orchid Doctor**. Canada. Hamilton Publishing Co.

** from **The New Orchid Doctor**. Other information as above.

The Quote of the Month:

" Everything has its beauty but not everyone sees it."

Confucius

(Could he have just met a *Bulbophyllum*?)

How Orchids Talk To You!

When our pets purr or hiss, wag their tails or growl we get the message. Orchids also communicate!

Deep green leaves on a plant you just bought in flower tell you to put it with your Phals in lower than Catt or Vanda light. Deep green leaves on a mature plant that hasn't bloomed in two years, are telling you to move the plant into more light so it will bloom.

Light grass-green leaves tell you that the plant can thrive in about 50% light and even pool screen. When you buy a new plant with light green leaves, you do not keep it with Phals unless it is a Paph or Phrag.

New leaves coming up with horizontal pleats tell you that the plant was not getting enough water when the leaf emerged.

Wilted, limp, leaves probably are saying that the potting medium has broken down and that the roots are dead or dying. Repot it at once. You should also check that plant for scale, mealy bugs, or mites. If these monsters are sucking the fluids from the leaves, they will wilt.

Smaller leaves this year than last are telling you to think back. Are you not fertilizing on schedule? Are fertilizer salts not being flushed well with clear water? Has the potting medium broken down? Healthy plants do not decrease in size. (*Can you see a plump orchid on a tread mill?*)

Phal roots coming up out of the pot are telling you to repot that plant, it is seeking better medium.

Color break in flowers screams virus. You can isolate it and mark it. (*I use the plastic flags used to mark off water lines at construction sites.*) If there is color break in the next flowers, put the poor thing in the garbage pot and all. Sometimes color break can occur with severe changes in temperature, or light summer oil sometimes causes darker floral pigment to run.

Air Quality Test, Biology 101

Do you have lichens on trees in your neighborhood? If so, the general quality of the air in your area is relatively free of pollutants. If you live near busy areas of I-95 or other heavily traveled roads you may have lost your lichens, and you might expect more bud blast! Lichens, as you remember, are symbiotic combinations of fungi and algae, and are the usually gray-aqua crusty growths on tree bark.

February, Think Love and The Start of Spider Mite Season

The dry months are a love potion for the rapid reproduction of these nearly microscopic orchid pests that can sometimes even kill. The season will peak in March or April, but an immediate attack on them is essential. Two sprayings, which will also kill scale and mealy bugs, are needed.

The first spraying, according to Dr. Martin Motes should be 1 ½ ounces of light summer oil in a gallon of water. Seven to 10 days later he suggests a second spraying with 2 ounces of a gentle soap per gallon of water. Coating the undersides of leaves is important. (*You need to pick a gentle soap that is not antibacterial. I use baby shampoo these days for it seems to be less likely to damage plants as it dissolves the exoskeletons of pests. I also put a dab of eucalyptus oil from Whole Foods on a cotton ball which I attach to a wire stake, cover with an empty pill vile, and stick into the medium of mite prone orchids. Joyce Skelly had this good idea a few years back and it's worked here. When I haven't protected plants well enough as shown by 'rusted' under-sides of leaves, I cut off the affected leaves and thus destroy a billion +/- mites.*)

If you chose to bring out bigger guns to control mites, these chemicals recommended by UF's IFAS may work for you: Avid 0.15 EC, Kelthane T/O, Mavarik Aquaflo, and Telstar Flowable. If you chose to use one of these please check to see that it is still recommended, and **follow the manufacturer's directions.** FLOS assumes **NO RESPONSIBILITY** for you or your plants if you use these relatively harsh chemicals. D.H. believer in oil, soap and eucalyptus.

Pet Helpers



Having a pet lowers your blood pressure, at least most of the time, and prolongs your life. You knew that, but did you know that keeping a cat can be a big help in growing healthy orchids? If the cat can walk between the pots without knocking them over then your plants will be healthier. The space will allow for good air flow and may halt the spread of insects and pathogens which happens when neighboring plants have touching leaves.

The safer orchidist

Wear Sun Glasses for Rain Driving

We live where sometimes the rain is so heavy you can barely see the road ahead. Put on your sun glasses, and they will filter out the misty droplets coming up from the pavement. This mist is what limits visibility!



Sandi Jones
Tom Wells

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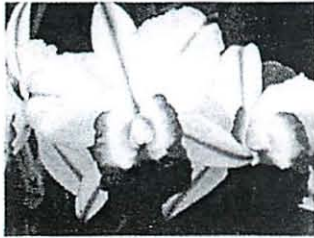
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Directions: Use Oakland Park Blvd. from I-95.
Go East for 2.4 miles, go to the rear of the church
which is on the North side of Oakland Park Blvd.
Or take US-1 (Federal Hwy.) to Oakland Park
Blvd. And go West for 2 blocks.

Place: Christ Lutheran Church Social Hall
1955 East Oakland Park Blvd.
Regular meetings: Second Monday of each month
Time: 7:30 P.M. Workshop, 8:20 P.M. Program

P.O. Box 4677
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ORCHID SOCIETY**

