

GREATER LAS VEGAS ORCHID SOCIETY

THE ORCHID COLUMN

CAROL SIEGEL, EDITOR

August 13, 2017



JUDGING ORCHIDS MARK ROMANSKY

Our very own Mark Romansky, a judge himself, will speak on judging orchids at our August meeting. Becoming a judge requires a lot of training. In particular, AOS judges don't receive full certification for six to ten years! You can become a doctor in that time—and then, after all that, they don't pay judges anything. They just spend money going to orchid judging centers and shows. Upon acceptance, the trainee undertakes a three to five year training program, after which he or she is considered a "student judge." Student judges are then allowed to judge at any AOS sponsored event, but they will not become fully certified for another three to five years. AOS-certified judges are required to continue their education and stay up to date on the latest developments by attending workshops and seminars. Orchids are judged based on certain criteria, including but not limited to:

- Bloom form (overall and individual parts of the bloom, i.e. sepal, petal, lip)
- Bloom color (overall and individual parts)
- Bloom size
- Bloom arrangement and number of inflorescences
- "Floriferousness" (how many flowers the plant has produced)

Points are given for each of these criteria and added up on a 100 point scale. Judges may also award other non-point based awards to orchids that are outstanding in certain ways.

AOS Awards

The American Orchid Society grants the following awards to orchids and exhibitors. AOS awards are a recognized measure of quality the world over and coveted by hobbyists and commercial growers alike. An AOS flower quality award adds value to an orchid in its own right, and as a parent for creating hybrids.

HCC (Highly Commended Certificate)

Awarded to orchid species or hybrids scoring 75 to 79 points inclusive on a 100-point scale.

AM (Award of Merit)

Awarded to orchid species or hybrids scoring 80 to 89 points inclusive on a 100-point scale.

FCC (First Class Certificate)

The highest flower-quality award, awarded to orchid species or hybrids scoring 90 points or more on a 100-point scale.

JC (Judges' Commendation)

Given for distinctive characteristics that the judges unanimously feel should be recognized but cannot be scored in the customary ways.

AD (Award of Distinction)

Awarded once to a cross representing a worthy new direction in Breeding. The award is granted unanimously without scoring by the judging team assigned.

AQ (Award of Quality)

Awarded once to a cross exhibited by a single individual as a group of not less than 12 plants or inflorescences of different clones of a hybrid or cultivated species. At least one of the inflorescences must receive a flower quality award and the overall quality of the group must be an improvement over the former type.

CBR (Certificate of Botanical Recognition)

Awarded to rare and unusual species with educational interest that has received no previous awards. The entire plant must be exhibited. This award is granted provisionally and filed with the judging center Chair pending taxonomic verification supplied by the exhibitor. (see Taxonomic Authorities)

CHM (Certificate of Horticultural Merit)

Awarded to a well-grown and well-flowered species or natural hybrid with characteristics that contribute to the horticultural aspects of orchidology, such as aesthetic appeal. This award is granted provisionally and filed with the judging center Chair pending taxonomic verification supplied by the exhibitor. (see Taxonomic Authorities)

CCM (Certificate of Cultural Merit)

Awarded to the exhibitor of a well-flowered specimen plant of robust health. The plant must score more between 80 and 89 points inclusive on a 100-point scale.

CCE (Certificate of Cultural Excellence)

Awarded to the exhibitor of a well-flowered specimen plant of robust health. The plant must score more than 90 points on a 100-point scale. Plants receiving this award represent the highest level of orchid culture.

MANY THANKS TO HANNAH JABLIN WHO PICKED UP OUR INSURANCE THIS QUARTER EVEN THOUGH SHE IS GOING THROUGH A HARD TIME LOSING HER BELOVED WALLY



PIZZA PARTY AND CHOCOLATE BAR AT OUR AUGUST

Food, glorious food! We will be having our annual pizza party and chocolate bar once again. I will be treating the club to the pizza, and everybody else will bring something decadently chocolate- chocolate cake, chocolate covered strawberries, chocolate cookies, chocolate ice cream, chocolate mousse, chocolate ANYTHING!! It is always a lot of fun, our club specialty. I have ordered blooming orchids from Hilo Orchid Farm so it will be food, friendship, flowers and fun, the best.

If you look at our monthly speakers listed below, you will be impressed by the quality of our roster. Art Chadwick was very impressed with the speakers we have lined up. In one year, we have Fred Clarke, Peter Lin, Tom Mlrenda, Jason Fischer, Steve Frowine, Keith Davis, Ron Kaufmann, Harold Koopowitz and Mary Gerritsen among others. I even convinced Norman Fang of Norman's Orchids to come to our club next July. I have been asking him for years! Pizza, chocolate AND world-class speakers. You can't beat that!

OUR PROGRAMS

We usually meet the second Sunday of the month at the Rainbow Library 3150 Buffalo at Cheyenne at the Meeting Room. Live Piano music at 1. Meeting 2.

August 13 Mark Romansky "Judging Orchids"

September 10 Mary Gerritsen "Orchids of the Lost World"

October 8 Keith Davis "Orchid Growing Tips"

November 12 Steve Frowine "Fantastic Phals"

December 10 Holiday Party Home Carol Siegel

January 14, 2018 Tom Mirenda tBA

February 11 Jason Fischer "Growing on a Log"

March 11 Ron Kaufmann TBA

April 8 Greenhouse Tour

May 11 Harold Koopowitz "Orchids of Thailand"

June 3 Peter Lin

July 8 Norman Fang "Harlequin Orchids"

Ocr 14 Fred Clarke "Modern Cattleyas and How to Grow Them"



The Making of My Rainforest

Diana Smith

A couple of years ago I felt the need to improve and simplify my orchid care. You know how it is, when the number of plants increases to where the "normal routine" becomes a form of slavery. After contemplating my concerns and needs, I decided (hoped) that putting in an automatic watering system, similar to those in our gardens, would fit the bill.

I would, however, need to change potting media to account for frequent watering, rearrange the greenhouse layout for better plant visibility, and incorporate an automatic feeding system. My shopping list looked like this:

- Pots with lots of drainage, baskets, and mounting supplies, including sphagnum moss

- 150 L of expanded clay pellets in two sizes: available at hydroponics stores

- Chicken wire (inexpensive, easy to mount, with the flexibility to arrange plants)

- Plastic utility shelves

- One-half inch poly water hose, Power-Loc connectors, Spectrum Barbed Spray emitters and barbed plugs (for the "oops")

- Melnor 4-zone Digital Water Timer (valve)

- Young Fertilizer/Proportioner and appropriate plant food

- Wiring ties, hose punch, miscellaneous tools

To begin, I hung chicken wire on the two end walls of my greenhouse, since they were accessible even with the old benches in place. Then, in one intense (aka hellish) week, I repotted or remounted 90% of my 250 plants keeping their individual requirements in mind. (For example, did they need some organic matter such as sphagnum moss to stay moist, etc.) As I worked, I removed the old benches as they were cleared and replaced them with the narrower plastic ones.

After recuperating and apologizing profusely to my family for my repotting rendition of the banshee howl, I hung the rest of the chicken wire by attaching it to the greenhouse frame, and moved the plants into their microclimate niches. At this point, many of my goals had been accomplished: my orkids were more visible, spread out to allow for better air movement, could be watered together, and were cleaner without the decomposing bark media. I could have stopped here and watered my plants by hand as needed, including the addition of fertilizer. But my husband and pet sitters, who take over when I'm out of town, would really appreciate not having to fret about killing them all with one ill-timed spray. Besides, once I get an idea in my head, I have to try it out. It was a learning experience.

So, now that the plants were arranged, I planned and drew out the sprinkler system. I even included a section for the plants that don't get watered at all during the winter. My greenhouse structure and new arrangement dictated a lot of the configuration, such as number of valves, hose position and spacing, and spray emitter placement. The number of emitters will also affect their performance: too many and the water pressure may only allow for an unenthusiastic dribble rather than a spray. I finished with 14 emitters per valve using my well pressure-tank equipment. One-half inch flexible hose is so easy to work with: a piece of cake to cut, trim, position, attach, deal with minor bends, and insert punch spray nozzles. (I suggest it be unrolled in the sun to soften it for straightening after purchase.) The plastic connectors are very easy to use: the connector fits on to a cut end of hose and a collar screws on to seal it. Splitters, hose ends, elbows, and T connectors work the same way to direct water to emitters. Conversion couplers make it easy to go from garden hose, to proportioner, to valve, to water supply hoses. The emitters come in a variety of angle widths, flow rates, and patterns. With an inexpensive hand tool they punch into the supply hose at whatever angle or density needed.

I did test sprays as I finished each area to determine if all the plants were getting wet, then went on to the next zone. Finally, all 4 zones were done and I was satisfied with the coverage. I learned that I needed to buy extra hose, connectors, spray emitters, etc. Not only did I not plan perfectly, but I ruined some, lost some, and changed plans mid-stream.

I will probably be fine-tuning this forever. I constantly move plants around to make sure they are being watered consistently especially as growth changes their shape, new orkids join my group, and others commit suicide. I also change plant locations for the right light and temperature, and to prevent them from strangling themselves on the chicken wire. I adjust the watering schedule seasonally; it is quite similar to the Southern Nevada Water Authority rules for gardens.

I have to say, I love it! I often sit in the greenhouse and listen to the "rain," a real treat in the Mojave Desert. (Confession: I even purposely get wet.) My greenhouse is much easier to keep clean and bug-free. My orkids bloom more consistently and maintain their flowers longer. And my patient and helpful husband doesn't need to follow me around when I return from a trip asking how they all are.

RESOURCES

Peaceful Valley Farm and Garden Supply at www.groworganic.com: look in watering and drip irrigation for: ½ inch poly tubing, Power-Loc ½ inch components such as elbows, tees, couplers, ends with or without flush valves, male or female starter fittings (depending on your system), Green Punch and Cut.

Melnor 4 zone Digital Water Timer (they also have one that connects to Wi-Fi and is reasonably priced)

Spray emitters in a variety of configurations and flow rates. I used Spectrum Spray 360 Degree adjustable flow and punched them directly into the ½ inch poly tubing.

How-to videos: Drip irrigation – Save water, Irrigation Maintenance, Fertiligation

WAAAHHH! Young Products Mixer Proportioners seem to be no longer available. I found a few still for sale at:

www.everwoodfarm.com, but even the Young Products site is now defunct. One site: www.fertilizeronline.com is looking for a good replacement. I will keep my fingers crossed.



Top Ten Signs that Your Orchids Are Happy

by Sue Bottom, sbottom15@hotmail.com



Cattleya Secure in Pot

1. You can pick up plant by the vegetation and the pot doesn't fall away. Roots are the secret to an orchid grower's success. If you want beautiful flowers, you need a healthy plant and for a plant to be healthy, it must have a vigorous root system. The rule in nature is there is a 10 to 1 ratio of the roots to the shoots. When the roots have filled the pot, you can pick up the entire plant from the leaves and the plant does not wobble in the pot.

2. The newest growth is larger than the prior growth. A great indicator of a well growing plant is that the new leads and leaves are larger than or at least as large as the prior year's growths. Don't fret too much if the year after repotting the growths are a little smaller than the prior year, that is probably just a short term case of transplant shock. If that trend continues though, ask for a consult with one of your orchid club's members.



Cycnodes Jumbo Puff



Phalaenopsis with Healthy Leaves

3. Your orchid has thick, turgid leaves. If your leaves look dehydrated, they probably are dehydrated and you'll have to follow the old tried and true advice, knock it out of the pot and look at the roots. If the roots are rotten, you'll have to repot and consider whether it was overwatering or late repotting that caused the problem. If the roots are still viable, you may have to increase your watering frequency and or the amount of water you pour through the pot when you water.

4. Pseudobulbs and canes are plump. The canes and pseudobulbs on your sympodial orchids like the leaves on your monopodial orchids function similarly to the hump on a camel. They should be full of water and energy reserves to get your orchid through the dry spells as well as to make sure your plant has enough energy in reserve to develop flowers. After all, most orchids aren't grown for their foliage.



Dendrobium Golden Aya



St. Augustine Orchid Society

www.staugorchidsociety.org

Top Ten Signs that Your Orchids Are Happy

by Sue Bottom, sbottom15@hotmail.com



Long Root Tips

When your plant is growing well, it is throwing off new growths, more leaves on a phalaenopsis or vanda, more pseudobulbs on a cattleya, more canes on a dendrobium, etc. With each new growth, comes the potential for new blooms. Dendrobiums are the exception, many will bloom from older growths, but cattleyas will only bloom from new growth, and somehow they always seem to bloom best when they're a bulb or two out of the pot. A monthly application of seaweed or kelp which contains some plant hormones will encourage new growths on your plant.

5. Plants in growth show long green (or red) root tips. You know you are a real orchid addict when you are just as excited about a new root as you are a new flower bud. When a plant is in active growth, it throws off new roots and the faster it grows, the longer the root tip.

6. Plants are flush with new growth, trying to jump out of the pot.



Cattleya Out of the Pot



Calanthe Baron Schroder

7. You get multiple bloom spikes. Your orchids expend a tremendous amount of energy to form flower buds and then to carry the flowers in the hopes one of their pollinators will drop in for a visit. The more energy they are able to generate and store, the more energy reserves are available when it is time for them to start flowering. A drop in night time temperature also helps many plants conserve their energy stores. Multiple bloom spikes are your reward for meeting the cultural needs of your plants.

8. Your orchids don't complain about being hungry. Orchids aren't like teenagers, they can't keep saying I'm hungry every couple of hours. Your orchids will grow fine with little fertilizer and many people proudly say they never fertilize their orchids. The real orchid food is light, but fertilizer contains the essential mineral building blocks for your plant. Get into a fertilizer routine. Use either water soluble or timed release fertilizer, whichever suits you better. Your orchids may not burp in appreciation, but you'll see an improvement in growth vigor.



Clowesetum Jumbo Circle 'Clair'
AMAOS



Top Ten Signs that Your Orchids Are Happy

by Sue Bottom, sbottom15@hotmail.com



Leaves Unmarred by Damage

9. No Vacancy" for disease and pests. A vigorously growing plant is much more capable of withstanding problems. It is axiomatic that if you have found the sweet spot for your orchid, you also have found a location where there is enough air movement to keep your orchid happy which means you'll have fewer fungal infections. While orchids don't have an immune system similar to we humans, a healthy plant can mount a greater defense against disease and to some extent pests. You always have to be vigilant looking for scale, mealybugs, mites and other opportunistic devils.

10. All your friends want divisions. The ultimate compliment is when friends come into your growing area and say I'd love a piece of that whenever you divide it. It means you've grown the plant to its maximum potential and gotten it to produce beautiful blooms. Do share your divisions with friends, it is one of the joys of gardening in general and growing orchids in particular. And who know, someday you may be asking for a piece of that plant back.



Cattleya Sue Bottom 'St. Augustine'