



GREATER LAS VEGAS ORCHID SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 3, 2002 AT ONE P.M. (not 2PM)

Our meeting will be in the usual place, the Nevada Garden Club Meeting, Washington and Twin Lakes, at the west corner of Lorenzi Park at 1pm. It is Super Bowl Sunday, and members have voted to start **ONE HOUR EARLIER THAN USUAL** so we can have **ALL** our pleasures on the same day. We will start promptly at one p.m. and try to be finished by 3. Your prompt arrival will be appreciated by sports fans in the club

Carol Siegel, Newsletter Editor

**CAROL SIEGEL- PRESIDENT
MARIA PEREZ-VICE-PRESIDENT
EILEEN MCKYTON- SECRETARY
DIANA SMITH- TREASURER**

AND...

El Requa and Theresa Gerstner- Membership Chairmen
Lillian Patterson- Photographer and Historian
Leslie Doyle and Tony Billitere- Raffle Chairmen
Phyllis Bond and Eric Doi and Eileen McKyton- Special Events Chairmen
Jeri Lee and Tony Billitere- Community Liaison
Dan Mumau- Hospitality Chairman
Eric Doi and Alex McKyton -Building Chairmen
Tex Severance- Show and Tell Guru
Scotty Nogaim- Election Chairman

February 3, 2002

**Conception Boyd, Owner Orchid Connection
"Orchids of Mexico" (Maria Perez, hostess)**

March 3, 2002

**Virtual Greenhouse Tour (starring slides of the Growing
Areas of Mike Levin, Carol Siegel, Maria Perez, Eileen
McKyton, Phyllis Bond, Diana Smith, Kenneth Snauwaert,
Daniel Vong, Jean Gordon, Clarice and Dennis Dean, Gary
Nelson, and Scotty Nogaim with Lillian Patterson photos)**

March 13, 2002	Spring Garden Sale
March 29-31, 2002	Easter Orchid Show at the California Hotel With the Torrance Cymbidium Society AOS Judging
April 7, 2002	Sam Tsui, owner Orchid Inn "Growing Orchids Under Lights"
May 5, 2002	Doug Conkin, orchid genius, on "Two Unusual Genera for the Beginning to Intermediate Grower- <i>Catasetum</i> and <i>Maxillaria</i> "
June 2, 2002	Norito Hasegawa, owner of Paphanatics, "Paph Species and How They Influence Hybrids"
July 7, 2002	Diana Smith, our very own orchid expert, on "Forty Orchids to Grow in Your Greenhouse"
August 4, 2002	Annual Barbecue Mt. Charleston home of Eldine Stevens
September 8, 2002	Mike Glikbarg returns to speak with LOTS of blooming Orchids (topic under discussion).
October 6, 2002	Film on Orchids "Fatal Flower"
November 3, 2002	Lecture by Bill Bergstrom of Bergstrom Orchids "Orchids of Peru"(arranged and hosted by The Mckytos)
December 1, 2002	Holiday Party

Happy New Year 2002 to Everyone! We started off our glorious new year with an interesting, informative and entertaining talk on trends in phalaenopsis hybridizing in Taiwan with Howard Ginsberg, owner of Bedford Orchids in Montreal, Canada (www.bedfordorchids.com). We shared the speaker and his expenses with the San Diego Orchid Society. Howard not only showed gorgeous slides, but he also gave valuable tips on phal culture. He recommended keeping a 20 degree difference between day and night temperatures to initiate phal

flowers. He suggested putting a table lamp on top of a fern, containing a gallon of water in November or December to coax reluctant phalaenopsis to spike. He liked New Zealand sphagnum moss for potting, although he also recommended Promix HP, and even bark chips. He was careful to remind members not to overwater moss. He did not recommend Spanish moss, which is really a bromeliad, and not a moss, and which deteriorates quickly in a wet dark pot. He especially recommended reading Bob Gordon's book on phal culture. A very special thanks to Alex and Eileen Mckyton; who housed, fed, and entertained the speaker. Kudos to you!

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Our White Elephant Sale was a great success. We had a great time, AND we made a fortune!! We made \$686.50 on the White Elephant Sale. We made an additional \$212 on the lovely orchids Tony Billitere brought from the Mirage, AND we collected \$400 in dues. Either we are getting a grade of stuff or a better grade of member, but we had terrific items to bid on- orchids, clocks, serving trays, wine, dolls, ceramics, jewelry- you name it, we had it!! Many thanks to all of you had emptied your treasure boxes and carted back more than you brought in. (You can sell it NEXT year at the White Elephant Sale.) Endless thanks to Tony Billitere who brought in lots of blooming phals from the Mirage to sell. Thanks, Tony. Thanks, too, to Leslie Doyle, for bringing in fruit trees to sell. By the way, she raised over \$150 for the Test Fruit Orchard, a Master Gardeners' Project. We very much appreciated all the people who showed up early to set up, especially Alex McKyton, Clarice and Dennis Dean, Kathleen Halloran, and Kenneth Snauwaert. AND the food by Tony Billitere, Leslie Doyle, Eileen McKyton, and drinks by me were delicious and most appreciated.

The very gracious Jeri Lee is spearheading our Cookbook Campaign. Everyone is invited to submit recipes for our very own cookbook. The profits will be divided between a homeless shelter and our club. Jeri asks that recipes be in by the next meeting. I have included an extra form for those who were not at the meeting, or for those who just need two. Send in several recipes. This fine project can only succeed if EVERYONE sends in recipes. We have great cooks in the club (just look at our Holiday Party!!), so share your genius and help the less fortunate.

Our meeting on February 3 will feature Conception Boyd, owner of The Orchid Connection, who will present a slide lecture on "The Orchids of Mexico". She will bring plants for sale, too. Remember, the meeting starts at ONE pm because of Super Bowl Sunday. Many thanks in advance to Gary Nelson and Cliff Wood who will provide food for the meeting. Thanks, guys!! Thanks to Ken Snauwaert and Alex McKyton for volunteering for setup. Maybe you, too, can come a little early to help set up, too.

Don't forget that your 2002 dues are due now. It is \$25 for a single, \$35 for a couple. You may pay at the meeting or send me a check made out to GLVOS (that is for Greater Las Vegas Orchid Society) and mail it to me at:

Carol Siegel 8601 Robinson Ridge Drive Las Vegas, NV 89119

Don't forget to update your address, phone, and e-mail addresses when you come to the meeting in February. Check with El, Theresa, or Diana and make sure we have your latest info. Want to know if you paid? Look on the label on your newsletter envelope. If it says (02) after your last name, you have paid. If not, Please...**BY THE WAY, WE HAVE OVER 100 MEMBERS NOW, AN ALL-TIME HIGH!!!** Dues must be paid by the end of February to continue getting the newsletter. Your membership card is included with the newsletter if you have paid for 2002.

Your Board has met twice already. We set up the responsibilities and speakers for the year, checked on our financial health, and met with a publicist who will ~~try to get our club name out in the press. My thanks to the other officers of the club, Maria, Eileen, and Diana, who are so willing to help. We all feel privileged to help direct this friendly, warm, smart and active club.~~

We will have our Virtual Greenhouse Tour in March. A reminder to those participating that slides must be given to me at the Feb. 3 meeting so I can put together the slide tray. Don't forget to number and put your name on each of the slides. Each person will make his/her own 3-5 minute presentation. An information sheet is included with this newsletter for people who have volunteered for the greenhouse tour.

The AOS orchid website (www.orchidweb.org), the most wonderful source of information about orchids anywhere, has a great tip this month. If you use styrofoam packing material, "peanuts", as drainage material in the bottom of pots, be sure they are not the water soluble type. These are usually green (rather than white) and can resemble a pair of tubes. Best way to know for sure is to place the suspect peanut in a container of water as a test.

Don't forget that the Fascination with Orchids show will be at the South Coast Plaza Feb.7-10 (www.fascinationwithorchids.com).

An original article on questions to make your orchids bloom follows. See you on Feb. 3 at ONE. Stay safe, enjoy, and keep blooming

Carol Siegel, Newsletter Editor 254-4168 growlove@att.net

TEN QUESTIONS TO MAKE YOUR ORCHIDS BLOOM

By Carol Siegel

Orchids are the royalty of the flower world. They do as they darn well please. Sometimes, they just drive us crazy by refusing to bloom. They just sit there looking all big and green, full of LEAVES but not even a trace of a flower. When you ask your orchids, "Why? Why won't you bloom?", these are the questions your orchids might ask YOU. The answers to these questions will help you to more blooming success

1. AM I HEALTHY ENOUGH TO BLOOM?

Healthy plants bloom. Dying plants just try to stay alive. (Of course, there is always the martyr mother orchid who blooms right before she dies, but this is not the usual case.) If your orchid thinks it is in a concentration camp, it is not going to be willing to invest energy in flowers and seeds. It may not trust you yet. There are four stages of orchid growing: keeping the plant alive, making the plant bloom, making the plant bloom spectacularly, winning awards. Maybe you are not ready to make an orchid bloom; maybe you are at stage one. Just not killing your orchid may be an accomplishment for you. If your plant has no roots, droopy leaves, and shriveled pseudobulbs, you need to improve your culture. Make sure you have 50% or more humidity. Use the right pot and make sure your potting medium is fresh and well aerated. Use reverse-osmosis, distilled, or water softened with potassium not sodium. Read the AOS Bulletin. Get the ~~Orchid Digest~~ ~~on-line~~ ~~websites~~ ~~that~~ ~~discuss~~ ~~orchid~~ ~~growing~~. Ask questions at meetings. Buy or take out some books on orchid growing. Ask questions at our Virtual Greenhouse meeting. Improve your growing techniques, and blooming may soon follow.

2. AM I OLD ENOUGH TO BLOOM?

~~Okay. So your orchid is healthy. However, there are other considerations. You~~
~~ould not expect a two-year-old girl to date, marry and have children. SHE is just~~
~~young. Your plant may be too young to bloom no matter how good you are at~~
~~growing orchids. Orchid plants have a long childhood: they take from four to~~
~~five years to reach their adulthood- their "blooming size". Smaller, less~~
~~expensive plants are often a good value, but don't expect them to bloom for a~~
~~time. If you are like me and like instant gratification, then you need to buy~~



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larger, blooming-size plants (BS). And often it is BS! I have bought an angraecum from Hoosier Orchids three years ago, a tiny plant that they said was BS, and it is way too small to bloom even now. If you buy a plant in bloom or with old spike stubs showing, then you will be sure your orchid is old enough to bloom.

3. AM I GETTING ENOUGH LIGHT?

Judywhite in her important article from the June 1990 AOS Bulletin ("Beginner's Series- Part VI Why on Earth Won't It Bloom?")--from which I got many of the ideas in this little article- says that the leading reason orchids don't bloom is that they are not getting enough light.

There are all sorts of fancy ways to tell if your plant is getting enough light, but leaf color is a really good guide. Dark green leaves mean that your plant is not getting enough light. It is making extra chlorophyll to manufacture food in the poor light so it is deep green. Moderate to light green leaves usually mean that your plant is getting the right amount of light to bloom. Have you ever noticed that your houseplants are really dark green? We think that that color is pretty, but houseplants almost never bloom!! Dark green is the wrong leaf color for blooming. How many of us say that we have a ton of houseplants, why can't we grow orchids? We mean why can't we BLOOM orchids. Well, keep them a deep green in poor light and you will have the yards of foliage that houseplants have and no blooms. More light means more blooms.

4. HOW COULD I GET MORE LIGHT?

Think of ways to get more light in your growing area. If you grow under lights, use grow-light fluorescent or HID bulbs which mimic sunlight and not regular bulbs. Make sure you are replacing your grow-light bulbs at least once a year and more if you can afford it. The light output drops dramatically in fluorescent bulbs long before they burn out. Put high-light requiring plants like cattleyas closer to the middle of the bulbs since light falls off dramatically at the ends of the bulbs. Increase light by bringing the top of your orchids closer to the fluorescent or HID (high-intensity discharge) lights.

Clean the lens covering your HID light and dust your fluorescents. Clean your orchid leaves on a regular basis. Increase the amount of time your lights are on with a timer. More time equals more light. Make sure your plants are not so crowded together that leaves are blocking other plants' leaves from getting light.

If you grow on a windowsill or greenhouse, make sure your window or glass is clean! Bring the plant closer to the window of your house or glass of your greenhouse for more light. Buy a light meter and see if your window or greenhouse is getting enough light. It might be too dark to bloom orchids. You can add artificial lights to your window or greenhouse to supplement your natural light. You can make your growing area more reflective with white paint, mirrored tiles or mylar.

5. AM I GETTING DIFFERENT AMOUNTS OF LIGHT ACCORDING TO THE SEASON??

Your orchid is genetically programmed to bloom in response to certain signals from the rainforest or jungle or mountaintop where it evolved. Your living room may be missing these signals. Your job is to reproduce the signals that tell your orchid that all is well in the environment, that it is safe to bloom as it has for aeons. One of the most important signals that some orchids (like cattleyas) need is a variation in light and darkness according to the seasons.

If you are growing in a greenhouse, Mother Nature will take care of varying the amount of light with the seasons giving you less light in December and many more hours of light in June. Your orchid will be happy. If you supplement your greenhouse light with artificial light, you will have to put your artificial light on a timer to mimic the light that nature is giving- no light on at 1am when it is otherwise dark in your greenhouse.

If you are growing in a windowsill in the living room, and light is always on for the same number of hours while you conduct your normal life, your orchid will be missing its signal to bloom. You need to block the living room or TV light with a screen or sheet or such or put the orchid in a room that is seldom-used and can be dark when it is dark outside.

If you grow under lights in a garage or basement or bathroom, you need to turn on and turn off your lights with a timer. I set my timer for 12 hours of light and 12 hours of darkness in December gradually increasing to 18 hours of light and 6 hours of darkness in June and gradually decreasing to 12 hours of light and 12 hours of darkness in December, just as in nature. This fools my orchids into thinking that all is well in their garage-rain forest, that that there is day and there is night, that there is winter and there is summer. Ah, they can bloom!!

6. AM I GETTING LOWER TEMPERATURE IN THE WINTER AND AT NIGHT?

As important as shortened day length is, it is equally important that nighttime temperature drop. If the temperature is the same day and night, buds will not initiate as well. Most plants require that it get at least ten degrees cooler at night than in the day for spike development. Some plants like cymbidium and phalaenopsis need a twenty-degree drop to initiate buds. Some plants like paphiopedilum require a temperature drop in the winter more than a change in day length to spike. Paphs with roth or stonei in their background and phals in general like three weeks at 55 degrees on winter nights to initiate a spike.

If you grow in your living room, opening a window will often do the trick. Turn the thermostat down at night. If you grow under lights, temperature will drop about

5 degrees when the lights are off. In the winter, I turn the thermostat down in my garage and use plastic insulation and open the garage door for a few minutes to let in cooler air. (Be careful not to have cold air blowing directly on your plants.) In your greenhouse, a crack. Get a minimum-maximum thermometer (available at many places including Charley's Greenhouse) to see just what variation you have in temperature. You MUST have a temperature difference at night. Warm growing orchids like phals like winter nights of about 60. Intermediate growers like winter nights about 55 degrees. Cymbidium and odontoglossums like it around 50. However, just dropping temperature degrees at night will go a long way to making your plants bloom.

7. AM I GETTING GOOD AIR MOVEMENT?

Sometimes buds are produced and they "blast", the dreaded bud blast of the orchid grower, little brown stubs that were meant to become flowers. There are a million reasons for bud blast. (I think some buds are just rotten.) Moisture around the bud is a prime one. Invest in a lot of fans, on low, swaying your orchid leaves, drying out the moisture around the buds, and air movement, preventing fungus and rot and bacteria from getting your buds. I take a straw and blow away the moisture around my paph buds, sometimes a Q-tip, too. Take special care not to get the little buds wet. Sue Ford recommended during her talk that we cut the tip off cattleya bud sheaths in a little air and dry out the inside of the sheath.

8. IS THIS THE RIGHT TIME FOR ME TO BLOOM? ARE YOU JUST IMPATIENT?

Most orchids bloom once a year, often at the same time every year. For example, *Cattleya Irene* Holquin 'Brown Eyes' always blooms for Mother's Day.

If you buy it in June, you will probably have to wait until next May to have it bloom. There is no point in lamenting about your poor blooming record in December. December is not the right time for your plant to bloom. The plant is behaving just the way it was meant to. If you buy six plants in December, and they are all in bloom, don't expect any blooms (if these are your only plants) until NEXT December. Orchids do not bloom all the time. Cattleyas are gorgeous, but their blooms only last 2-4 weeks. The rest of the time they will be leaves. Paph blooms last from 1-3 months. The bloom, to some, is not as showy, but it will bloom for a long time. Some phals seem to be in bloom most of the time. Stanhopea and sobralia blooms last only days. Know your plant and don't expect it to do what it was not meant to do.

Some growers recommend a little epsom salts (one or two tablespoons) in a gallon of water for phals to coax them to bloom. Many believe that switching to a "blossom booster" fertilizer at the time when buds are starting to form (often fall) helps initiate buds and produces better flowers. Blossom booster are lower in nitrogen and higher in phosphorus and potassium which are needed more for flowers. You might try these.

9. AM I THE RIGHT PLANT FOR YOUR GROWING AREA?

Matching your plant to your growing setup is very important. There are 25,000 species and countless hybrids of orchids. Some you will not be able to grow in your little growing area no matter what you do. Some will flourish with great care, and some will just love your combination of benign neglect and inexperience. If you keep killing one type of orchid, try another type. If one type of orchid likes your set-up, buy more of these! Use the period when you are struggling with your plants to learn the kinds of orchids you want to specialize in. I personally specialize in anything that does not die, first, and that blooms often and well, second. My growing area is too small to be a hospital. It is certainly not a REST home. If you bloom, you are in. If you don't, well, then you are not right for my area. You are a GIFT. And it is funny. My zygopetalum just sulked under my grow lights. I gave them to Maria Perez. Under HER grow lights, they did fabulously well. Go know! Then, I got an air conditioner in my garage so it is cooler, and now my NEW zygopetalum (and odontoglossum and cymbidium) are very happy. I just couldn't get it cool enough before without an a/c unit. If you

don't have lots of light, try paphs and phals. If you have LOTS of light, try dendrobium and catts. Move stuff around. Sometimes, one spot is cool and wet and another just a few feet away is hotter and drier. Experiment.

10. AM I SUFFERING FROM PURCHASE SETBACK?

It is quite common for plants that you have just purchased to go through a period of sulking after you get them. They have been ripped from their wonderful home in Hawaii or some such with swaying breezes, ideal humidity, and morning mists, stuffed in a dark box, and plunked down in your desert living room with nothing but your enthusiasm to sustain it. It may be in shock. It may not know what it did to deserve such a horrible fate. It may miss a whole blooming cycle. That's right. It may skip a year of blooming and not bloom for TWO years. Don't take it personally. The plant is just saving its energy; it doesn't want to invest in seeds and flowers unless it knows they have a chance of surviving. If you persist, your orchid will adapt, relax, and produce great blooms for you.

In fact, if your plant missed blooming on a new growth this year, it can still bloom on that growth next year. Our speaker Sam Tsui showed us a slide of an award-winning paph that had 18 blooms! When I asked how he got so many blooms, he said the plant had not bloomed on its new growths in a long time. Moving the plant to a new location sparked all the unbloomed new growth to spike, making a fabulous display. All is not lost!! In fact, your plant may just be saving up to win a great AOS reward for you. Smart plant!

So listen to your orchids. Increase your light. Varying the light with the seasons. Make it cooler at night. Buy a fan. Be patient. Most important, don't give up!! You can get your orchids to bloom!



The Greater Las Vegas Orchid Society Cookbook

The Greater Las Vegas Orchid Society is asking for your help to make the cookbook project a success. The goals of the project are:

- 1) to make a permanent document in tribute to all the good cooks in our club
- 2) to document some of the cultures and traditions and good times of the club members
- 3) to use the money from the sale of the book to help the homeless in Las Vegas
- 4) maybe use some of the money to buy orchids for the club.

Please fill out this form with your recipe(s) and return it as soon as possible. You may submit as many recipes as you want, the more the better. Please attach additional sheets with more recipes. Your recipes must be received by Monday 28 January 2002 for inclusion in the book. Thank you for sharing your recipes.

Your name

Phone number (In case there is a question about your recipe. This will not appear in the book.)

Comments about your recipe. Please write a little bit about your recipe:

- its history
- why you like it
- who you got it from
- who cooked it
- where you first ate it
- the occasions when it is served
- a childhood memory
- a romantic memory.

You get the idea. Comments are optional, but they make the book more interesting.

How much should we charge for the book? How much would you pay for the book?

Name of recipe

Ingredients

Directions

How many does this serve?

Please mail to:

Jeri Lee
4500 Lilliput Lane
Las Vegas, NV 89102

