

Western North Carolina Orchid Society
PO Box 874
Asheville, NC 28802-0874

Calendar of Events

Sunday September 30 – Annual Auction
– NC Arboretum
Preview 12:00 pm
Auction 1:00 pm

October 16 – Board Meeting 6 PM CAO
Speaker Mark Reinke 7 PM
“Cattleyas and Broughtonias”

November 20 – Annual Meeting
7 PM CAO

December 9, 1:00 PM –
Holiday Social
1889 WhiteGate Inn & Cottage
Hosts: Ralph Coffey and Frank
Salvo

**WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA
ORCHID SOCIETY NEWSLETTER**

Volume 13 Issue 9

September 19, 2007



WNCOS Annual Auction
Sunday
September 30, 2007
NC Arboretum
Preview 12:00 PM
Auction 1:00 PM

**2007 Annual Auction
September 30
NC Arboretum
Preview 12:00 PM
Auction 1:00 PM**

Please mark September 30, 1:00 PM at the NC Arboretum on your calendar. It is important that we have a large turn-out for the annual auction. The auction committee is very excited this year about the nurseries we have picked to supply us orchids. We will have a wide selection of oncidiums, cattleyas, Paphs, Phals, vandas, cymbidiums, and unusual species from H&R Orchids, RF Orchids, Carmela, Tropical Orchid Farms, Oakhill, Etowah, and Carolina Orchids. You will have several chances to win free orchids. Refreshments will be provided. Preview starts at 12:30. Come prepared to add some great plants to your collection.

We need Volunteers to bring snacks for the Auction. Please contact Gerry Hils 683-9054.

WNCOS Board Meeting Minutes

Minutes of WNCOS Board Meeting – 21 August 2007

President Ralph Coffey called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Attending: Graham Ramsey, Gerry Hils, Bob Benites, June Wilbanks, Ginny Honea and Vickie Patrick.

A motion was made by Gerry to accept the minutes with one exception, the donation to the NC Arboretum should be corrected from \$1,000.00 to \$100.00. Motion carried.

TREASURE REPORT

\$2000.00 was added to the existing CD when it matured, and a new CD was purchased for \$7,145.23, with a rate of 5% to mature on 17 March 2008. The checking accounting balance is \$5,459.51.

OLD BUSINESS

Hospitality-The list for the year is completed.

A brief discussion about finding a new place to meet. Graham is still looking at the two locations.

The WNCOS meets the third Tuesday of each month, at 7:00 pm at Community Action Opportunities (see map), unless otherwise announced. The Society Board meets at 6:00 pm prior to the General Meeting. Meetings are open to all members. General meetings are open to the public.



**Community Action Opportunities
25 Gaston St. Asheville 28801
828-.252-.2495**

West of St. Joseph Hospital between McDowell St. and South French Broad Ave. The cross street is Choctaw St. From Choctaw turn onto Congress St. The first street on the right is Gaston St.

**The newsletter can also be found on our website
<http://www.WNCOS.org>**

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS:

President- Ralph Coffey	253-2553	innkeeper@whitegate.net
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Secretary- Vicki Patrick	628-5458	vpatrik@charter.net
Treasurer- Bob Benites	253-3945	benites@cs.unca.edu

BOARD MEMBERS:

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Gerry Hils	683-9054	sherryngerry@yahoo.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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OLD BUSINESS

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A brief discussion about finding a new place to meet. Graham is still looking at the two locations.

Program Schedule

September 30 - Annual Auction Sunday-NC Arboretum @ 1:00pm

October 16 – Mark Reinke – Cattleya and mini Cattleyas

November 20 - Annual Meeting

December 9 – Holiday Social

NEW BUSINESS

An orchid collector, who wishes to remain anonymous, has contacted Ralph and has offered us approximately 50 Paphs for \$200.00. Most of these plants are unlabeled. There ensued a discussion about putting the labeled ones into the annual auction, and some of the other plants into the silent auction. Bob motioned we pay \$200.00 for the plants and the motion carried.

September Auction

A motion was made by Ginny to make the budget up to \$1,700.00 including plants and food. Graham seconded. The motion carried.

The following vendors are to be contacted:

Vendor	Amt.	Contact Person
RF Orchids	200.00	Ralph Coffey
H & R Orchids	200.00	June Wilbanks
Carmela	200.00	June Wilbanks
Tropical Orchid	200.00	Ginny Honea
Oak Hill	200.00	Graham Ramsey
Etowah	150.00	George Logsdon
Carolina Orchids	100.00	Ralph Coffey

Ralph made the suggestion that all plants should arrive by September 20. That way research can be done for each plant (i.e. care, light, etc.)

Publicity- Ralph will prepare fliers to be distributed to different businesses.

Hospitality – Cookies, coffee, drinks will be provided for members setting up the auction.

Silent Auction – It was decided not to have a silent auction this year.

Auctioneer - Frank or Cynthia has been suggested to be this year's auctioneer.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS:

There was some discussion about the orchidarium.

A motion to adjourn was made by Graham, seconded by Ginny. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Vickie Patrick

Meet Our Members By Leslie Ann Keller

Jan & Piet Bodenhorst



Jan and Piet met while in college in Massachusetts. Piet was raised in Ecuador and upon their marriage the two were given a wedding gift to return to Ecuador for an extended visit. With a wide variety of orchids growing profusely at every altitude, the year and a half that Jan and Piet spent in Ecuador sparked their initial interest in these exotic flowers. Some years later that spark would turn into the well recognized fever that infects us all.

Piet's career as a textile chemist took them back to the states. While raising five children in sultry Georgia, Jan managed to re-bloom several phalaenopsis on her screened verandah. That success has led to a still burgeoning collection of some 64 plants.

Once in Asheville for retirement, the Bodenhorst had a fortuitous conversation with local ophthalmologist and orchid enthusiast Ed Isbey. The next thing they knew they had become tried and true society members. (*Take note members, our membership greatly benefits from word-of-mouth!*)

Jan grows her wide variety of orchids in a fully automated indoor greenhouse which allows the couple to go away for as much as 2 ½ weeks. She also grows in her kitchen where she adds a humidifier in the winter and takes the majority of her plants outside for the summer.

Growing Tips for September

Growing Tips for September

By

Courtney T. Hackney

EMAIL at Hackneau@bellsouth.net

During the past 3 or 4 weeks I have had some time to spend in the greenhouse and time to review my orchid growing culture. It is often difficult to accurately assess whether cultural changes have really improved the growth of your orchids because too often all we remember is the problem plant or the night slugs ate your prize buds just before they opened. One approach that I find useful is to examine my use of pesticides, fungicides, and fertilizers from year to year in light of my culture. The application of these products often

Treasurer's Report:
Checking Account Balance:
as of 9-06-2007 \$4,856.30
CD \$7,158.62
Total Assets: \$12,014.92

Membership Report:
Members: 80

reflects large-scale problems.

What I discovered is that I had drastically reduced my use of pesticides and fungicides. That does not mean that there have been no pests; juvenile crickets have occasionally chewed on new buds. There has also been an occasional rot here and there, but nothing widespread. The greatest surprise was how little soluble fertilizer I had used. The next question is whether my orchids have grown better or worse between years. The mantra among the best orchid growers is if orchids are provided with proper light, air circulation, good water, and nutrition there will be few pest and disease problems.

With the exception of a small collection of vandaceous orchids, new pseudobulbs on cattleyas are larger this year, with more flowers and roots. Phalaenopsis not only survived in the 100 degree heat this summer, but they also produced several new leaves simultaneously. There has been the occasional orchid that "bit the dust", but, generally, this has been a great growing year. WHY?

If you want to become a good grower you must keep records so you can determine what worked and what has not worked. Most significant for me has been the fact that very cold conditions, below 50 F, in late spring did not result in widespread rots in phalaenopsis. Similarly, in day after day of searing summer's heat, there have been very few bacterial or fungal rots. In the 25 years I have grown phals, this has never happened before.

Several years ago, a number of members of the Phalaenopsis Alliance had the elemental content of their phal leaves tested. What surprised me was the amazing variability among growers and the surprising concentration of some micronutrients. The take home lesson for many phal growers was that these orchids could grow under high nutrient conditions without any significant cultural problems. What was not said was that many commercial growers whose orchids were tested used almost constant antifungal and antibacterial treatments to prevent rots.

My suspicion was that many growers did not provide a balanced nutrition which left their orchids susceptible to rots once the protection of constant fungicides was removed. It was extremely frustrating to purchase magnificent phals that would develop just about every rot known within a couple of weeks in my greenhouse. Meanwhile, phals right next to these new phals grew just fine. If I repotted the new phal and kept it alive long enough to grow new leaves it would often thrive under the same conditions that previously led to rots. Even so, I still thought I had more rot problems than average.

Thus, my cultural goal for many years has been to find the perfect nutrition for optimal growth and disease resistance using the water available to me. Unless you use RO water or rain water, water varies greatly with respect to both the quantity of dissolved elements and the proportion of one to another. The dissolved minerals often affect the growth of orchids and may even limit whether your fertilizer is available to your orchids. Within any area, growers have figured out what fertilizer works best given the water available. Even the most accomplished grower must change their culture if they move to a different water

supply. Those that grow orchids well with few problems have found the perfect mix of water and nutrition.

Several years ago I decided that the key to finding the right balance of nutrients was to eliminate changes in nutrient availability and pH brought on by decomposing media. So, as I began to repot my orchids each was placed in lava rock. Lava rock, while inert, retains a surprisingly large amount of water and will even accumulate a little salt, but the medium does not change as it degrades or accumulates nutrients. Flushing pots thoroughly once a month produces the same environment for roots no matter how long the orchid is in the pot. The lack of an organic matrix to hold nutrients eliminated possible salt buildup, but required regular nutrition since very little is retained by the lava rock. The use of 13-13-13 Nutricote has worked well to provide the constant feeding required in lava rock, despite the tendency for the grey pellets to fall to the bottom of the pot. Apparently, enough of the pellets are retained in the rock to allow great growth.

Once a week, if I have time, a very weak fertilizer solution of Jacks 12-2-15 RO is applied (1/16 teaspoon/gal). This fertilizer is specially formulated for rainwater and contains high levels of calcium and magnesium required for proper plant growth. This solution is sprayed on plant leaves after plants have been watered. The nutrient level is very low but supplies the extra calcium & magnesium I think orchids need. This weak solution has a pH of 6.5, which is similar to the pH of rainwater here on the coast.

Soluble high nitrogen fertilizers must be used with caution as they can produce very low pH levels in RO or rainwater; levels low enough to kill orchid roots. For instance, delivery of 100 ppm of N, a feeding rate used by many commercial growers, (1/2 teaspoon/gal) will produce a pH of 3.93 that will damage roots. The manufacturer recommends using a buffer to raise the pH, but this is more than most hobbyists can manage. Thus, I rely on Nutricote to deliver the key nutrients of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium.

As noted earlier, the only orchids that have not responded to this change in culture have been vandas in open baskets. I interpret this as evidence that my weak solution of high nitrogen fertilizer does not deliver enough of this key nutrient. Despite attempts to place Nutricote in bags above the vandas, they are clearly not growing as well as they have in the past; no doubt due to a nutrient limitation. Vandas in lava rock have grown extremely well, again indicating that nutrient limitations are a problem for my vandas growing in baskets.