

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

**Calendar of Events**

**Aug 10 – 2:00** Asheville Eye Assoc. Paul Storm – Schomburgkia

**Sept 7— 1:00** Annual Auction  
Sunday /NC Arboretum

**Oct 12— 2:00** Asheville Eye Assoc.  
David Mellard—Watering and Nutrients

**Nov 9— 2:00** Asheville Eye Assoc.  
Annual Meeting

**Dec 7— 1:00** Christmas Social  
Covered Dish – Host Tom Peterson

**WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA  
ORCHID SOCIETY NEWSLETTER**

*Volume 14 Issue 8*

*August 1, 2008*



**Sunday August 10, 2008  
Asheville Eye Associates  
8 Medical Park Drive  
2:00 PM**

**Paul Storm  
“The Wonderful World of  
Schomburgkias”**

## PAUL & MARY STORM AND THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SCHOMBURGKIAS and MYRMECOPHILAS

PAUL WAS BORN AND RAISED IN BUFFALO, NY, AND MARY WAS BORN IN YONKERS, NY, WHERE NEITHER OF THEM EVER SAW AN ORCHID. LATER THEY LIVED AND TAUGHT IN MIAMI, FLORIDA WHERE THEY MET AND WED, BUT AGAIN THEY NEVER SAW AN ORCHID EVEN THOUGH THEY LIVED NEAR SOME OF MIAMI'S MOST FAMOUS ORCHID NURSERIES. HOWEVER, WHEN THEY MOVED TO SARASOTA, FLORIDA PAUL ATTENDED AN ORCHID SALE FOR NO KNOWN REASON AND PURCHASED A DIVISION OF SCHOMBURGKIA TIBICINIS AND THEIR WORLD CHANGED FOREVER. AGAINST THE DERISION AND ADVICE OF FRIENDS AND FAMILY, SCHOMS AND THEIR HYBRIDS BECAME AN OBSESSION TO THE STORMS AND THEY REALIZED THAT THEY WERE BORN TO CONVERT THE WORLD TO "SCHOMBO-LOVE"! IN ADDITION THEY OWN THE LARGEST AND MOST DIVERSE COLLECTION OF THIS GROUP AND THEIR HYBRIDS IN THE WORLD.

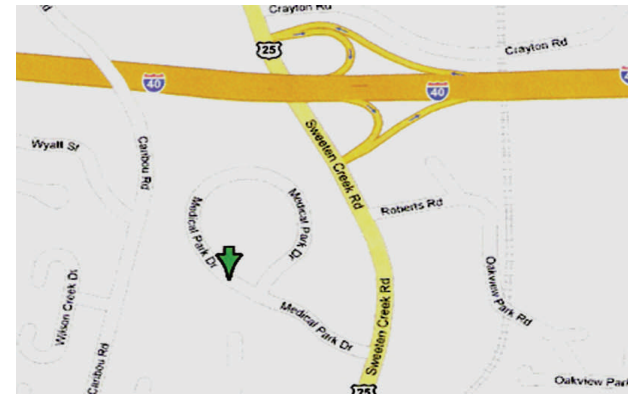
TOGETHER PAUL AND MARY (AS MEKE ALOHA ORCHIDS) HAVE TRAVELED EXTENSIVELY SEEKING THE FINEST EXAMPLES OF SCHOM SPECIES AND HYBRIDS AND EVENTUALLY THEY STARTED TO MAKE THEIR OWN HYBRIDS. THEIR LOVE OF PEOPLE AND ORCHIDS (AND THEIR MISSION OF 'SCHOMBOCONVERSION') HAVE BROUGHT THEM INVITATIONS TO MANY SOCIETIES AROUND THE COUNTRY AND INTRODUCTIONS TO MANY NEW LIFE-LONG FRIENDS.

PAUL'S 'SCHOM-HERO', DR. CARL WITHNER, DONATED HIS PERSONAL SCHOM COLLECTION TO THE STORMS, AND SOME OUTSTANDING NURSERIES AND HYBRIDIZERS HAVE NAMED SCHOM HYBRIDS AFTER PAUL IN HONOR OF THEIR SCHOM MISSION.

ALTHOUGH THEIR MISSION HAS TAKEN THEM TO SOCIETIES THROUGHOUT FLORDIA, ARIZONA, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, TEXAS, HAWAII, WASHINGTON,DC, AND THE BAHAMAS, THE RECENT CHANGES IN SCHOMBURGKIA/ MYRMECOPHILA TAXONOMY HAVE NECESSITATED A MAJOR REVSION OF THEIR PROGRAM WHICH HAS BEEN AIDED BY THE SR. REGISTRAR AT RHS AS WELL AS DR. GERMAN CARNEVALI IN MEXICO CITY.

PAUL AND MARY ARE EXCITED TO BE PRESENTING THEIR PROGRAM IN ASHEVILLE NEAR WHERE THEY HAVE A SUMMER CABIN, AND THEY INVITE MEMBERS TO BRING AND TRADE (OR SELL) ANY OF THEIR SCHOM HYBRIDS OR SPECIES WITH THEM. PLEASE WRITE THEM IN ADVANCE AT: [mekealoha@comcast.com](mailto:mekealoha@comcast.com) TO ARRANGE THIS, AND/OR VISIT THEIR WEB-SITE AT [MEKEALOHAORCHIDS.COM](http://MEKEALOHAORCHIDS.COM). THEY ALSO WELCOME INVITATIONS TO VISIT MEMBERS' SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AND TO BECOME BETTER ACQUAINTED. TOGETHER LET'S SHARE 'SCHOMBO-LOVE' !!

The WNCOS meets the second Sunday of each month, at 2:00 pm at Asheville Eye Associates (see map), unless otherwise announced. The Society Board meets the third Tuesday at CAO 5:30 pm. Meetings are open to all members. General meetings are open to the public.



### Asheville Eye Associates 8 Medical Park Drive

Sweeten Creek Road South to Medical Park Drive. Right on Medical Park Drive and follow the circle to Asheville Eye Associates. If coming in on I-40 take exit 51 (route 25 South) Sweeten Creek Road exit. Right on Medical Park Drive and follow the circle to Asheville Eye Associates.

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

#### OFFICERS & DIRECTORS:

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## Growing Tips for August Cont’.

dissolved solids are well advised to discard clay pots and not reuse them. Many arid areas in the U.S. have water with lots of dissolved solids. This combined with low humidity and high temperature leads to clay pots with lots of surface salts.

### Treasurers Report:

Checking Account: \$6,073.70

CD: \$8,929.21

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Total: \$15,002.91

**Please mark September 7, 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.**

## Meet Our Members By Leslie Ann Keller

### Clark Merrill



Clark Merrill grew up in Knoxville, Tennessee, and Washington, D.C. However, her roots are deep and broad in the Asheville area. Clark’s father, Pete Merrill, was once principal of Lee Edwards High School (now Asheville High), and both her grandfather and uncle owned popular bicycle shops in town, Merrill and

Hearn’s.

Pete Merrill’s career in education led the family to the University of Tennessee, and later, to Gallaudet University in Washington. Merrill served for many years as president of Gallaudet, the world’s only university for the deaf.

While living in the D.C. area, Clark received a Graphic Design degree from George Washington University. She initially worked in the design field, yet also helped run a company that created databases for a variety of organizations, including the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Clark is certainly multi-talented. When she moved to Asheville in 1995 to help oversee a family property, she shifted careers once again. She is now an administrative assistant at Architectural Design Studio, where she does a little bit of everything. Interestingly, this firm has been actively involved in renovations at Asheville High!

Clark’s interest in orchids began back in Washington with a housewarming gift of a Dendrobium. This flowered beautifully for her, and by the time she joined our orchid society 3 or 4 years ago, her collection had grown to 20—a very manageable number. Yet 20 plants have somehow managed to multiply into 200! As Clarke says, she has never seen a plant she does not like. (I might add this applies to dogs also—she has five at the moment.) Clark grows her wide assortment of orchids under fluorescent lights in a 1927 Stucco house flooded with light. Although humidity is a challenge, she has had great success, as we who have seen her orchids can attest.

We can not end this bio without mentioning that Clarke was solely responsible for the enchanting mermaid that helped make our annual show a great hit. We thank her for her many contributions to our society, and most especially, for sharing her creative gifts.

## Growing Tips for August

### GROWING TIPS for August

By

Courtney T. Hackney

Email: Hackneau@comcast.net

Optimal time to repot is rapidly coming to an end as days get shorter. Repotted orchids need time to grow new roots into the medium so that they can acquire water and nutrients during winter and early spring. Always remember that plants are “cold blooded”, which means only that their growth is entirely determined by temperature.

Each orchid can survive within some temperature range, but within that range is an optimal temperature range where it grows fastest because it can take up nutrients and water at a rate sufficient for it to use all of the light it is getting and move water to its leaves fast enough to keep its leaves cool while it absorbs sunlight. At higher temperatures an orchid may not be able to keep its leaves cool enough to prevent burning and at lower temperature it may not be able to obtain nutrients fast enough to turn light into new tissue.

The ideas temperature range for most orchids was determined by the natural environment of an orchid’s ancestors. This may be easy to determine for a species, but more difficult for hybrids. Hybrids, however, have been selected for best growth at typical greenhouse temperatures. Vandas, whose ancestors are from the lowlands of the tropics, continue to grow at high temperatures that would inhibit phrags which come from the Andes.

Most hobbyists pay attention to the temperature in their growing area. That, however, is not exactly what your orchids experience. Direct sunlight on a plant leaf warms the interior of the leaf far above the air temperature. If there is no air movement around the leaf or the orchids cannot obtain enough water to cool its leaves through transpiration then an orchid leaf can quickly burn even though the air temperature is below the maximum temperature recommended. Conversely, lots of air movement can allow an orchid to survive in an environment where air temperature is far above what is recommended.

The temperature within the orchid pot is another important facet for orchid growth. Typically, the temperature within an orchid pot is different from the air temperature; cooler during the day and warmer at night. The temperature within the pot determines the rate of root growth,

## Growing Tips for August Cont’.

nutrient uptake, decomposition of the medium, etc. In winter, a dark pot will absorb heat and roots remain well above the ambient air temperature at night. A soil temperature probe is ideal for understanding growth of orchids because it indicates what is happening in the pot. Hobbyists often note that root growth in Vandas cease much earlier in the fall than other groups of orchids. To some degree, this occurs because we generally grow Vandas in baskets where root temperature is at or near that of the air.

White plastic pots in a greenhouse remain much cooler than dark green pots even when there seems to be little direct light on the pot. Most surprising is the temperature within clear plastic pots. These act like little greenhouses and warm up quickly. A clear, plastic pot with medium exposed to direct sunlight can warm to well over 100 F in a matter of 15 minutes, while a white or even green pot remains below 90 F. This can be a problem in summer, but ideal in winter when air temperature is low and days short. Phalaenopsis mericlones grown side by side in clear and white pots with open their first flowers a week or so apart simply because of the difference in medium temperature produced by different types of pots.

This heat gain is most extreme when the medium is dry as the water in a wet medium absorbs large quantities of heat. Many successful hobbyists who live in environments that are not ideal for orchids take advantage of the different characteristics of pots and use it to mediate temperature extremes. Clay pots tend to be cooler than plastic in summer. Water evaporates from the exterior of the pot cooling the pot and its roots. Water is pulled continuously from the medium through the pot as long as the medium is wet. This works extremely well to cool orchids in hot climates during summer as long as there is lots of air movement and a supply of good water. The quality of water is critical since water is continuously evaporated from the surface of the pot and any dissolved salts are deposited on the pot surface.

If water quality is poor, i.e. lots of stuff in the water, a silver or grey sheen will develop on the pot surface that limits water movement through the pot. This salt buildup can become so severe that roots die when they come in contact with the pot. Fertilizer dissolved in deionized or rainwater can produce the same effect unless there is a sustained effort to flush pots. Pots can become so filled with a surface glaze of salt that water no longer moves from inside to outside a pot. In fact, salts can move back into the clay pot and make even the interior surface toxic to orchid roots. Hobbyists who use water high in