

December 2018 **The Orchid Grower**

Orchid Growers' Guild of Madison



NEXT MEETING DECEMBER 16th

December is here and so it's almost time for our annual holiday celebration at Olbrich Gardens with good food, good fellowship, and of course, orchids.

Please bring your orchids for ribbon judging at 1 pm. Bring a dish to pass and any holiday spirits you prefer. OGG will supply tableware. It is helpful if you use Sign-Up Genius as it gives us

an idea of how many members will be attending. If you prefer not to use Sign-Up Genius, just RSVP to Nancy Thomas at mikeandnancy@tds.net. 2018 OGG award winners will be named at the holiday party!

There will be no holiday orchids this year. It is also time to renew your membership at \$20/\$25. You can also mail your membership form [it's on our website] to OGG, PO Box 5432 Madison, WI. 53705.

Meeting Dates

- December 16
- January 20, 2019
- February 17
- March 17
- April 14
- May 19
- June TBA
- September 15
- November 17
- December 15

Meetings start at 1:30 pm at Olbrich Gardens unless otherwise noted

Up-Coming Events

- **February 2-3, 2019**, Orchid Quest,
- **February 16-17**, Batavia Orchid Society
- **March 2-3**, NEWOS
- **March 16-17**, ILLOWA

Officers and Committees

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Treasurer:
Denise Baylis (2020)
jrbaylis@tds.net

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello members,

The Orchid Guild has started the new year very well with a great series of speakers and well-attended meetings. I really appreciate our speakers being willing to talk about the plants brought in for judging. I have been learning a lot from these short presentations and I hope you all have appreciated them also. There is so much to learn about orchids, and with new thoughts about how to raise them! What works for one person might not exactly fit into your situation, but there might be some aspects that might. Growing orchids is a constantly learning experience with the variety and diversity of these unique flowering plants.

Besides having great speakers (Thanks Cynthia), our members taking care of hospitality (Thanks Jim and Shirl and others who brought items) help make our meetings more enjoyable.

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AOS: Nancy Thomas
MAOC: Keith Nelson
Orchid Digest: Open

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Stay tuned to be impressed with our December meeting with all members bringing something to share for your meal. We will have some fun games and a chance for socializing and meeting new members, and getting reacquainted with other members. We would like all food to be brought by 1 PM and we will have plant judging also. The room will be open by 12:30PM for setting up the food and the plants.

Late December and early January is the time of year to also start taking Orchid Quest posters around and sharing book marks to businesses, libraries, work places. The best publicity is word of mouth! You as members are a great resource!

We also will be needing items donated from business, such as gift cards, or items that can be used for the silent auction or the raffle. Last year we made \$700 on the raffle and \$1200 off the silent auction. Help with obtaining items, setting up, working on show days are much appreciated.

Orchid Quest is our largest yearly project. Orchid Quest is one way of educating the public about orchids to foster a greater appreciation of them which hopefully leads to a great sensitivity to the natural world and our effect upon our environment.

Happy holidays to all and I hope to see you at the December holiday party!

--- Sue Reed

REMINDER: DUES ARE DUE!

2019 dues are due. Dues are \$10 for students, \$20 for single memberships and \$25 for duos. Cash is accepted but checks are preferred. I am unable to attend the December meeting, so give your dues with any contact information changes to Sue Reed.

Denise Baylis
 Treasurer

The editor would like to thank Keith Nelson, Sue Reed, Cynthia Wadsworth, Nancy Thomas, Lorraine Snyder for their contributions to this newsletter.



Callie is Grandpa Keith's automatic orchid mister

Richard Philip “Dick” Narf (1939 - 2019)

I am saddened to inform you of the passing of a former OGG President and AOS award photographer, plus great supporter of the Guild, Richard Narf. Just last year Rich’s wife, Pat, passed. While Richard was President, he and Pat were the whole hospitality committee. They brought the snacks for every meeting while still organizing the Guild and doing the show AOS photography. Rich donated his fantastic photos that he printed himself, to the Guild for major prizes and for the silent auction. Rich was a rock to the Guild and he will be greatly missed.

Sue Reed

Richard Philip “Dick” Narf, age 79, of Oregon, passed away on Monday, Oct. 29, 2018, due to complications from an infection. He was born on April 13, 1939, the son of Philip and Helen Narf.

Richard led an active life filled with numerous accolades, from breeding champion Siberian Huskies at Butterfly Acres Kennels to many entomological discoveries. His research was well documented in one of his many spellbinding research papers like “Emergence Pattern of Stoneflies (Plecoptera) in Otter Creek, Wisconsin.” A stonefly, now named *zealeuctra narfi*, was his limnological breakthrough and the must-see bug of the year. Yes, that’s right, our legacy is that we have a bug named after us! Not everyone can say that. In fact, one of us probably sucked that thing into a jar as Dad turned over rocks for us along the creek bed.

Dad spent most of his career working for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Research, keeping lakes alive and constantly bringing bugs home to live in our refrigerator, van, basement, garage—you know, just like anyone who brings their work home with them. He was passionate about the waterways and the ecosystem and proudly served as an executive member of the North American Benthological Society (we had to google that one too so don’t feel bad). Because he had too much time on his hands, or perhaps because he needed an escape, he was also a member of the American Entomological Society, as well as a charter member, and past president of the Wisconsin Entomological Society.

Dad, of course, could not slow down in retirement and would spend hours in his woodshop making



dog sleds. He also had a thing for cut and blown glass and dabbled in fine antiques; we blame his parents for that. He rekindled his love of astronomy and especially photography, always taking things to the next level. He won many awards for his photographs of orchids, as well as birds, particularly (no surprise here) waterfowl. No matter what he did, he was always a perfectionist just like his father.

Then the grandkids moved in. He spent countless hours playing with them, reading them breathtaking best sellers like, “Birds of North America” and “For the Love of Insects” in between driving them to soccer practice, and helping them raise (of course), bugs. From stick-bugs to caterpillars he was introducing his new generation to his passion. He also played a mean game of M&M and Twizler keep-away, by hiding stashes that will be found for years to come, if the bugs don’t get them first. Seriously, we don’t know where they are all stashed. For these and so many more reasons, Richard will be missed by many. (We, however, will not miss the bugs).

Richard is survived by his daughter, Maria Narf Spuller; son, Steven Narf, daughter-in-law, Aryka (Johnson); and his grandchildren, Kai, Adric and Clara. He is preceded in death by his wife, Patricia; and his parents.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Agrace HospiceCare. The family would like to extend a special thank you to the staff of Agrace and also the nurses and doctors at St. Mary’s Hospital. Online condolences may be made at www.gundersonfh.com.

November Presentation Recap

Discovering the Orchids of Ecuador

Niles Dusdieker, a member of the Eastern Iowa Society and an AOS judge, presented a travelogue titled *Discovering the Orchids of Ecuador*. This was a tour organized by Ecugenera following the World Orchid Congress in Gyayaquil, Ecuador last fall. Ecuador has more orchids than any other country, any many which have not yet been discovered and described. The tour traversed the three main habitats of Ecuador, dry eastern lowlands, the Andes, and the Amazon rainforest. The hiking was often steep and precarious.

The presentation wowed us with many photos of local orchids. A highlight of the trip was finding the Red *Phrag besseae* growing on wet, rocky streambeds by some waterfalls. The car was moving along when the guide shouted "Stop!", and everyone got out to look at a little patch of red the guide spotted. Niles exclaimed, "This is what we came to see!"

Niles emphasized many Ecuadorean orchids are endemic to very specific locations, even to one specific valley. He had a picture of at least one that apparently had not yet been described.

Niles credited his wife Lois with having a



Aliceara Hilo Ablaze 'Hilo Gold',
grown by Nancy Thomas



Photograph by Lorraine Snyder
Nile Dusdieker discussing attributes of orchids
submitted for ribbon judging

sharper eye than he for finding orchids. No falls or injuries were reported, but they certainly looked possible. Other times the vehicle simply stopped on the road and everyone walked along the road looking for orchids.

Much of the land in Ecuador has been disrupted. Orchids often grow well in disturbed areas like road sides because there is less competition from other plants and orchids can more easily get established. Some roadside areas were covered with blooming orchids.

An interesting observation was the number of *Pleurothallis* orchids that were blooming in the full sun in areas that looked quite dry. This is certainly not how most people try and grow them. Niles said these areas were covered in fog early every day and that is how the *Pleurothallis* orchids get their moisture.

A highlight of the trip was a stop at Ecugenera where Niles and Lois were accompanied by a personal salesperson who helped them select the best individuals of specific species Niles felt a need to adopt. The trip sounds like a wonderful event for any orchid enthusiast.

-- Keith Nelson

Report from the Fall Mid-America Orchid Congress

Mid-America Orchid Congress

The Mid-America Orchid Congress was held in Kansas City October 26-28, 2018. It was presented by the Orchid Society of Greater Kansas City. Ten vendors were selling plants and orchid related art.

The lecturers were:

- Roy Tokunaga, "Flower Boosters or How to Bloom Spectacular Orchids"
- Gary Meyer, PhD, "Dracuphilia, a Gothic Romance"
- Larry Zettler, PhD, "The Ghost Orchid Demystified"

An affiliated breakfast meeting focused on retaining new membership.

The MAOC business meeting was presided over by President Russ Vernon. A focus of this meeting was the struggle to find sites for the MAOC meetings.

A report on each lecture and the business meetings will be provided in the future for inclusion in the newsletter.

Keith Nelson, MAOC Liaison

From Keith Nelson

Mid-America Orchid Congress

"Flower Boosters"

by Roy Tokunaga

October 27, 2018

Roy is owner of H&R Nurseries, Waimanalo, HI. He has been hybridizing, cloning, and germinating orchids for more than 40 years. He is an accredited judge for the American Orchid Society and the Honolulu Orchid Society. Roy's passion has been the proper nutrition of orchids and searching for the mythical flower booster.

Commercial growers and hobbyists always have good and bad years. If you are having a bad year, check your water. Something in the municipal water supply may have changed. Ray gave several examples of this. Be sure roots are well aerated. Flush plants regularly. If you have high total dissolved (TDS) salts flush for up to 45 minutes. If low in TDS a 10-15 minute flush will do. If you grow outside a 1 inch rainfall will do the same thing. If you are growing outside with high rainfall add dolomite or use Michigan State Fertilizer (MSF). Rain and RO water has no calcium or magnesium so using MSF adds needed minerals. High phosphorus is not needed for anything. In the summer 1 tsp MSF/gallon/week is good. In winter use 1/3 tsp MSF/gallon/week. If you have high TDS and do a lot of flushing the best fertil-

izer will be 20-20-20 or 18-18-18. Peters 10-30-20 is not a good choice.

The best growers learn to balance sun, fertilizer and humidity. Maximize the light for the specific plant. Ask successful local growers for advice about growing in your area. Knowing the requirements of specific plants is essential. For example, *Habenaria medusa* needs low light, low fertilization and very pure water. Any salt build-up is fatal. For dendrobiums too much fertilizer is not good because it shifts the plant to a vegetative growth state instead of a blooming state. If dendrobiums have a lot of kakis instead of flowers the cause may be too much fertilizer.

As a starting point for a mixed collection a pH of 5 to 6.5 is good. If you use Orchiata which has dolomite added, the dolomite will wash out in about a year and the pH will go down so add a little dolomite to the potting mix.

For a good test of root zone pH you can slip the root ball out of the pot and put the root ball in a plastic bag. Put the root ball back into the pot. Fill the pot ¾ full with distilled water. After the root ball and water sits in the bag for 30 minutes remove the root ball from the bag and filter the water through a coffee filter. Then test the pH of the water. Ray always

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uses test strips because he doesn't like to mess with meters. See Orchid Magazine, February 2017 page 115 for illustrations.

Ray's current formula for flower production:

On mature plants JUST BEFORE the spikes appear apply additional calcium based fertilizer ½ tsp per gallon with 1/8 tsp of a micronutrient package like STEM by Peters or Microplex by Millers Chemical. Use this for a MAXIMUM of 3 months.

References:

"What's in Your Water", J&C Peters, Orchid Magazine May 2012.

"Without High Phosphorus", Jan Szyren, Orchids Magazine June 2002."

"Choosing Fertilizer Based on Water Quality", S. Bottom and R. Tokunaga, Orchids Magazine February 2017.

Keith did buy some of the Microplex by Millers Chemical so if anyone wants to try some let him know.

Orchids from the Fall MAOC



A few displays from the Fall MAOC. Clockwise from top left: *Dendrobium Green Mist* from H & R Nurseries, *Bulbophyllum Elizabeth Ann 'Jean'* HCC/AOC from Timbuktoo Orchids, and the display of Miranda Orchids

NOVEMBER OGG RIBBON JUDGING

First Place

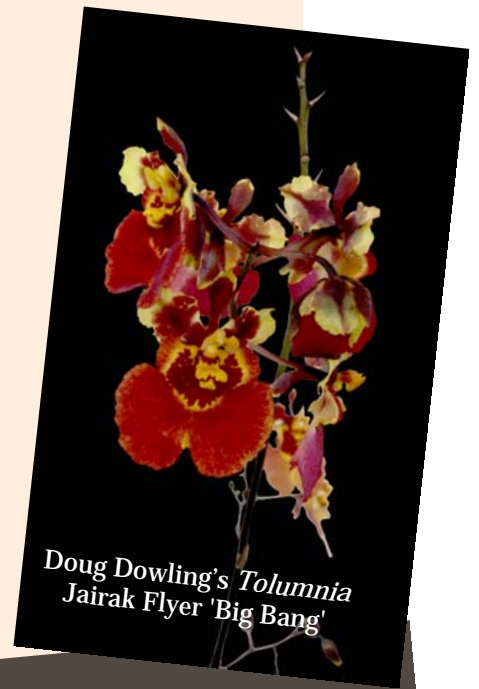
Gary Lensmeyer
 Keith Nelson
 Keith Nelson
 Keith Nelson
 Gary Lensmeyer
 Lynn West
 Steven Thimling
 Doug Dowling

Monnierara Millennium Magic
Comparettia speciosa
Vanda Sansai Blue
Angraecum distichum
Epicattleya Volcano Trick 'Fireball'
Lc Bowri-Albida 'Pink Lady'
Brassia hybrid
Tolumnia Jairak Flyer 'Big Bang'

Second Place

Doug Dowling
 unknown
 Gary Lensmeyer
 Shirl Roberts

Dendrobium moniliforme Matsunoyuki
Stenorrhynchos speciosum
Cattleya Hybrid
Bc Maikai 'Mayumi'



Doug Dowling's *Tolunnia*
 Jairak Flyer 'Big Bang'



Keith Nelson's *Angraecum distichum*



Gary Lensmeyer's *Monnierara* Millennium
 Magic



Stenorrhynchos speciosum



Keith Nelson's *Comparettia speciosa*

ORCHID QUEST UPDATE

The Orchid Quest planning committee continues to meet every month. Since we are returning to Olbrich Gardens much is the same as last year. Our space in the lobby will be slightly smaller due to construction.

A signup sheet will be passed around at the next meeting. We need volunteers all day on Friday. Helping after work is perfect because we cannot set up the tables and signs in the lobby until after 4 pm. We need volunteers Saturday morning. We can start at 6:30 pm, breakfast will be available at 7:00 pm. We ask that you park either across the street or by the baseball field because parking will be more limited due to construction. We may have someone available to move your car if that would be helpful. We also need volunteers during the show to help with a members' table, raffle, silent auction, plant check and just generally to be available for relief of vendors and other volunteers.

We are looking for items to raffle. If there is a business that you have approached or would like to approach, please let Carrie Weismann know so we do not duplicate efforts.

We also sell member plants to benefit the OGG, so if you have plants you would like to donate, please start thinking about that now. Please save iffy plants until we auction members-only in May.

Donations of food or cash are needed to feed the



Richard Miller brought in an example of a Vanda growing happily in a clear glass vase

volunteers and vendors. Please see Keith.

If you would like to help fund an award for the show, donations start at \$25.00. Awards are determined by the AOS judges. A signup sheet will be available at the next meeting.

Posters and bookmarks will be available at the next meeting. Please start to tell all of your friends. The event is a wonderful winter break.

UP-COMING EVENTS

- **January 26-27, 2019**, Orchid Society of Minnesota "Winter Carnival Orchid Show", Marjorie McNeely Conservatory, 1225 Estabrook Drive, St. Paul, MN
- **February 2-3, 2019**, Orchid Quest, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, 3330 Atwood Ave, Madison, WI
- **February 16-17, 2019**, Batavia Orchid Society, DuPage County Fairgrounds, 2015 Manchester Rd., Wheaton, IL
- **March 2-3, 2019**, Northeastern Wisconsin Orchid Society, "Orchid Magic", DoubleTree by Hilton, 123 East Wisconsin Ave., Neenah, WI
- **March 16-17**, ILLOWA Orchid Society Spring Show, Quad City Botanical Center, 2525 4th Avenue, Rock Island, IL
- **March 23-24, 2019**, Wisconsin Orchid Society Spring Show