All things in life change, as evidenced by everything that has happened this year. Our orchid growing hobby is no exception. For the last several years, the Mid-America Orchid Congress has been using the same show schedule, with occasional modifications as our growing and showing habits have changed. But we have fallen far behind the changes that have been made in taxonomy and nomenclature with the advent of DNA typing and a clearer understanding of orchid families.

For the last two years or more, the Show Schedule Committee has been working on a complete revision of the show schedule. We have used your reports of number of plants entered in each class. We have talked to experts and expert growers in several of the genera to have the best information possible. The result is the show schedule and accompanying documents attached.

Every numbered class is different. You will not be able to use any previously published show schedule.

There was no longer any way to adjust the class definitions without a complete renumbering. The changes in nomenclature have been too drastic. And what you grow now and show is different than what was being grown before.

We always attempt to make the show schedule as useful as possible to the societies, show chairmen, and plant registrars – those who are most closely in contact with the schedule. We have made several changes that we hope will reduce ambiguity and make the logical flow of classes easier to understand and use. Some of the changes are below:

In most cases, the subclasses (24a . . .) have been eliminated, and numbers are sequential.

Open competition exhibits separated Educational from Artistic, to make the class choice easier and more defined.

The Laelia class is now only for true Laelias. The term ‘traditional’ is gone.

Sophronitis is gone. Small red, orange and yellow hybrids are accommodated in the Cattleya hybrid classes.

White Cattleya hybrids and Semi-alba Cattleya hybrids have been combined. The numbers in the classes no longer warranted two separate classes.

Multiflora hybrid Paphs are now listed at the beginning of the hybrid Paph groups. Many people were entering them by color as the first available class, instead of using the multiflora class at the end of the group.

Doritis is gone. It is no longer considered a valid name. All Doritis have been rolled into Phalaenopsis or allied genera.

Odontoglossum is gone. Perhaps someday the taxonomists will alter their conclusions, but that hasn’t happened yet.

Dendrobium has been divided. There are now 10 Dendrobium classes along with a class for allied genera. We had many, many miscellaneous Dendrobiums entered, and we’ve tried to get all those separated.

Pleurothallids have been divided into 5 classes. This should help relieve the log jam in that group and allow the growers to showcase their plants.

Lycaste and Maxillaria classes have been re-sorted to get the new name changes in the correct listing.

A class for foliage plants has been added.

Miniature class is gone. Any flower that was eligible for the mini class can be accommodated in a class for its genera. For those genera with flowers with a wide size range, we have added size breaks for the different flowers.

The Show Rules and Regulations are essentially the same. Changes were made to synchronize with the change in class numbers in the show schedule. Societies are allowed to choose how many entries per class an exhibitor may enter. This was changed a few years ago. Double entry may be allowed in two classes only – Specimen plants, and First Bloom Seedling.

Please forward this to your show chairs, registrars, exhibitors, and anyone who needs to directly use these documents.

MAOC is planning a ZOOM meeting later in August during which you or anyone in your society can ask questions and help us explore how to use this schedule to its best advantage. If you have questions or issues with the schedule, please save them for the ZOOM meeting, so everyone can take advantage of all the collected knowledge of all the societies.

We will be asking you again to send us the number of entries in each class at you shows. This is what we need to work to make the show schedule easier and more relevant for your shows.

Thank you for your patience. This will not be easy. People will have old show schedules with their orchid show kits, but using those will create a situation in which every entry is wrong. Everyone who uses the show schedule will need to be using the same one.