

November
2008

The Orchid Grower

Orchid Growers' Guild of Madison



NEXT MEETING NOVEMBER 16th at Orchids Garden Centre & Nursery “What's New at Orchids Garden Centre & Nursery”

Chuck Acker, one of the founding OGG members, and Kent Franz will be



Photograph by Judy Stevenson
Lc. Mary Elizabeth Bohn 'Kathy', Best of Show at
MAOC

the speakers for our next meeting. Kent has years of greenhouse experience starting with Roorbachs Greenhouses in Manitowoc. He also owned his own greenhouse business growing and selling hydroponic vegetables. Kent relies on Chuck's expertise with orchid growing. Chuck grew up in this facility with his family and the orchids. He has a passion for plants and orchids in particular.

Meeting Dates

- November 16—Orchids Garden Centre & Nursery
- December 14 - Meeting Room
- January 18, 2009— Meeting Room
- February 15 -Meeting Room
- March 15—Meeting Room
- April 19—Atrium
- May 17—Meeting Room
- June TBA
- September 27—Meeting Room
- October 18—Meeting Room
- December 20—Meeting Room

Meetings start at 1:30 unless otherwise noted

Up-coming Events 2009

- January 31—February 1, 2009 Orchid Quest
- February 21-22, Batavia Orchid Show
- March 14-25, NWOS
- March 27-29, Spring MAOC, Columbus OH
- April 11, Spring Orchid Sale

They will talk about some of the changes being made there with information about their new direction and products. There will be a tour of the new 15,000 square foot structure (actually the former structure used in the Manitowoc greenhouse.) Finally, if there is time, Chuck would be happy to open up to questions on other topics as well.

Be sure to bring your plant, P. Golden Peoker x P. Hausermann's Gold Cup, from last year to be judged during "Chuck's Annual Orchid Plant Challenge." The winner will receive a \$50 gift certificate good for any merchandise at Orchids and there will be another plant for another challenge next year.

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Orchid Digest: Jill Hynum (2009)

CAMERON ON BAR-CODING

Ken Cameron is the recently hired director of the Wisconsin State Herbarium, and an expert on the vanilla orchid. He spoke at the October meeting of the OGG, and introduced some of his graduate students, who he brought as guests. Their interests ranged from the biology of bromeliads and orchids to epiphytes in general.

Vanilla is a diverse genus with upwards of 100 species. A number of species produce showy flowers; others like *V. aphylla* are leafless.

Vanilla planifolia is the only one of more than 25000 species of orchids in the world that has a significant agricultural value. Vanilla has a long history of human cultivation in Mexico. Modern scholars believe that the Totonas were the first to cultivate vanilla (or tlilxochitl.) A mural by Diego Rivera depicting periods of Mexican history portrays a Tootona chief presenting an Aztec chief with an orchid vine. Vanilla has always been closely associated with cocoa in Mexican and Central American cuisine, and they remain closely associated flavors today in candies and ice creams. It is also used in fragrances, as a healing herb and as an aphrodisiac.



All commercially produced vanilla is the result of a labor intensive cultivation process. Vanilla is derived from the seed pod or 'bean' of the vanilla orchid. Hand pollination of flowers that are fertile for only a few hours is required (there is a single species of natural pollinator), a nine month wait until the seed pod is hand picked before opening, dried, gently crushed, and then 'fermented' to extract its unique odor and flavor. This cultivation, whether in Mexico or elsewhere, is usually done by small groups of people in small batches as a family enterprise. For this reason vanilla beans are traded on the world market as a prized commodity. Vanilla beans recently have been traded at \$500 per kilo. Only saffron is a more expensive crop. Today most of the world's vanilla supply is grown in Madagascar, which exports an average of 1000 metric tons of vanilla beans each year. This one crop represents 10% of their entire domestic gross product.

Looking at DNA from chloroplast and nucleus it is possible to deter-

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mine the relationships and differences among plant species. By using a DNA bar-coding technique that is referenced to a known library of DNA variants at the same genetic loci as are known from a sample, the proper identity or relatives of the sampled plant may be determined.

The ancient orchid subfamily Vanilloideae is the perfect group to study questions of evolution, diversity, etc. Its recognition as a subfamily was discovered through DNA analysis which has proved useful to solve problems of orchid classification. A 1999 study showed that vanilla fell out as a primitive group related to asparagus. Its modern distribution as a genus mimics the distribution one would expect from the breakup of Gondwanaland.



Vanilla Lutescens Moq. Tand. La Guayra (*V. pompona*), from "Flore des serres et des jardins de l'Europe"

Prof. Cameron has collected samples of vanilla species and cultivars from all over the world tropics. The samples are usually as dried leaves in silica gel. Stored in this way, the DNA in the specimen will keep indefinitely in a freezer and is useful for future analysis. He is looking to see how vanilla is related to other orchids. Most closely related to vanilla are a group of Asian vine orchids, in particular, one from Australia called *Psuedovanilla*. This genus is leafless, feeds on fungi in the soil rather than depending exclusively on photosynthesis, and has winged seeds. The latter genus lacks the chemical vanillin in the

seed pods, which gives the vanilla pod its characteristic flavor (and economic value.)

A grower planting vanilla cuttings needs to be certain that what he is planting is in fact a specific species and cultivar. A buyer needs to know that the dried vanilla seed pods are from a specific species or cultivar. In the past a reference book would be used to identify an unknown plant, but descriptions are all based on flowers, not the leaves or fruit. It takes five years for a vanilla orchid to produce a blossom. The seed pods are not visually unique. However, DNA bar-coding works with fragments of plant tissue from all stages of life so the blossom is unnecessary for identification. The value of vanilla on the open market can vary greatly depending on the plant and country of origin. DNA bar-coding can unmask look-alikes and hence protect the buyer's investment. While the chemical vanillin is easily synthesized, the complex chemical mix present in the natural pod is still the most prized for aromatic flavoring by cooks, who can even distinguish among cultivars in taste testing, and this mix has yet to be synthesized for any variety of vanilla.

For more information on vanilla, Prof. Cameron suggested Tim Ecott's book, Travels In Search Of The Ice Cream Orchid and "the vanilla queen" Patricia Rain's cookbook, The Vanilla Chef.

Orchid Growers' Guild of Madison Presents...

ORCHID QUEST 2009

Featuring Dazzling Displays of Orchids from Around the World,
Seminars and Fabulous Vendors
JANUARY 31 - FEBRUARY 1
Saturday 10 AM - 5 PM, Sunday 10 AM - 4 PM
\$6.00 admission or \$9.00 for 2-day admission
Under 12 free with paid adult admission
Exhibition Hall, Alliant Energy Center
Madison, Wisconsin
Web site: orchidguild.org or Judy Stevenson 608-231-3163

AWARDS FROM THE MID-AMERICA ORCHID CONGRESS, SEPTEMBER 6-7, 2008

The Fall 2008 Mid-America Orchid Congress as held September 5-7, 2008, at the Kings Island Resort and Conference Center in Mason, Ohio, hosted by the Miami Valley and Greater Cincinnati Orchid Societies. Meetings of the Slipper Orchid Alliance, International Phalaenopsis Alliance and Oncidium Alliance also took place. The well-attended orchid show and sale held in conjunction



Cycnoches Jean E. Monnier 'Phantom Spots' above; *Dendrobium amboinense* 'Perfect Timing' below



with the meetings consisted of 33 exhibits - 10 orchid societies, 2 amateurs and 21 vendors and 1 Wardian case.

Two exhibits were 100 sq. ft. or larger. The Miami Valley Orchid Society exhibit was outstanding.

Fred Clarke's lecture featured a discussion of hybridization breakthroughs and resulting new hybrids of *Catasetum*, *Cycnoches* and *Mormodes*. Henry Oakeley shared his experience retracing the steps of Ruiz and Pavon in Peru and rediscovering species not recorded since their original description by the explorers in the late 1770s. Ron McHatton delved into what birds, bees and butterflies are really seeking when they serve as orchid pollinators.

Stephen Benjamin chaired the 42 judges in eight teams as they evaluated the 614 entries. The judges awarded the AOS Show Trophy to the exhibit entitled 'MVOS Rainforest' put in



AOS Show Trophy winner 'MVOS Rainforest,' Miami Valley Orchid Society

by the Miami Valley Orchid Society (see above right). The exhibit workers were chaired by Eric Sauer, and, in addition to the Show Trophy, they earned an AOS Gold Certificate of 92 points.

Twenty-two orchids were evaluated for AOS awards and the following nine received them:

1. *Cycnoches* Jean E. Monnier 'Phantom Spots' (*barthiorum* x *coop-eri*) AM/AOS 81 pts, Deborah Longworth (New Carlisle, IN)



Lc. Mary Elizabeth Bohn 'Kathy', Best of Show

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2. *Dendrobium amboinense* 'Perfect Timing' CBR/AOS, Jordon Hawley (Lexington, KY)
3. *Dendrochilum magnum* 'Kathy' CCM/AOS 86 pts, Jim & Kathy Bailey (Xenia, OH)
4. *Guarisophleya* [Lc] Mary Elizabeth Bohn 'Kathy' (*Guarisophleya* [Lc] Blue Boy x *Guarianthe* [C] *bowringiana*) AM/AOS 82 pts, Jim & Kathy Bailey (Xenia, OH); awarded **Best of Show**
5. *Masdevallia* Lollipop Angel' (*triangularis* x *uniflora*) HCC/AOS 78 pts, J&L Orchids (Easton, CT)
6. *Maxillaria acuminata* 'Sticky Fingers' CHM/AOS 82 pts, Barry Jones (East Peoria,

IL)

7. *Paphinia herrerae* 'Pendulous Passion' AM/AOS 80 pts, Edgar Stehli (Broadview Heights, OH)
8. *Sophrocattleya* [Lc] Amphion 'Myra' (*Sophrocattleya* S.J. Bracey x *Sophrontis tenebrosa*) AM/AOS 83 pts, Jordon Hawley (Lexington, KY)
9. *Vanda* Pachara Delight 'Barbara's Purple Majesty' (Karulea x Gordon Dillon) AM/AOS 85 pts, Barbara Tisherman (Pittsburgh,

Special Mid-America trophies were also awarded:

1. Mid-America Perpetual Trophy for the most outstanding exhibit by an affiliated society: Miami Valley Orchid Society
2. Clifford and Vivian Walters Award for the best oncidium alliance plant: *Psychopsis* Mendenhall 'Hildos' FCC/AOS owned by Dr Malcolm Siegel of the Central



Vanda Pachara Delight 'Barbara's Purple Majesty'



Victorian Village Orchids

Kentucky Orchid Society

3. Memoria Raymond McCullough Award for the best epidendrum/encyclia: *Encyclia phoenicea* owned by Tom and Pat Stivers of the Central Ohio Orchid Society
4. Christine M. Chowning Angraecoid Award for the best angraecoid species: *Angraecum distichum* owned by Dr Malcolm Siegel of the Central Kentucky Orchid Society.

OGG RIBBON JUDGING, OCTOBER 2008

First Place:

Gary Brendemuehl

Phrag Acker's Superstar 'MVP' 4N x Mem. Dick Clements
'Rocket Flash' 4 N

Gary Brendemuehl

Paph bellatum

Gary Brendemuehl

Paph Henrietta Fujiwara (*primulinum flavum* 'Lehua Glow x
haynaldianum album '12 mile')

Audrey Lucier

Psychopsis papillio Mendenhall x Mendenhall 'Lace'

Sandy Delamater

Cym Sarah Jean 'Ice Cascade'

Sue Reed

Ornithocephalus inflexus

Jeff Baylis

Cochleanthes amazonica

Second Place:

Rich Narf

Gongora galeata – yellow

Gary Brendemuehl

Phrag Twilight 'Rising Rocket 4N AM/AOS x Waunakee
Sunset

Sandy Delamater

Phal speciosa 'Orchidglade'

Jodie Thistle

Vuylstekeara Melissa Brianne 'Shady Lady' HCC/AOS

Third Place:

Rich Narf

Gongora armeniaca

Sue Reed

Scaphosepalum breve

Gwyn Padden-Lechten

Oncidium ornithorhynchum

Sandy Delamater

Brassavola cucullate`



Ornithocephalus inflexus
grown by Sue Reed



Vuylstekeara Melissa Brianne 'Shady Lady'
HCC/AOS grown by Jodie Thistle

Paph bellatum grown by Gary
Brendemuehl



Blackhawk Orchid Society, October 2008

Exhibit set up by: Sandy Delamater and Judith Rapacz
Exhibit taken down by: Sandy Delamater

Display: Third Place

First Place: Sandy Delamater Phrag. Belle Hougue Point—BEST OF CLASS
Sandy Delamater Cym. Sarah Jean 'Ice Cascade'
Wayne King Slc Acker's Royal Hue

Second Place: Sandy Delamater *Brassavola cucullata* (sp)
Gary Brendmuehl *Paph bellatulum* (sp)
Chuck Acker Phrag. Don Wimber
Chuck Acker *Ddc. magnum*

Third Place: Susan Reed *Ornithocephalus inflexus* (Orcp.)
Susan Reed *Dendrobium johnsoniae* x *Dendrobium convolutum*
Wayne King *Phrag Calurum*
Wayne King *Brassavola nodosa* (sp)
Chuck Acker Phrag. Autumn Fire

NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next Board meeting is scheduled for November 24 at 7 pm. The meeting will be at Judy Stevenson's residence. To obtain the agenda and to be advised of any last minute changes, let Rich Narf know if you plan to attend.

Submit your photos to be included in the newsletter. Every month we want to include a gallery of photos to enjoy. Email your photos to Gary (brendemuehl@verizon.net) and Denise (jrbaylis@tds.net)

Sandy Delamater's Cym. Sarah Jean 'Ice Cascade'



UPCOMING EVENTS

- January 31—February 1, 2009 Orchid Quest
- January 24 – 25 2009. Minnesota Orchid Society, Winter Carnival Show, Marjorie McNeely Conservatory, 1225 Estabrook Drive, St. Paul, MN 55103
- February 21-22, Batavia Orchid Show, Charlestown Mall, Charlestown, IL
- March 14-15, 2009 - Northeastern Wisconsin Orchid Society Spring Show. "An Orchid Luau," Holiday Inn Neenah Riverwalk, 123 East Wisconsin Ave., Neenah WI
- March 21-22, 2009, Illinois Orchid Society Spring Show, Glencoe, IL
- March 28-29, 2009, 34th Illowa Orchid Society Spring Show, Putnam Museum and IMAX Theatre, 1717 West 12th Street, Davenport, IA
- March 27-29, 2009, Spring MAOC, Columbus OH
- October 10-11, 2009 Illinois Orchid Society Fall Mini-Show, Glencoe, IL