

But I wanted to go to a show...

My name is *Phaius tankervilleae*, but you can just call me Phaye. I live in a greenhouse. In the summertime I get to go outside and soak up the sun but in winter I spend my time in the greenhouse. My pot is 24 inches around, I weigh 60 pounds and without blooming I am about 40 inches tall. I started sending out my spikes in the beginning of January. They were only a few inches tall at the time. By early Feb. there were 20+ spikes. I had some nasty pests on my leaves and then my spikes, mealy bugs, that my owner sprayed for. She sprayed many times. She finally sat down and washed every single leaf, both sides, with insecticidal soap, and I have a lot of leaves, like 100! After that, she sprayed my spikes nearly every other day. That made a good dent in the mealy bugs but it left dead mealy bugs to see on my flowers. I wanted to go to an away show. My blooms were nearly all the way open for the Chicago show (early March) but I still had a problem with the mealy bugs so I set my sights on the Illowa show



two weeks later. I produced 24 spikes with 10-14 flowers per spike and my over-all height ended up about 60 inches tall. I was really showing off! Now away shows are set-up and taken-down by volunteers. My owner cleaned me off, got control of the mealy bugs and considered taking me. But I was 60 pounds, in a 24 inch pot and stand 5 feet tall. I guess I showed off too much. If I went into a vehicle, if I fit laying down, I would take up half of the vehicle. That is if they could lift me. I don't fit into any vehicle that my owner has. Where would all the other plants that were going to the show fit? Where would the props fit? I just got too big and showy. I didn't get to go to any show. I stayed in the greenhouse. If I had made it to the final away show, Illowa, I know I could have been awarded something nice. I just decided to show off too much. My owner decided to split me in three or four pieces next year and get me into several smaller pots. I will try to recuperate quickly and show her that I can be very beautiful in a smaller size. Just you wait. I will get to a show again sometime. I will stand up tall and show off and maybe even get an award for my beauty. I can't wait.

Phaye