



Houston Happenings

The Houston Orchid Society's Monthly Newsletter

JULY 3, 2003 MEETING

Meeting Time: 7:30 P.M.
Plant Table: Setup 7:00 P.M.
Place: Hermann Garden Center

Speakers: Bill Thoms
Topic: Paphs, Phrags, Bulbos, and more
Plant Sale: Setup at 7:00 P.M.

Renowned orchid grower, world traveler and speaker Bill Thoms will be presenting a talk on Bulbophyllums; Bizarre and Beautiful (the largest genus in the orchid world!) The talks are spiced with funny stories, funny associations and funny accents so whether you grow thousands of orchids, only a few, or none at all, you will have a wonderfully entertaining time and be able to grow anything better. Many of the most important requirements for growing world class plants are made easy to understand and remember. He will also share secrets to producing more award-winning plants faster.

Bill gives talks all over the country on a wide range of topics ranging from his specialty, "Bulbophyllums," through "Dr. Diag Nosy" (which has members bring in plants with problems and they are shown how to fix them) and "Bloated Bloom Table" (where the plants on the bloom table are given the time and attention they deserve). He also has a wide range of slide shows of Orchid Shows and Orchid Rescue (Collecting) in countries all over the world. They all are presented in a funny style that helps growers understand how the plants work and they all revolve around the Culture of Orchids. He helps the beginner grower with lots of advice about fixing problems and has a wealth of accumulated information for the more advanced grower, too! No matter what kind of plants you grow, Bill will give you tips to make them grow and bloom better.

Bill got his first orchid in 1969 when he rescued plants of *Enc. tampensis* in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. (He actually just picked them off trees pushed over for a new Condo, but 'rescued' sounds better). After moving to the Tampa area in the early 70's and, after having an orchid nursery for 20 years called Hilltop House, he and his wife, Doris Dukes, took several thousand of their favorite plants and built their own greenhouse at home to retire from the retail business, relax and continue their hybridizing program, (making about 200 crosses a year). Since then their plants have grown back up to 10,000, so have their awards: 58 Awards for Culture in over 20 genera including 2 Certificates for Cultural Excellence (90 points or better); three First Class Certificates for *Cirrhopetalums*, *Paphiopedilums* and *Phragmipediums*; and about 150 total awards in all categories. One of his latest is a 95 point CCE for *Cirr. rothschildianum* 'A-doribil', FCC/AOS.



Above: Specimen plant of probably *Bulbophyllum phalaenopsis*. Protecting it is Speaker Bill Thoms.

Below (right): Jay Balchan, center standing, hosts June Newcomers. (left): Species table winner, *Paph. lowii*, owned by Jay Balchan. Pic taken at Newcomers Meeting.

Don't miss this great opportunity to learn how to grow these fascinating plants by one of the world's best and to hear one of the most knowledgeable, interesting and funny speakers in the orchid world. Many people say he is one of the best speakers they have ever heard.* Come and see for yourself.

*Bill's mother, Cindy Banks and friends

Greg Scott



FROM THE PRESIDENT

No real president's message this month... just another tip for summer-time orchid fun. How many of you eat strawberries or blueberries? I bet a lot of you do, especially during the summer. Some of you probably even pick them yourselves, suffering insect bites, getting dirty, and having to drive to a farm. Well all that is nuts when you've got a perfectly good supermarket just around the corner. And those of you who pick your own strawberries don't get to participate in this month's tip.

The old marketing adage says "you pay for the packaging". Well that is certainly the case with anything you buy in the supermarket. So for those of you who buy strawberries and blueberries from the supermarket, how many of you just throw away the clear plastic containers they come in? Well don't do it. Those containers make perfect compost homes for seedling orchids. First, they are just the right size for a dozen or so small plants. Second, there are holes in the bottom of the container (usually a lot of holes) to allow for excellent drainage of standing water away from the media (be sure to use a media that won't wash out). As we all know, the fastest way to kill a small seedling is through rot. And finally, there is a lid which you can close if you have really small plants and want to create a humid, micro-environment for them. And you can cut the lid off as the plants become larger and the lid won't close. And then when you are done, you can throw away the container without feeling guilty.

I've found that other clear food containers like salad containers and restaurant leftover containers also work well for seedlings, but they don't have holes in the bottom so you need to be sure to drain some of the water out of them each time you water.

My wife loves it that I dig through the trash saving all these containers. I'm sure that your wife/husband will love it too. Give it a try!

Jay Balchan

JULY NEWCOMERS MEETING

In July we will meet at Orchids & Tropicals, home of Sheila and Laurie Skov's in Clearlake. They have over 4,000 orchids in a tropical jungle behind their home. The meeting is from 2:00 to 4:00 P.M on July 20. Even if you are not a Newcomer, if you live in the area, you may want to join us. They have a website at www.orchidsandtropicals.com if you would like to get a preview. Drive out 45 South towards Clearlake. Take the El Dorado Blvd. exit and turn left under freeway onto El Dorado Blvd. Turn right at Brookforest Drive. The address is 15727 Brookforest Drive, Houston 77059-6401. Their phone number is 281-286-1471.

In June over 25 Newcomers gathered at Jay Balchan's to tour his greenhouse and got a lesson on mounting orchids. Jay had several interesting ideas, including mounting in small clay pots and hanging with wire. Thanks to Jay for his hospitality.

Theresa M. Riggs

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

July 18-20. International Phalaenopsis Alliance (Symposium & Show), Green Oaks Hotel, 6901 West Freeway, Fort Worth, TX 76116. Contact Kathy Baxley, Kbaxley@academicplanet.com Phone 817-551-7363, Postal 45 Chelsea Dr, Fort Worth, TX 76114

August 1-3. Terrebonne OS Show. Southland Mall in Houma La. Contact Mr. Ashley Matherne, Abmatherne@hotmail.com. 985-594-4050

August 8, 9. HOS 24th Annual Workshop. Greenway Holiday Inn Select. A must for all orchid growers and lovers. See schedule on front page of this month's **Happenings**.

Mavis Klehm

HOUSTON JUDGING CENTER

Web site: <http://hjchoustonorchidsociety.org>

There were 12 plants entered for judging with 3 awards:

1. Laeliocattleya Canhamiana 'Granier's Violet' (sibling cross of C. mossiae x L. purpurata) HCC 79 points, owned by Ervin and Carol Granier, St. Gabriel, LA
2. Cattleya Granier's Pride 'Steven' (walkeriana x Minerva) HCC 78 points, owned by Ervin and Carol Granier, St. Gabriel, LA
3. Epidendrum melistagum 'Vera Cruz' (species) provisional CBR, owned by David Hunt, Houston, TX

There were 16 Accredited Judges, 3 Probationary Judges and 1 Student Judge present with a total of 30 people attending.

The next regular judging will be held on July 19, 203 at the B. J. & Margaret Bradshaw Wellness Center, 7731 Southwest Freeway (Highway 59 South). It is requested that all plants be entered prior to 11:30 A. M. so that they may be properly researched for judging.

Marg Putman

AOS CORNER

Need something special? Perhaps a little hostess gift or a small remembrance for someone you don't usually exchange birthday gifts with, maybe just a little token for a special occasion in someone's life or a "pick-me-up" for a friend with the blues. The AOS Emporium can solve the problem with a distinctive gift you'll be proud to give!

From fine crystal to jewelry to desk items to refrigerator magnets, the Emporium stocks a wide variety of appealing gifts in every price range. Just go to the website, www.orchidweb.org, click on Bookshop & Emporium and browse through the categories on the left. Click on any one of them and begin filling your shopping cart. AOS accepts Visa, MasterCard and American Express, plus, AOS members receive a 10% discount!

If you're not an AOS member, you can join through the website and are encouraged to do so. You can also give a gift membership, a subscription to the Awards Quarterly, or purchase a gift certificate the lucky recipient can use to purchase books or gift items.

One of the problems faced by every orchid show chairman is locating suitable trophies for the winners. No problem! Again, a wide assortment of items, both useful and beautiful, is available through painless shopping on the web.

It's not too soon to begin thinking about the Holidays. AOS has just released its third annual collectible ornament. Priced at just \$14.95 each, the 2003 ornament features a Laelia, while the still-available first two showcase a Lycaste and a Disa.

The possibilities are endless. Why not access the site right now and lay in a small supply of gifts. If you can resist keeping them for yourself, you'll be prepared with an appropriate item on hand for the next time you need something special for a special friend.

Donna Craig

JUNE PLANT TABLE

Great selection of beautiful orchids on the plant table - thanks to all that brought these plants! We had a total of 27 hybrids and 26 species on the plant table this month. The Hybrid winner for this month was a wonderful Brassia, owned by Jim and Melba Butler. The Species winner was Paph. lowii, owned by Jay Balchan. Don't forget to vote on your favorite hybrid and species on the plant table each month! Bill Bergstrom with Bergstrom Orchids (June's speaker) announced the hybrids and C J Maciejewski announced the species - thank ya'll very much!

Pam Vinson

HOS's 24TH ANNUAL WORKSHOP

In case you missed the schedule in the June Happenings. Here it is again:

Friday, August 8, 2003

2:00 PM Vendor set-up
 5:00 PM Plant entry
 6:30 PM Judging
 7-9:00 PM Reception, sales, silent auction (Benefits Houston Judging Center—bids close 8:30 PM)

Saturday, August 9, 2003

8-9:00 AM Sales, Coffee, Silent Auction (Benefit H O S)
 9:00 AM Welcome, Jay Balchan, Houston Orchid Society President
 9:10 AM Vandaceous Orchids, Bob Fuchs, RF Orchids
 10:00 AM Coffee Break
 10:30 AM Breakout sessions
 Bob Fuchs — Vandaceous Culture
 Ken Wilson — Pests and Diseases
 Anita Aldrich — Tolumnias (Equitant Oncidiums)
 11:20 AM Cattleyas, Ned Nash, Cal Orchids
 12:10 PM Lunch
 1:00 PM Silent Auction ends
 1:30 PM Andy Easton—Update
 2:20 PM Break out sessions
 Andy Easton, AOS — Culture
 Marvin & Renee Gerber — Potting, dividing, and re-potting
 Bill Tippitt — Phalaenopsis species
 3:10 PM Wrap-up

Registration forms will again be available at the July meeting and are also available to be downloaded from the HOS web site:

www.houstonorchidsociety.org

Here's a sample of what to expect.

"Are we becoming better orchid growers or are we mired in the lethargy of instant blooms and a lack of innovation in hybridizing and culture of our favorite genera? I will renew some of the new findings in orchid cultural practice from Europe and see where they have practical application to US conditions."

Andy Easton, AOS

Bio - Ned Nash

Ned has been an "orchid guy" all his professional life. Starting just out of college with a degree in Botany, and no marketable skills, he has gone on to a career in the orchid business, including managing one of the world's best known orchid nurseries. Most recently, he has been Director of Education & Conservation for the American Orchid Society, which 30,000 member group he had previously served in various capacities including Trustee and Chair of both Education and Conservation Committees. He recently moved back to California to join the well-known firm of Cal-Orchid, Inc., where he is fulfilling his life-long dream of nursery ownership. Ned will help us with growing better Cattleyas.

Remember. There's room for only 150 people so it's first come, first serve. Don't miss the opportunity to meet some famous 'orchid' people and sharpen your skills and knowledge of orchid growing.

Jerry Stephens

SYMPATHY

We have just learned of the death of Florence Little, one of the founding members of the Houston Orchid Society. Those who were fortunate enough to know her will always remember how she gave so generously of herself to help the society.

DON'T FORGET: Plant Raffle Tickets for Boxtops
www.boxtopsforeducation.com

Reminder: Thank the Following for the July Refreshments Table

Coordinator: John Van Domelen
 Punch/Drinks: Joe & Dolores Fields, Lynda & Paul Brandenberger
 Sheet Cake: Joe & Dolores Fields, Lynda & Paul Brandenberger
 Cookies: Joe & Dolores Fields, Lynda & Paul Brandenberger
 Snacks: Joe & Dolores Fields, Lynda & Paul Brandenberger
 Snacks: Joe & Dolores Fields, Lynda & Paul Brandenberger

Please volunteer for coming months.

Houston Orchid Society
2003 Officers and Committee Chairs

Officers

President	Jay Balchan	713-942-2298
1st Vice President	Greg Scott	936-447-3232
2nd Vice President	Pam Vinson	281-589-6719
Recording Sec.	Kelly Moseley	713-480-1062
Treasurer	Bill Bartlett	713-523-5031
Membership	Claudia Hanson	281-395-8575

Chairs

Guest Hospitality	Carol McDonald	713-667-8756
Happenings Editor	Don Ghiz	713-661-1885
Newcomers Group	Theresa Riggs	281-496-2296
Librarian	open	
Petals and Wings	Jim and Melba Butler	281-492-1437
Plant Raffle	Ted Baenziger &	713-525-3146
& May Sale	Dennis Tomjack	713-789-1748
Refreshments	John Van Domelen	281-464-9245
Silent Auction	Emily Lam-Jones	713-524-3055
August Workshop	Jerry Stephens	713-529-0808
Webmistress	Nina Rach	713-461-8605

Directors

Jim Butler	Melba Butler
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Joe Fields	Dolores Fields
Marvin Gerber	Renee Gerber
Theresa Riggs	Jerry Stephens
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Web-site: www.houstonorchidsociety.org

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Houston Orchid Society
Don Ghiz - **editor**
3217 Amherst Street
Houston, TX 77005

FIRST CLASS MAIL

JULY 2003 ISSUE



June hybrid table winners were Jim and Melba Butler with this fantastic Brassia. Congratulations!

HOUSTON JUDGING CENTER'S JUNE AWARDS (See Pg. 2 for full descriptions).

