

THE HOUSTON HAPPENINGS

The Monthly Newsletter of the Houston Orchid Society, Houston, Texas

Speaker Spotlight

By Deanna Roberts, First Vice-President

Our program for this January is going to be fun and exciting. We are delighted to host Harry Phillips, the brother of Andy of Andy's Orchids or the Species Nuts.

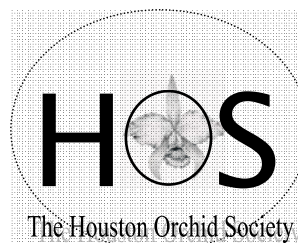
The title of his talk is "Mounted Orchids, Fact & Fantasy". It is an open forum discussion (no slide show) on the proper way to grow mounted orchids, with demonstrations on how to water correctly, what types of mounts to use, and how to mount orchids. He will try to dispel the fantasy that mounted orchids are difficult to grow. He will do a mounting demonstration and give the mounted orchid as a donation to a raffle. He has also convinced Calwest Tropical Supply to provide a donation of various orchid supplies to Houston Orchids Society to raffle off.

Harry Phillips was born in San Diego, California on July 9, 1953. His Father taught him to appreciate plants at an early age. In January of 1963 Harry's brother Andy (of Andy's Orchids fame) was born, and six years later is when it all started. They were both exposed to exotic plants and flowers at an early age, but when Andy became interested and later obsessed with orchids, Harry somehow resisted becoming involved with them for as long as he could. He assisted Andy in his passion by building his first two greenhouses, and Andy would reward him with a hybrid that was in bloom, tell him to bring it back when it goes out of bloom, and exchange it for one in bloom. Well this only lasted about a year until he decided that he wanted to keep one and get it to rebloom, the beginning of the end.

In 1986 Harry, with his soon to-be-wife Leslie, moved with Andy and his orchid collection to Encinitas, California. Being constantly exposed to all of Andy's orchids was beginning to have an effect on Harry. Shortly after, Andy left for four months to Costa Rica, and placed Harry in charge of the collection. When Andy returned he found that Harry had not killed too many plants and managed to become even more addicted. Andy now, feeling more confident about leaving his orchid collection under Harry's care, began to plan a cycling trip through South America which ended up lasting two years. After that it was all over for Harry, he was completely addicted to orchids.

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The Houston Orchid Society was established in 1945 and is a recipient of the AOS Distinguished Affiliated Societies Service Award.



Continued from previous column

Harry assisted Andy part time, with the beginnings of Andy's Orchids, for over 10 years while holding a full-time job to pay the mortgage, going full time about 8 years ago. His passion in orchids are in the Genera Sobralia and Elleanthus, but you ask him at any particular time of the year which is his favorite orchid, and it will most likely be the one or ones in bloom at that time. He has traveled in Mexico and Ecuador viewing orchids in the wild. Harry believes that growing epiphytic orchids the way they grow in nature is best and the orchids seem to agree. He will share with you his experiences with growing mounted orchids, and would like to dispel the fantasy that growing mounted orchids is difficult.

Orchid Arabia

A beautifully illustrated article appeared in the Aramco World magazine this month written by Eric Hunt, the author of Orchid Fever. It details a trip across the Arabian Peninsula looking for orchids.

The article can be accessed via the web at <http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com/issue/200606/orchid.arabia.htm> and well worth reading. Thanks to Nina Rach for sending the information to find the article.

President's Post

By Don Ghiz, President

I'm writing to you a few days before Christmas and the holidays ahead bring excitement and good will everywhere we look. By the time you read this, the holidays will be behind us, but I still offer you my best wishes for a successful new year.

A good part of my past few weeks has been spent building a team of volunteer workers to make our society function so well. I hope you'll take a moment to look over the new roster of chairs and Board members. Our thanks to all of them for their spirit of giving that will last throughout the year. Some may notice that the Intermediate Group is not listed. After a lot of discussion with the new officers and others, it was decided that the idea of an 'advanced Newcomers' group was probably diluting the efforts of the original Newcomers, so the decision was made to discontinue the Intermediate Group. This does not take away from the thanks due the Becks for all their hard work in the past.

The one thing about volunteerism that continues to impress me is how well it pays. So, when you get upset about something one of them does, please remember their pay scale. I'm reminded of something Jarvis Banks once said when he was President. He said, "Folks, it's only a flower club."

I agree with Jarvis in a way, but, in another way, I have to say that this year poses some interesting challenges. We must meet them head-on and we have to take them seriously. Our financial health depends on their success.

Many people are working diligently to pull off our Spring Show successfully. We have at risk close to half our financial assets, so it's very important that we make this event a success. Please, please, and one more please. Don't wait until the weekend of the Show to volunteer and put your time and talent into making it a success. The show will be earlier this year, March 16-18. Talk with John Stubbings or Laurie Skov now to see what you can do to help. If you have influence at another flower club and can bring them to exhibit, or a vendor to come, it would make a tremendous difference.

Right now, there's a team working on redesigning our web-site. Nina Rach has done an incredible job for the past fourteen years, but she has asked to step down and let another take the responsibility. To Nina, my personal thanks, and I hope all of you will take a moment to thank her for so many years of volunteerism. The web-site is one of our primary vehicles for bringing in new members and interest in our events. We simply have to have to have a 'killer' site to compete in this ever-growing electronic world we live in.

I don't want to dilute my message with too many to-dos. The message this month is, "Volunteer, volunteer, volunteer." I was kidding above when I talked about pay for volunteers, but the 'pay' we get is in the reward of giving and being a functional part of the orchid family of friends. So please get involved and have fun doing it!

Recap: December 2006

Annual Hospitality and HJC Auction

Our December meeting was one of good cheer, installation of the new officers and a great auction. Laurie Skov gave a farewell speech as his last meeting as President of the HOS. He and Sheila gave out lovely hand made heart shaped pillows to those special volunteers who have most helped the society during 2006. Many thanks to Sheila and her mother who donated the time and effort to make this generous gesture.

Deanna, our new first vice president spoke about membership for 2007 and gave a brief introduction of the speakers for 2007.

Laurie then introduced the new officers and swore them in. Our new officers for 2007 are:

President	Don Ghiz
First Vice President	Deana Roberts
Second Vice President	Holly Huston
Recording Secretary	Beverly Starr
Treasurer	Jay Balchan
Membership	Holly Miller

John Van Domelen presented plants to those members who had brought in the most plants for the plant table in 2006. Each winner was presented with a special plant from H&R Nurseries. The winner of both a plant and a \$50 gift certificate was Sandy Higham who brought in 39 plants for the table during 2006. Thanks to all who took the time to do so.

As his first act as the new HOS President, Don Ghiz presented Laurie Skov a plaque for his excellent tenure as president of the club.

Marvin Gerber presided over the auction which supports the Houston Judging Center. The total raised by the auction of the plants was approximately \$3,200, with many special thanks to Jeff Bradley for his donation of divisions of several rare older cattleyas which brought in over \$1,300, including \$1,000 for a division of C. Nigrella "Jungle Princess". There were also generous donations from Houston Judging Center judges and volunteers, and from HOS members.

Houston Judging Center

By Margaret Putman

HJC Results - December 16, 2006 -

There were 8 plants entered with no awards. There were 14 Accredited Judges, 2 Probationary Judges, 2 Student Judges and 1 Clerk present, with a total of 24 persons attending. The next regular judging will be held January 20, 2007 at the Jerebeck Center, Room 202, University of St. Thomas, 2000 Mt. Vernon Street, Houston, Texas. It is requested that all plants be entered before 11:30 A. M. so that they may be properly researched prior to judging.

Houston Judging Center Photo Essay

Since our December meeting included an annual auction benefiting the Houston Judging Center, we thought that a bit of background information on what they do would be appropriate. Phillip Free provided us with a photo essay from November and December judging. Special thanks to Melba Butler who helped me identify the people and plants as well as a short article on what judges look for in a Cattleya Alliance flower.



(From left to right) Alice Barrios, Nina Rach, Laura Aberkron, Don Maples, Melba Butler, and Don Ghiz examine Bc. ___ (as yet unnamed) (C. lulu x B. Little Stars) 'Clown Alley Orchids' at one of the judging tables.



Here Regina Wilson discusses the merits of a Cattleya hybrid. See the article by Melba Butler on what judges look for in a Cattleya Alliance flower on Page 6. The group in the background (from left to right) are Terri Dolney, Dolores Fields, Marg Putman and Mavis Klehm who are on the very important and vital HJC clerking team.



Student judge Brian White counts flowers on *Onc. nudum* 'Vera Cruz' with Judge Marilyn Holloway so that the plant can be compared with others previously judged.



Theresa Riggs is our official photographer for the judging center. Here she is shooting a picture of an *Oncidium andreanum* that belongs to David Hunt.



As part of each judging, a program is presented to further educate judges. Here Marvin Gerber, HJC chair, addresses the participants.



Culture Q&A

HOS Culture Q&A Panel: Ted Baenziger, Jay Balchan, Dolores Fields, Joe Fields, Marvin Gerber, Renee Gerber, Doug Harris, Rick Hepler, Julius Klehm, Nina Rach, and Greg Scott.

Editor's Note: We did not receive any questions this month for Culture Q&A, but will start it back up during January. Please send any questions you might have to sataylor@eastex.net.

EpiWeb a new environmentally-friendly medium

I came across a reference to a new product the other day that I'd like to let you know about. It replaces Osmunda, the roots of the fern *Osmunda regalis*, which was used near to the point of extinction, and tree fern, the roots of the *Dicksonia* fern which is now also at the point of extinction and red listed for commercial use. These two products for years have been used for mounting orchids as they last a long time and provide excellent bases for roots to adhere.

A new product, EpiWeb, has been developed and is being produced in China from 70% recycled soda bottles. It is configured to resemble tree fern, but is a totally inert product and can be reused indefinitely when sanitized either by boiling or cooking in a microwave for 3-5 minutes. It will dry out quickly, but does absorb water so that roots will get moisture for a period of time before drying out. It allows for thorough soaking because it will not float as many other products so can be immersed and will soak up water.

It comes in a variety of products from flats, pieces, pots, branches and baskets. In the US it is distributed by Ray Barkalow at First Ray's Orchids (<http://www.firstrays.com/>).

The product was reviewed by Hackan Hallander in Orchideer in March 2006. The article can be accessed at http://www.epiweb.se/A_new_promising_planting_material.pdf in an English translation. He offers some very interesting thoughts on the product. And there is a very informative site by the developer and producer of the product at <http://www.epiweb.se/english.html>.

AOS Corner

By Melba and Jim Butler

New President for AOS

Carlos Fighetti has been involved in orchids for more than 30 years. He has served on the Board of the American Orchid Society for the past nine years, five years as a Trustee and four years as the nonprofit organization's Vice-President. He was a member of the AOS's Affiliated Society Committee for eight years; a member of the Information Committee for four years (three as its Chair); and currently serves as a member of the Library and Archives Committee, of which he was Chair for two years. Carlos has also been a member of the Finance Committee for the past five years. In addition, he has volunteered his time as a member of two Nominating Committees of the Society.

He is the past President and a current Trustee of the Greater New York Orchid Society, where he also served for eight years as show Chair of the prestigious New York International Orchid Show. In addition, he is a Trustee of the Ramapo Orchid Society, and a member of the North Jersey Orchid Society, the Manhattan Orchid Society, the Puerto Rican Orchid Society and the Peruvian Orchid Society. Carlos was the founding president and is a current director of the International Phalaenopsis Alliance.

An accredited AOS Judge, Carlos has amongst his judging experiences two World Orchid Conferences, the Tokyo Grand Prix Orchid Show, the Taiwan show and several Latin American shows. He has lectured about orchids all over the USA and Canada, as well as at many international venues.

Carlos lives in Guaynabo, Puerto Rico, where he grows approximately 1,200 orchid plants. He grows a mixed collection, although "I now have quite a few species." A grower of note, his plants have received more than 90 awards from the AOS for horticultural, flower quality and cultural merits, including three FCCs. He has also received eight AOS show trophies and many other awards for exhibits at orchid shows around the country.

Introduction to 1% for Orchid Conservation

By Mark Sullivan

In situ orchid conservation and habitat preservation are the first line of defense for safeguarding orchid species for the future. Orchids in situ and their habitat are destroyed regularly around the world from illegal collecting, logging, farming and other human activities. With recent discoveries of such orchid species as *Phragmipedium kovachii*, one wonders what other species have yet to be discovered. Will they be discovered before they are destroyed? There is little doubt that orchid species have disappeared before being identified because of habitat destruction. What have we missed?

What orchid species may we miss out on in the future? When an orchid is found at the beginning of the 21st century with the flower the size of a man's hand outstretched and the flower color of a bright red/purple, one can only wonder what else we haven't discovered yet? Our collective action today will determine the state of orchid species for future orchid growers.

1% for Orchid Conservation (1% FOC) is a program of the Orchid Conservation Coalition (<http://www.orchidconservationcoalition.org/>). Organizations that participate in 1% FOC commit to budget 1% or more of their net revenue towards in situ orchid conservation projects of their choice. The choice of where a donation should go is not limited to the non-profit orchid conservation organization participating in the OCC. Organizations can invest in their own in situ conservation project. As the coalition membership increases, more orchid organizations will consider participating, thus increasing the donor base for in situ orchid conservation. One of the biggest hurdles for in situ orchid conservation is funding. Imagine if every orchid society budgeted 1% or more of their net revenue towards in situ orchid conservation, funding would increase. It does not matter whether an orchid society's contribution is 1 dollar, 100 dollars, or 1,000 dollars. The combination of all donations will positively impact orchid conservation. Orchid growers, societies and businesses actively engaging in donating will make a difference.

The goal is to raise awareness and money for orchid conservation. Orchid societies and businesses worldwide can participate. A participating orchid society's board determines what amount is 1% of net revenue of its society and whether a society has fulfilled its commitment. Part of the net revenue can be non-monetary donations such as volunteering. An important part of the 1% FOC program is networking between societies, businesses and orchid conservation organizations. Through networking we can identify orchid conservation organizations and projects that are effective and worth funding. It is through raising money, awareness and networking that participants in 1% FOC will help save orchids in situ and safeguard their habitats for future orchid enthusiasts.

Currently there are five orchid societies participating: the San Francisco Orchid Society, the Orchid Species Society of Western Australia, the New Hampshire Orchid Society and Bucks County Orchid Society (PA, USA). Four businesses: the Orchid Seedbank Project, Nascent Orchids, Mist Exotics and the Calypso Orchid Company. Listed non-profit orchid conservation organizations: Orchid Conservation Alliance, Orchid Conservation International, Grande Ronde Overlook Wildflower Institute Serving Ecological Restoration (GROWISER), Tropical Research and Education Center (TREC) and Phytosophy. The American Orchid Society and the Orchid Digest have endorsed 1% for Orchid Conservation.

Mark Sullivan is the administrator of the Orchid Conservation Coalition and its projects. For more information <http://www.orchidconservationcoalition.org/>.

Bring in Plants for the Plant Table

The first time I came to the HOS meetings I was astounded with the beautiful plants on the plant table. It gave me good a chance to look at the actual flowers of all the orchids I'd seen online and in those beautiful full-color catalogs that I had been drooling over.

But the last thing I thought about was bringing in plants. Mine were so small compared to those that I was seeing. They might only have one or two flowers compared to 20-30 on the beautiful big plants brought in by the professional growers. I just knew I'd be embarrassed to show my little plants.

Then one of the hobby growers brought in one of her plants and I went and talked to her about what her culture was like and she assured me that the plants were easy to grow here. She even gave me a piece of the plant the next month. She encouraged me to bring in some of my plants so that other new growers would know that they, too, could grow here.

This has turned out to be good advice. When you bring in plants the newer growers will likewise ask you questions that they're embarrassed to bring up to the experienced growers. You can pass on what you've learned about the particular plant in your own growing conditions. If you are having any kind of problems with it, the experienced growers are very helpful with advice and tips as to how to make it grow better.

The HOS has even developed a "thank you" for those people who bring in lots of plants in the form of a plant for the top nine of the top ten. The person who has brought in the most plants for display during the year is presented with a gift certificate in the amount of \$50 which can be used to buy -- what else -- more orchids!

Our congratulations to Sandy Higham who has been the winner for the last two years of the top award. She always brings in several plants with a total for 2006 of 39. It was she who encouraged me to try bringing in plants and also to enter some plants in the March show last year. It was a lot of work, but extremely enjoyable and educational.

Do join us in showing off your flowers!

Notes from the Editor

By Susan Taylor

Please help me move the newsletter in the direction you want. I would like for it to be informative, helpful and useful to all our members.

A newsletter can only be as good as its editor and the people who help the editor by letting them know what the membership wants. I am excited to take over from Nanette and Doug George who made a great difference in the newsletter and how it was put together. I only hope I can provide you with as good a product as they did. Fortunately, Nanette has generously agreed to help me out when I get stuck, so I hope that the transition will be as painless as possible.

If you have ideas for articles, either that you write or give me an idea to research and write about, please let me know. If you see anything interesting in the news, in a book or on the web, please send it to me at sataylor@eastex.net so I can pass the information on to the rest of the members.

Are you an expert on growing a specific plant in the Houston heat? Would you be willing to provide me information or write a guest column on what you know so that others can take advantage of your expertise?

I would like to try to reduce the cost of the newsletter to the society as well as the usage of paper by requesting that those of you who would be willing to receive the newsletter by email link to contact me directly at sataylor@eastex.net. This will allow those who truly prefer the hardcopy version to continue receiving it that way. In the interests of conservation I think it is important to try to reduce the number of printed copies where we can do so without compromising quality.

The deadline for February's *Happenings* will be Wednesday, January 17, with the exception of the Houston Judging Center results which will not be available until after judging on Saturday.

Cattleya Flower Judging

By Melba Butler

In accordance with the *AOS Handbook on Judging and Exhibition*, when judging species or hybrids of the Cattleya alliance, everything considered is in accordance with the parental background with improvement and superiority in extraordinary flowers being desirable for awards. Judges look at flowers for roundness and fullness in general form, with sepals and petals almost forming an equilateral triangle; side view should be nearly flat with lip curving down; lip is usually the "showiest" component with a rounded, flattened, symmetrical and crisped or frilled trumpet or isthmus -- closed near the base and somewhat rolled around the column and should be proportionate to size of petals; petals should be erect to slightly arched, frilled or undulated at the margins in accordance with the variety; flower color should be clear, bright, strong and even with a hue that is consistent with heritage; flower size, floriferousness, substance and texture are considered and should be acceptable and pleasing based on heritage; strong flower stems should display flowers to their best advantage without crowding.

Orchid Temperature Definitions

Cool Growing Orchids

These orchids require a night time temperature of approximately 50-55 degrees, especially in the winter months. During the hot summer months any temperatures above 80 degrees during the day are about all they can endure.

Intermediate Growing Orchids

Intermediate growing orchids can accept night-time temperatures in the 55-60 degree range and day time temperatures in the 80-90 degree range, with a definite night/day differential.

Warm Growing Orchids

Most of these come from real tropical areas and will not tolerate well any kind of dip in temperatures to below 65 degrees year round. They normally will acclimate to a warmer day time temperature of up to 95 degrees.



Committee Bulletins

Newcomers Group

Chair: Katherine Brown (Ksbrown208@hotmail.com 318-243-3416)

Co-chair: Jill Smith (jsmith8146@houston.rr.com 281-545-2023)

The January Newcomer's meeting will be held at Clown Alley Orchids (<http://clownalleyorchids.com>) on January 21, 2007 from 2:00--4:00 pm. John and Sandy Stubbings look forward to hosting the meeting at their greenhouse at 3119 Lily St., Pasadena, TX, 5 blocks west of Beltway 8 and 1/2 block south of Spencer Hwy. (Phone # 281-991-6841). Please bring a small folding chair. Please note: you must be an HOS member to attend any of the Newcomer's meetings.

We are also looking forward to planning the Newcomer display for the Orchid Show in March so please bring any ideas and suggestions so that our group can sponsor another spectacular orchid extravaganza! The February meeting will be devoted to planning the display and will be held at Gerry and Jill Smith's home in Sugar Land. The date will probably be earlier than the 3rd week so we can have longer to plan.

Intermediate Group

The intermediate Group will be discontinued in 2007. Many thanks to Gary Beck who chaired the group in 2006.

Raffle Table

Chair: Johnny and Donna Williams

We will have species plants from Andy's Orchids on the raffle table at the January meeting. Andy's is a family owned nursery specializing in SPECIES. They cultivate over 3,000 different species and grow everything from traditional favorites to the rarest exotics. Andy has been growing orchids since the age of 7 and opened his nursery in 1990.

You may purchase 5 raffle tickets for \$1.00 or 30 tickets for \$5.00. These tickets may be used to win any of ten plants.

In addition, another plant will be raffled as a door prize. Everyone who walks in the door gets a free raffle ticket for the door prize and if you wear your nametag, you get two free tickets.

There is also one plant raffled for the General Mills Box Tops for Education promotion. Bring in General Mills Box Tops and receive one raffle ticket for each box top. The Box Tops will be donated to schools for purchasing needed equipment.

Membership Notice

Chair: Holly Miller (hollymiller@earthlink.net)

This year we will place advertisements in the Membership Directory for any member's orchid or non-orchid related business. For more information on sizes and rates, please contact Holly Miller at hollymil@earthlink.net or (281) 597-8792. Ads should be submitted to her by early January.

We had two new members approved at the December meeting. We would like to welcome Mary Gunn and Fred Rettenmaier as new members.

Houston Orchid Society 2006 Officers and Committee Chairs

Officers

<i>President</i>	Don Ghiz
<i>1st Vice President</i>	Deana Roberts
<i>2nd Vice President</i>	Holly Huston
<i>Recording Sec.</i>	Beverly Starr
<i>Treasurer</i>	Jay Balchan
<i>Membership</i>	Holly Miller

Chairs

<i>Guest Hospitality</i>	Maureen Ferrara
<i>Happenings Editor</i>	Susan Taylor
<i>Intermediate Group</i>	Discontinued
<i>Librarian</i>	Sarah Bentley
<i>Newcomers Group</i>	Katherine Brown Jill Smith
<i>Parliamentarian</i>	Richard Champagne
<i>Plant Raffle</i>	Johnny and Donna Williams
<i>Refreshments</i>	Pam Vinson
<i>Silent Auction</i>	John Jamerlan, Debbie Peterson and Eddie Mitchell
<i>2006 Spring Show</i>	John Stubbings and Laurie Skov
<i>HOS Web</i>	
<i>2007 Workshop Chair</i>	Ted Baenziger and John Stubbings

Directors

<i>Two-Year Term</i>	<i>One-Year Term</i>
Joe Fields	Dolores Fields
Fr. Ted Baenziger	Marvin Gerber
Greg Scott	Jim Butler
Calvin Starr	Jerry Stephens
John Jamerlan	Julius Klehm
Phillip Free	Doug George
Richard Lund	

Representatives

AOS Representative	Melba and Jim Butler
IPA Representative	Clark Whiteside
ODC Representative	Joe Fields
SWROGA Representative	Mavis Klehm and Terry Palmer

Houston Orchid Society *January 2007 Meeting*

Program: Mounted Orchids
Plant Auction

Date: January 4, 2007

Time: 7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Place: Houston Garden Center

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.houstonorchidsociety.org

Houston Orchid Society
The Houston Happenings
P. O. Box 648
Ace, TX 77326

