The Houston Happenings

May 2019

May Program: Dotty Woodson - Taking the Mystery Out of Growing Orchids By Nina Rach

Please welcome Dr. Dotty Woodson as our May speaker, presenting ‘Taking the Mystery Out of Growing Orchids.’ She and her husband, Berry, have grown and hybridized orchids since 1973. They grow orchids in a 3000 sqft greenhouse as D & B Orchids in Fort Worth, TX. They have registered 67 orchid hybrids with the RHS and won many awards for their plants and exhibits.

Dotty has presented orchid programs to orchid growers and gardeners in many states, at four International Master Gardener Conferences, two International Phalaenopsis Alliance (IPA) Conferences, California Speakers Day, Texas, New England and New York Speakers Circuits and to international audiences on Norwegian Cruise Lines. She is a member of the Fort Worth Orchid Society, Greater North Texas Orchid Society, Southwest Regional Orchid Growers Association (SWROGA), and the American Orchid Society (AOS).

Woodson has also written articles about orchid culture for many newspapers and magazines and appeared on many television and radio shows to discuss growing orchids. In addition, she has produced several orchid videos and contributed orchid material and photographs for several books. Woodson’s DVD “Growing Orchids Made Easy with Dotty” is available through the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Bookstore at https://agrilifebookstore.org/.

Woodson earned B.S. and M.S. degrees in Horticulture.

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Presidents Post

By Rick Hepler

We are past the spring show and what a show! That was the first time we held our monthly meeting at the mall in my history with the HOS. What a fantastic idea! The night worked out well with room to improve, but that’s what your first try is. Many folks showed up ready to help, but leadership wasn’t prepared with set tasks to hand out. Next year, the 2020 show schedule works out such that we can repeat the monthly meeting/show kickoff. Next March, the program will be geared towards displaying your orchids as in, materials to use as props, tabletop layouts, color schemes, plant registration, etc. This program will hopefully encourage more members to put in their own tabletops or band together with other members to do a tabletop or floor display.

Many years ago, the majority of the members put in their own personal display and the "HOS" floor display was created by our Newcomers group as a newbie entry. Over the past ten years or so, the HOS display has evolved into what it is today. A large, massive collection of colors and shapes in a well thought out flow of interest, but what I see missing is the opportunity for onlookers to be up close and personal with the flowers. The intricate structure of these flowers I find to be one of the interesting parts of the hobby. I would guess more tabletops by individuals would peak interest by onlookers and turning the HOS display back over to the Newcomers Group would bolster getting involved, build confidence and creativity and, one of the most important aspects - enjoyment of their newfound hobby. On the other side, examining the multitude of different flowers up close can spark greater interest and more questions from onlookers, especially if we proudly show the display was put together by newcomers. As onlookers, they will say, "Can I do that? Sure, I can!"

I sent out approximately 85 emails to individuals showing interest in our society during the show. These folks took the time to stop by the HOS information table, ask questions and drop off their email info. I’m expecting 10 percent of these

Continued on page 3
May Tips: Mounting Your Orchids
By Father Ted Baenziger

Why should we limit ourselves to plastic pots and clay pots, when we can act 'naturally' and give our orchids real mounts like tree limbs and the bark they grow on in nature? The first reason is that watering is much more difficult and, secondly, places to hang these contraptions are not always easy to find. But, îô! A mounted orchid is glorious and proud, can grow as it likes, has a natural look to its inflorescence and will thank you in a number of ways. In nature (the Latin is in situ), most Cattleya species grow along the highest, most exposed branches. Psychopsis, the butterfly orchid is another; so are many Oncidium species, including the twig-orchid, Tolumnia.

Singapore, one of the most densely populated island-states in the world, has orchids growing on living trees up and down the streets. The city has even built enormous metal tree-like sculptures 200 feet into the air, covered with orchids, mosses, ivy and bromeliads. Of course, it rains often in these places, sometimes twice a day. Air, light and water and a place to show off - that's what they need.

Supplies needed: (1) Super-glue or gorilla glue, twine, fishing line or panty-hose, (2) sphagnum moss, (3) screw and eye, sturdy hook or malleable wire. You will also need (1) a clean surface, (2) water, (3) at least one orchid, of course; (4) needle-nose pliers, (5) wire cutter, (6) a #2 pencil, and (7) a label or two. Then when you are done, you will need a place to put the mounted orchids. I use rafters, longer hooks, plastic covered mesh, metal rods, whatever.

Cork has lasted, easily, for 20 years for me. The plant outgrows it, but it can be doubled (a larger piece glued to the back).

Below is Brassavola cucullata, one of my prized specimens, which blooms every year in late Spring and Summer. It has been mounted on cork since 1995. Last year, it had over 50 blooms and one-third of the growth is new.

It, and Encyclia bractescens, also mounted on cork, have won me many a “best-grown” over the years, although the HOS Show this year was too early for it.

Wood is also a choice - a flat piece or branch, with or without bark. I have used peach [15-year life, but I need to replace it soon], oak [not nearly as resistant], bald cypress [fibrous but water resistant with a 15-year life-span - Louisiana Orchid Connection uses hundreds of these as plaques]. Driftwood from the Gulf of Mexico is NOT an option, because of the salt impregnated in the grain, unless it is soaked and drained many times. Osmunda or tree-fern fiber (very expensive) as a base lasts 10 years max. Coconut husk as an alternative only works for 2-3 years, and is usually used as liner for baskets, but the ½ nut out of its husk is kind of cute, and can last five years.

Sphagnum moss is my go-to root base for all but the hardiest roots: it absorbs water and holds it for 1-7 days depending on the thickness of the pad. It is best held onto the surface by panty hose or fishing line. I cut the panty-hose horizontally and use it like rubber bands; it takes 5 to 10 years to fall apart and by then the roots have attached directly to the cork of the wood. The sphagnum seems to last longer in open air than in pots, and I don’t worry about it on the mounted plants. The plant can be attached directly to the mount using glue, but be warned: the surfaces and the plant have to be wet and the glue expands quite a bit before drying so be sparing! The stem of the plant, but not the root, is what you want to adhere. Sphagnum can be added around the free roots after the glue dries.

Labelling for me means something that will last a long time - either good plastic or metal that I can etch. I found that Sharpies fade after two years and are best not used. Pencil never goes away, although the tag can get lost. I often use two tags - a small one with name, date and maybe the cost to hide in the sphagnum and, a larger one to hang down so I can see what it is (or used to be: some of my plants commit suicide, sigh). The hook and eye arrangement is not always necessary, but it sure makes it easier to move things around. It’s easy to screw the eye into wood or cork, but I have also used a drill or awl to make holes for simple wire hooks, making them as long as I want them to be.

Watering can be a challenge unless everything can drip into your bathtub or on the ground. I water everything with a mister (=a thing to make mist, not a lady’s companion), or at least spraying small drops and then go back and really soak the whole thing so it drips. Depending on where you are, the plants may need a second misting later that day, or two days, or can go for a week. Key: dry
interested individuals to come to our May meeting. Please be sure to welcome these folks to the meeting and invite them to participate in the raffle table, silent auction and the buffet table. I especially like to see our visitors enjoy the program, so sit near a visitor and answer any questions they may have. We all tend to spread out, so squeeze in to make seats available. If I see a shortage of seats, I will ask everyone to move over and fill in the empty seats.

Baskets can be used as temporary or permanent hanging containers, especially for vandas and stanhopeas. The latter need a water retaining filler, while the former do not. By the way, for vandas and other high-light lovers, nice, bright, living Spanish moss is a very helpful accompaniment to bare roots. It takes a while to establish, but orchids seem to love the soft bed it makes. Just be careful not to use it in pots as it will die quickly and rot.

Can you guess what this is?
Next month, we'll talk about grooming and cleaning your plants.

May Tips continued

President's Message continued

Tolumnia Golden Sunset
Presented by Derek Lowenstein
AM 81 points

Myc. John's Passion
Presented by Dennis Tomjack
HCC 76 points
Don’t forget to put the 2019 40th Consecutive HOS Workshop on your calendar, August 2-3, 2019. The workshop is being held at our usual monthly location at the First Christian Church, 1601 Sunset Blvd., Houston 77005. On Friday evening, August 2, bring in your plants for AOS judging. Plant sales will begin at 5PM and continue through Saturday, August 3. AOS judging begins at 5:30PM.

Come join us for dinner (your tab) and have an opportunity to speak with our presenters and HOS colleagues.

On Saturday, August 3, we will have Fred Clarke (Sunset Valley Orchids), Fr. Ted Baenziger and Stephen Moffit (Rare Earth Orchids) speak on Catasetinae species and hybrids and their allied genera. We will hold a silent auction, and Sunset Valley Orchids, Rare Earth Orchids and Orchids and Tropicals will be selling plants.

A light breakfast and lunch will be served on Saturday.

HOLD THE DATE, HAVE A GREAT TIME, LEARN ABOUT ORCHIDS, AND BUY YOUR FAVORITES!
April Plant Summary
By Sarah Bentley

When I reflect on the recent HOS floor exhibit at the annual show and sale in Memorial City Mall, I would describe myself as surprised, but willing. At the March HOS meeting, I was surprised to learn that the ALWAYS helpful Judith and Loren Neufeld were going to be unavailable when it was time to produce the exhibit in April. Of course, I had been planning to help them so I was willing to take the responsibility then and there. Loren offered any of the available props in his HOS storage space and Judith trusted me to raid her greenhouse for blooming plants to use in the arrangement. They kept in touch throughout the weekend and were enormously helpful in absencia. It was a joy, as usual, to have the support of these good friends.

Rick Hepler, the current HOS President, stepped in to provide transportation for all the materials to the venue on Thursday afternoon. Sadly, one of his Phrags was damaged in the trailer, so I recognize this sacrifice to the cause. Paying close attention to the need to reduce mess and noise in the setup area, Holly Miller and Randy Johnson, Rick and I surveyed the area and chose the orientation of the display. Then it was simple to spread out the 15 x 15 burlap base and bring in the heavy plywood platform and build the pergola atop our 8 foot tall wooden columns. Jay Balchan, Jean Schwenke, Steve Fox, Calvin Starr, Kar Chong, Frank Lee, Bill Caldwell and Stephen Moffitt were some of the other HOS members who assisted in the construction. Placing the thematic ‘Garden Path’ I had made with canvas naturally pleasing display. We ended up with nearly 200 orchids along the garden path.

I knew it was going to be a big task, and I apologize that there were a few areas where I just did not remember to line up more assistance. I also apologize if there is someone whom I did not name in this article, for I feel it was a team effort and everyone contributed. It was successful because so many members participated.

After the display was judged, there were dozens of ribbons and prizes of recognition earned by HOS members. The exhibit won three trophies: Best Society Floor Exhibit 50 sq. ft. and over, sponsored by Jay Balchan; the American Orchid Society Trophy, sponsored by Loren and Judith Neufeld; and the Orchid Digest Trophy, sponsored by Nina Rach. Additionally, I was awarded a very special American Orchid Society Silver Certificate for creativity. Just making the exhibit and working with everyone in the HOS was the biggest reward for me.

Thank you to everyone who helped make our 2019 HOS Show a great success!

To everyone who put in an exhibit, helped the vendors setup, clerked, judged, helped staff the HOS and Children’s tables, or even just bought plants, Holly and I thank you very much for your time, energy and commitment to the HOS!

Putting on a successful show takes a team and with everyone contributing a small piece, everyone succeeds!

Finally, a huge “shout out” to Sarah Bentley who coordinated the HOS display!!

And to everyone who contributed plants, what an outstanding display! The display received a Silver Medal from the American Orchid Society because of its quality of layout and plants. Awesome!!

The Mall was again very happy with the quality of the event and we are on their calendar again next year!

The pizza and Thursday evening setup seemed to be a good addition to the overall event and we are planning on continuing that next year.

Holly and I would love to hear your feedback and any suggestions you have for changes and improvements as well as things you think went well and we should continue doing.

Refreshments
By Lily Chang

Many thanks to Jay Balchan, Winnie Yap and Kar Chong who provided and arranged a wonderful spread of pizzas, fruits, dessert, cookies, brownies and drinks for all the members who were helping to set up the HOS show at the Memorial City Mall on April 4th. Everyone enjoyed the delicious treats. Please consider sharing your culinary skills with your fellow members at the next meeting!
Stay-At-Home Orchids
by Judith and Loren Neufeld

Epidendrum radicans (aka the Crucifix orchid)
Maxillaria tenuifolia

Epidendrum Magic Wand
Phalaenopsis Shu Long

Laeliacattleya
Tokyo Magic

Renanthera imshootiana
HOS Show Photos
by Malcolm McCorquodale

Cattleya intermedia orlata
presented by David Gardner

Paphiopedilum Hawaiian Charm
presented by Rick Hepler

Paph Hilo Midori x Hilo Green
presented by Doug George

Cattleya intermedia orlata
presented by Malcolm McCorquodale

Paphiopedilum Hawaiian Charm
presented by Malcolm McCorquodale
Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society
Meets the Third Sunday of each month
2:00pm, Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, 2020 Hermann Drive
Visitors Welcome
www.tgcfernson.org

Bromeliad Society
Houston
Meets Monthly on the
Third Tuesday of the month,
7:00 pm
West Gray Multi-Service Center
Visitors Welcome
www.bromeliadsocietyhouston.org

AOS WEBINARS

Greenhouse Chat with Ron McHatton
Tuesday, May 7, 2019
7:30-8:30pm CT

Register

Asian Cymbidiums
Ken Jacobsen
Thursday, May 16, 2019
7:30-8:30pm CT
Member-only Webinar

Register
### HOS Officers and Committee Chairs

#### Officers

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#### Chairs

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#### Directors - One Year Term

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