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The Back Bulb

Marin Orchid Society Newsletter

April 2011

Join us! San Rafael Corporate Center, Tuesday, April 26, 6:30 PM
Silent Auction Starts at 6:30; No Orchid Doctor This Meeting

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The *ROOT* of the Matter



Whether Spring is here to stay is still a matter for debate, but our Orchids' roots are voting on the positive side. As those light green root tips begin to elongate, it's a sure sign that in the greenhouse and in the home environment, it's time to resume our regular watering and feeding regimes. Most plants, which were enjoying a winter rest, are now ready to explode with blooms and leaves. All they need is a little encouragement: water, food, and good air movement to "do their thing".

Feeding is especially important now, to encourage root growth and bloom formation. In addition to resuming my "weekly, weakly" feeding regimen with a

Dear BackBulb,

Wait, can it be?! Sunshine (occasionally), rain, and spring breezes -- it must be the time for new orchids! MOS Spring Auction is right around the corner. What is your intention? To sell orchids, buy from members at the Silent Auction, or bid high and often in the live auction? "*All of the above*" is the answer for many of our members while others will be looking for a few tempting plants to expand their collections.

For those who are selling orchids, the information you will need is described in the following article and all necessary forms can be downloaded.

This is an excellent time to bring guests to MOS because they will learn more about orchids and how to care for them. Plus, the variety of orchids available will be much greater than they will usually find in Marin.

Refreshments: Appetizers and desserts will be provided by MOS.

Directions to San Rafael Corporate Center:

From 101S:

Exit 452 toward Central San Rafael, continue straight onto Hetherton St., take the 3rd right onto 3rd St., turn left onto Lindaro St. (just past Ritter). Corporate Center is just beyond 2nd St.

From 101N:

Take Exit 452 toward Central San Rafael, turn slight right onto Irwin St., then left onto 3rd St., then left onto Lindaro St. (just past Ritter). (Note: 3rd St. is one way West, 2nd St. is one way East.)

Read All About It! MOS Spring Auction

It is always pleasant to hear that many of the beautiful plants that our

balanced non-urea fertilizer, I've just done my annual application of Nutricote time-release fertilizer, to provide important micronutrients to the roots every time I water. Several MOS members have commented that those pesky little pellets are too much trouble: they bounce everywhere except where you want them, with most ending up on the floor or down the drain. A small plastic funnel from the hardware store resolves that dilemma, directing the bouncing fertilizer balls into every nook and cranny, so that the nutrient-rich water reaches all of the roots.

This is also the best time to **repot**. When the roots are actively growing, they are able to recover quickly from the trauma of repotting, with the new medium providing great drainage and air movement. I mark the repot date on the back of each plant tag, so I am sure to repot them every two years ... three is stretching it. The roots of the third-year plants often show decline, and I lose a bloom season while they pout and recover.

It may still be a little early to move tender Orchids outdoors to summer quarters, but getting our Spring chores done now will make for healthy, happy plants. And that's the root of the matter.

Lynne

MEMBERSHIP New and Renewing

Thank you to those who

members exhibit at Show and Tell were purchased at an MOS Auction! This year MOS carries on the tradition of offering an excellent variety of healthy and enticing orchids.

What an excellent time to invite guests because this auction offers quality orchids in a setting where buyers can learn about the features and native habitat of the orchid while at the same time hearing how to take care of the plant. And keep in mind the MOS Auction slogan: ***Bid often and bid high!***

The tempting plants for the live auction come from an esteemed nursery. There will also be a silent auction of plants that members have grown. These are another excellent source of plants. At our home, a large, white phalaenopsis about to bloom and three others are in full bloom right now, all from MOS auctions. What a treat! In addition to the excellent information provided by the auctioneer, members who are seasoned growers will offer details on growing conditions and blooming the plants successfully.

Here are the details for buying and selling at the auction:

Auction fee is still only \$2.00! (Anyone wishing to participate in the silent or live auction must pay the auction fee of \$2.00.) Donations are welcome! Please bring your donated plants as early as possible with labels as described below and give them to any of the Board Members: Bill, Lynne, Susan, Gail, Ron, or Sandra M.

Members are welcome to sell their orchids! Plants in flower may be sold in the live auction. Plants without flowers will be placed in the silent auction. 20% commission on all sales to MOS.

In order to sell plants at the auction, you must:

- 1) Be a current member in good standing to have the privilege of selling plants at the auction. So, if you have not yet renewed your membership, be sure to send Bill your check or bring your dues to the auction.
- 2) Place a label on each plant with your name and seller's code, the plant name and the minimum bid. (Example: Max Ylaria MY1, Onc. Kalihi 'Big'; Minimum Bid \$10). A description of the plant and a picture are optional but may increase interest.
- 3) Fill out a Seller's List of all the plants you brought for sale and include the corresponding seller's code.
- 4) When you arrive between 6:00 and 6:30 pm, a board member will attach a circular sticker with your seller's code onto each plant's pot.
- 5) Please prepare the labels and list at home prior to coming to



Silent Bidding is Closing!

renewed in March! And, if each member brings in one new member this year, think how we will all benefit!

Quick Links...

[Marin Orchid Society](#)
[American Orchid Society](#)
[San Francisco Orchid Society](#)
[Online Orchid Species Identification](#)
[MOS Blog](#)

the auction! This assures that plants will not be lost and that sellers will be accurately paid. Note: MOS members will receive a separate email from the Marin Orchid Society with a sample tag as well as forms to download and print.

(No bugs allowed! Plants with bugs will be removed from the auction and from the room.) There will be no dinner prior to the auction in April and there will be no opportunity table.

Click below to download the page of forms needed:
[Sellers Lists Download.](#)

Show and Tell March 2011



Carolyn Fisher

Plant name not recorded.



Bill Lenarz

Masdevalia Machu Pichu and
Lepanthopsis astrophora
'Stalky'



Cymbidium Surprises?

Ken Jacobsen spoke to MOS on March 22 about creating hybrid cymbidiums...and the results truly were surprising. Why? Because "genetics is not like mixing paint".

Ken and his wife Amy (and Spaniel, Winston) have an Orchid collection of more than 5000 plants in 4 greenhouses, so Ken decided some years ago that it would be interesting to create his own hybrids, and see the magic of the seedlings' first bloom.

Of course one would think that crossing two different huge white Cyms would result in a **huger** White Cym, but in reality these crosses generally yield Red offspring, frequently with blushes and spots. Why? Because you have to study the parentage (and grand-parentage) of those 2 huge white Cyms, and understand that "genetics is not like mixing paint". Remember recessive genes from high school biology class? Also there are color genes, and "color extinction genes", which turn color **off**. So how do you get a new huge white Cym? Cross a pink with a yellow, and the results are often surprisingly white.



The other surprise of Ken's presentation was the wide variation of form and color of siblings from the **same seed pod**. The color photos of the parents and the resulting hybrids were dramatic illustrations of this variability. As Ken pointed out, human brothers and sisters don't look alike. And my niece's yellow lab gave birth to white, black and chocolate lab puppies, so now this is making sense to me.

Ken makes 15 to 20 new Cymbidium crosses each year, and he does his own flasking. He generally makes 2 or 3 flasks per cross (in case one gets contaminated and dies). And he pots up about 25 seedlings per flask. Cymbidiums take from 6 to 7 years from pollination to first bloom (are you doing the math here?), at which point Ken selects the best one or two hybrids which meet his criteria for large, full blooms with clear strong color.



Lynne Murrell

Laelia anceps, L. annabarina,
and L. canriensis



Mary Falk

Masd. Henriette



Linda Tripp

Orchid name not recorded.



Patty Olson

Paph. Deed marmianum

**For Show and Tell, please let
the audience know:**

Plant name. If it has no ID,
then at least the species, or a
best guess.

Growing conditions.

- **Light:** Is it grown on a
window sill? If so, then what
direction does the window
face? If not a window sill,
then what? Full sun, partial
shade, heavy shade?

Ken Jacobsen

So what is Ken's goal in creating these hybrids? To win
the Grand Champion Cymbidium at Santa Barbara. When
he wins it, we'll all have a better appreciation of the
labor of love it took to get there!

Opportunity Table

Ken Jacobsen also provided the Opportunity Table for our meeting, and what
a beautiful bunch of Cymbidiums they were! He was tremendously generous
with the number and variety of plants, and every MOS member and guest
went home with at least one new Cym to nurture...and to think about
hybridizing, to create that once-in-a-lifetime medal winner.

Refreshments

Thanks to Lynne Murrell and Cathy Thompson plus those who forgot to sign
the list!

Article by Lynne Murrell

Photos by Ron Ludwig

SCOS Invites MOS to Join Greenhouse Tour



SCOS has once again invited MOS members to join
them for the bus tour of settings not generally
open to the public. This time, the tour is heading
south on May 14. Seating is limited so get your
tickets now to guarantee your spot.

Reasonable priced, the cost is \$35 per person. Passengers can be
picked up at the Petaluma / Lakeville and Lucas Valley Road Park and
Ride. Click this link to download the flyer with full details.

In addition to visiting Golden Gate Orchids, White Oak Orchids, and
Hanging Gardens, there will be a behind-the-scene tour of the
Conservatory of Flowers' special exhibit, 'Wicked Plants.'

[SCOS Orchid Bus Trip](#)

Thank you, photographers

The Back Bulb greatly appreciates all those who took and submitted
photographs for the April issue. They include: John Merlo and Ron
Ludwig.

With a shortage of time, it was not possible to indicate who took,
sized, and corrected each picture, and it was wonderful to have
many, many photos to choose from.

Editor

- *Temperature range*
- *Frequency of watering.*
- *Fertilizer? How frequently and what kind?*
- *Where is it from? What altitude does it normally grow at?*
- *Any other important details? Do tell!*

And remember that one of those who brings plants to show gets first pick of the opportunity table!

MOS Board of Directors

**President: Lynne Murrell
457-0836**

Vice-President: Susan Anderson (707) 762-2917

**Treasurer: Bill Lenarz
457-1642**

**Secretary: Ron Ludwig
Editor: Sandra Merlo
342-9110**

**Web Master: John Merlo
342-9115**

**Member at Large:
Gail Beach**

**Community Education
Committee Chair: Glenn
Smith 457-2538**

Upcoming Board of Directors Meeting

May 5 at 6:30 pm at Lynne Murrell's home. Board meetings are open to all members to observe. If you want to attend, please give Lynne a call for directions.

MOS Purpose and Vision

The purpose of the Marin Orchid Society, our Mission and Vision, is:

◆To provide support for those having common interests in the appreciation and culture of orchid plants, to broaden their interests and improve their knowledge

◆To acquire and distribute to the members practical and scientific information about the collection, culture and propagation of orchids

◆To arrange the dissemination of information through exhibits, lectures, access to publications, and any other means, for the encouragement of orchid growing

◆To cooperate in and take part in activities of other Societies with purposes similar to those of this Society

Special thanks to Lynne Murrell for her excellent article about our March speaker. As ideas come to you, perhaps about the perfect greenhouse or the economical greenhouse, jot them down. Other members will enjoy hearing from you. Editing available! Email me at marin.orchids@gmail.com.

Sandra Merlo
BackBulb Editor
Marin Orchid Society

MARIN ORCHID SOCIETY EVENTS - 2011

April 26 - MOS Spring Orchid Auction

May 14 - Greenhouse Tour with SCOS.

May 24 - General Meeting with Speaker

June 28 - MOS Bingo Night and Pot Luck

July 26 - General Meeting; Orchids 101; Mini-Auction

August 23 - General Meeting with speaker

August TBA - MOS Barbecue, date to be announced, at Lynne's home

September 27 - General Meeting with Speaker

September TBA - Greenhouse Tour; date and detail to be announced

October 25 - MOS Fall Orchid Auction

**November 22 - Members' Orchids Digital Show and Tell; workshop
December - No General Meeting. Holiday Dinner. Date to be determined.**

MOS Membership / Renewal Application

Name _____ new ___ renew ___

Address _____

City _____ ZIP _____

Phone(H) _____ (W) _____

e-mail _____

Business (optional for roster) _____

Dues are \$25 per person per year, including two at the same address.

Please make checks payable to the Marin Orchid Society.

Amount enclosed _____

Mail to: Bill Lenarz, PO Box 251, Kentfield, CA 94914-0251, or bring this form to a meeting.

OTHER ORCHID SOCIETIES MEETINGS

First Monday: Carmel Orchid Society meeting; The First Presbyterian Church, 501 El Dorado Street, Monterey; [Carmel Orchid Society](#)

First Tuesday: San Francisco Orchid Society meeting; San Francisco County Fair Building, Golden Gate Park, 9th Avenue and Lincoln Way; [San Francisco Orchid Society](#)

First Wednesday: Sacramento Orchid society meeting; Odd Fellows Hall, 1831 Howe Ave. (921-0569), Sacramento; www.sacramentoorchids.org

First Wednesday: Santa Maria Orchid Society meeting; Veterans' Memorial Center, 313 W. Tunnell Street; Contact Chuck Scheitaur at 937-6201

Second Tuesday: Sonoma County Orchid Society meeting; Veterans Building, 1351 Maple Avenue, Santa Rosa (across from the Fairgrounds) [Sonoma County Orchid Society](#)

Second Tuesday: Monterey Bay Orchid Society meeting; Lincoln Ave Presbyterian Church, 536 Lincoln Ave, Salinas; (831) 663-3953

Third Monday: Orchid Society of California; Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue Oakland; [California Orchid Society](#)

Third Tuesday: Coastal Valley Orchid Society; Lompoc, CA; [Coastal Valley Orchid Society](#)

Third Friday: Gold Coast Cymbidium Growers meeting; San Mateo Garden Center, 605 Parkside Way, San Mateo; Weegie Caughlan at goldcoastcymgrowers@gmail.com; [Gold Coast Cymbidium Growers](#).

Fourth Friday: Napa Valley Orchid Society; 7:30 pm at Napa Senior Activities Center 1500 Jefferson St. Napa CA 94558

[Forward email](#)



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