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April 2014

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About the April Meeting

April 14, 2014

7:00 p.m.
 University of Washington
 Center for Urban Horticulture
 3501 NE 41st Street
 Seattle, WA 98105

Harvey Brenneise: Darwin's Sexy Orchids

Harvey has grown orchids for most of his life, starting when he was young in what is now called Silicon Valley. Over the course of his orchid growing career, Harvey has grown a wide variety of orchid genera in greenhouses, under lights, and in windowsills. He co-authored an article on "growing orchids in mud" for Orchids magazine.

Harvey developed the presentation we will be hearing as the keynote presentation at the semi-annual Members' Meeting of the American Orchid Society in 2009.

Most people do not know that Darwin's first book published after Origin of Species was on one of his favorite topics, orchids as exemplars of his ideas about adaptation and the co-evolutionary relationship of plants with their pollinators in what we now know as the general theory of evolution. The book itself, published in England in 1862, has a typically elaborate Victorian title: On the various contrivances by which British and foreign orchids are fertilized by insects, and on the good effects of intercrossing.

His presentation includes discussion of the voyage of H.M.S. Beagle and the orchids Darwin found during that 5-year journey, as well as Darwin's lifelong interest in orchids and his publications about them, including the infamous *Angraecum sesquipedale* and its predicted insect pollinator.

Display Table:

We will have our regular display table, so bring your blooming plants to share.

Sales Table:

Members may bring up to 10 plants to sell. Include an extra tag with your name and the cost.

Raffle:

The raffle will be held as usual. Win a new orchid for your collection while supporting the Scholarship Fund.

Angraecum sesquipedale in bloom
 in our display at the NWF&G Show



NWOS Volunteer Day at the Zoo!

Saturday, April 26, 2014
10:00 am to 1:00pm (approximately)
South Entrance (50th street)



Last year's volunteer day was such a success and so much fun that we are going to do it again!

We really need your help! We have lots of orchids that need some TLC. Join us for a few hours to help repot, divide and clean our orchid collection then spend the rest of the day seeing the Zoo.

Meet Katrina at the Zoo's South Entrance at 10:00am. Bring your own gloves and dress in layers as the greenhouse can get quite warm. Please be on time as we need to escort you into the zoo. Attendance is free but you will have to pay for parking if you park in zoo parking lots (\$5.25).

Our greenhouse is a working facility so we ask that you please not bring children younger than 12 years of age for this volunteer project.

An RSVP would be welcomed but it is not necessary.

Contact Katrina at 206-548-2576 ext. 5 or Katrina.lindahl@zoo.org

President's Corner

Now that Spring has arrived in our part of the world, it's time to take notice of the local orchid Shows.

We are lucky to have some shows that we can drive to and for some it makes a nice day trip.



Enjoy the trip. Along the way, you may just get to experience these glorious Washington flower fields.

Donna and I just got back from the Vancouver Canada show at the Van Dusen Gardens. The Vancouver folks had a great preview party to showcase the many displays and sales. Even though we can't bring orchids back into the US, the vendors offered a few plants that we don't usually see.

The main difference was the many varieties of Cypripediums and Bletias. The AOS has a listing of all the shows and the NWOS site has all of the local shows listed. Plan on attending one or two this Spring.

Mike Foster, President

Here's some great shots of the show. Photos Courtesy Mike Foster and Donna Pierce.



Donna enjoys the Preview Party



and Mike enjoys the show



Victoria Orchid Society's display



room full of orchids



Orchid Shows Past and Future

The Spokane Orchid Society Show and Sale (March 29th to 30th) was an excellent show as usual with displays by five different societies and half a dozen vendors. Although there were many outstanding plants in the show, no AOS awards were granted. Our display featured orchids above the clouds among the stars, consistent with the theme of the show, “Orchids Out of this World.” Six members sent a total of 49 plants for our display. Cylvia and my Lycaste Absolutely Stunning ‘Grantham’s Glory’ AM/AOS garnered “Best Maxillaria Alliance” and “Best Pleurothallid Alliance” went to Mike Pearson and Abigail Chang for their Stelis adrianae (see photo). Our exhibit won “Best Display in Show”. Additional members who loaned plants were Mike Foster and Donna Pearce, Joff Morgan, Alan Kaas and Harvey Brenneise.



Cylvia stands next to the “Best Display in Show”



Stelis adrianae won “Best Pleurothallid Alliance”, grown by Mike Pearson and Abigail Chang

The Oregon Orchid Society Show and Sale will be held April 26-7 at the Ambridge Event Center in Portland. We fully expect to display in this show but details still need to be worked out because Cylvia and I will not be able to set up due to a conflicting obligation. We will be able to collect plants on Thursday April 24 but will need a volunteer to set up the display on Friday. We would be able to go down Sunday to bring the display back.

The South Central Washington Orchid Society Show and Sale will be held May 3-4 in Kennewick. Their society has been bringing very high quality displays to our show each year so we hope to reciprocate. I will be collecting plants at my house on Thursday May 1st for this show.

George Grantham, 2nd Vice President

Proposed Slate of Officers

Here are the Nominations for NWOS Officers to serve July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015:
The election will be held at our May meeting with installation at the June meeting.

President: Mike Foster
First VP: Caroline Mann
Second VP: George Grantham
Secretary: Mike Cory
Treasurer: Peter Maunsell
Past President: Jamie Notman

Trustees (2 years) 2014-2014

Mike Pearson
Barb Roberts
Leanna Fox
Alycia Moncrieff
Christa Divis

The following Trustees have one year remaining on their 2 year Tenure (2013-2015)

Joff Morgan
Ellen Macomber
Jeanne McKinnie
Diane Drisch
Chris Peterson

NW Flower & Garden Show News

I received the Judges comments about our garden "50 Shades of Orchids". The comments are in random order but it is clear that one of the three judges "got it." Now bear in mind, these are "garden" judges and not "orchid" judges. If they were the latter, we would have been awarded the gold medal a long time ago. Maybe. <wink> So without further ado, here are their comments with my thoughts in parenthesis:

- Stunning & spectacular collection of orchids.
- Beautiful collection.
- Move container (black flower vase) to column.
- Not balanced front to back.
- Background (foliage) all on one place, should be in foreground.
- No framing; no foreground, middle, and background.
- Would have been nice if they had flipped the plane -- put the color palette on the diagonal instead of following the curve of the raised bed.
- Pots -- lack of consistency. (No pots should show, ever)
- There's a cacophony of flowers -- too many! No single specimen stands out; not seeing individual flowers that are truly special.
- Color zones not balanced.
- Love the sedum border as a groundcover.
- It is a really stunning collection of orchids; really impressive.
- There's no structural connection between the garden and the column.
- Two pieces (the garden and the column) don't relate.

- Great and mesmerizing collection; however (flowers) not given enough attention as individuals.
- Glass flowers aren't incorporated. (They needed to be raised up)
- Well displayed.
- Background support plants could be in better condition.

Whew! So we know that any pots showing are a no-no, orchids need to be in smaller groups (by color) with breaks between those groupings, individual flowers of a group need to stand out or stand on their own, foliage in the back can be in the front too, the garden was too flat front to back, it needed varying heights to break it up for the eye, the sedum tiles were a great addition, and we could have asked them not to judge the column.

Where to now? It is time to begin planning our garden for next year's Show. Our application with a detailed written description of what we plan to create is due by the end of June. Yes, that is about 2 months away! I'd like to submit it earlier, by June 1 if possible, for the best choice of garden spaces. There is a possibility they might move us and the earlier we can submit our application the better.

The theme for the 2015 Show is "Romance Blossoms". The dates are February 11 - 15. With setup running on 7, 8, 9, and part of the 10th.

You've seen our space, it's about 600 square feet, showing on three sides with a 27-foot back wall, and a huge column in front that is 24 feet from that wall. I will have the blank layout sheets at the meeting or I can email it to you as a PDF. Put on your thinking caps, get out the crayons, and draw out/describe several different garden layouts. The Flower Show Team will meet sometime this month or next to sift through the ideas and pick one to display on the Convention Center floor.

Let's go for the GOLD in 2015!

Joff Morgan

Report from the March Meeting

Mike Foster opened the meeting with several announcements and introduced new members and visitors. George Grantham gave a report about our exhibits in other Orchid Society shows.

NWOS members enjoyed a wine and cheese reception while they previewed the plants that were up for auction.

Our Auctioneers for the evening were Michael Cory, Mike Pearson and Abigail Chang. Assisting them as runners were Joff Morgan and Alycia Moncrieff. Greg Sliman and Kathy Murray proved to be expert Auction record keepers, with an assist from Pat Gossler.

Photos courtesy Diane Drisch



Previewing the plants



Friends catch up and have fun talking orchids



Hmmm, let me click on this and see what the web says about it



Offering some refreshments



Ellen having a great time as hostess



An orchid quilt and some artwork were also auctioned off



Our Auction team: Mike, Mike, Joff and Alycia



Let's get the bidding started



Do I hear a bid?



Bidder on the right, we'll see you next week at the Potting Clinic



Abby pitches in and helps auction off some nice ones



It was nice for the bidders to have so many plants in bloom to pick from



Entire room is full of eager bidders



Greg, Kathy and Pat recording bids and checking it twice



Happy to pay up at the end of a great event

Report from the Potting Clinic

On March 17th we had our Annual Potting clinic. There was a fantastic turnout and lots of plants got a much-needed makeover.



Mike Foster welcomes everyone and introduces our potting clinic instructor



Michael Cory talks to a large group of eager orchid enthusiasts



Mike discusses where and how to divide



Cutting dead roots



Packing potting material securely around the roots



Mike holds the plant up by one leaf to test whether it's securely potted



In the end we have a smaller piece in a correctly sized pot



Experienced NWOS members then go around the room giving people a chance to ask questions



Checking each plant out



Inspecting before acting



Offering advice that comes from years of experience



Checking a tiny orchid in a room full of overgrown cymbidiums



It took a long time and at least two people to pull this plant out of it's pot



This mass of roots is why



Cleaning old media off the roots



Potting the plants up



Helping to find the right pot



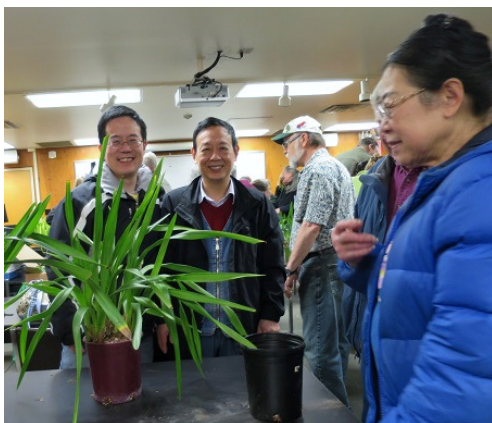
Tucking potting media all around



That's some cym!



After spending a long time working on the plant, finally a piece of that big boy gets a pot



At the end of the evening, many plants were given a new lease on life. People learned a lot from long-time growers and appreciated the hands-on instruction.

Photos courtesy Diane Drisch

Pleased with the outcome

Schedule of Upcoming Events

April 14, 2014 - Meeting Speaker is Harvey Brenneise: Darwin's Sexy Orchids.

April 26, 2014 (Saturday) - NWOS Volunteer Day at the Zoo, 9:45 until 1 or a little later if we're having fun. Meet promptly at the South Gate at 10 a.m.

May 12, 2014 - NWOS meeting

June 9, 2014 - NWOS meeting, Pot Luck Dinner and Gary Baker Service Award

Reminder for Officers & Board Members

The schedule of Board Meetings for the rest of this fiscal year is: 5/6/14. Meet at 7 p.m. at Mike Cory's house unless notified that it's been moved elsewhere.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS