



December 2007 Newsletter

<u>Affiliations</u> American Orchid Society The Orchid Digest	<u>Proud Supporter of</u> Alzheimer's Association of the Central Coast
President: Danny Stocks	Vice President: Eric Holenda
Secretary: Anne Bachmann	Treasurer: Christina Holenda
Directors at Large: Frank Madrid, Scott St. Clair and Kathy Phelan	
Newsletter Editor: Chris Ehrler	

Our Next Meeting

Our next meeting on December 13 will be our end of the year potluck and silent auction. THIS MEETING WILL START AT 6:30PM. FCOS will supply ham and you are all encouraged to bring a side dish, a salad, or a dessert. Also, bring along your place setting and something to drink. We do not have alcohol insurance so please leave it at home. If you have a nice flowering orchid you would like to share with the group as a centerpiece on the food table, please bring it along. We will make certain it is not accidentally put on the auction tables.

After dinner we will have our winter silent auction. This is a major fundraiser for FCOS and helps keep the cost of our dues low. This is an excellent time to make adjustments to your orchid collection. If you have orchids that have not been growing well for you (you just might not have the correct conditions for this orchid), or you have too many for your growing area, or you have made some divisions and want others to be able to grow some of them, please donate them to FCOS for this sale. If you have orchid related items you are interested in donating these would also be gladly accepted for the silent auction. If you want to fill out a bid sheet for your donation in advance, let me know and I will send an electronic version of the bid sheet you will be able to print out and fill in before the meeting. If your donation plants are not in bloom and you have a photo of it, bring it along so bidders can see it in bloom. If you are looking for some great deals on orchids, please bring along your checkbook and bid high and often on the plants. I can guarantee you will be happy with the price you will pay for your new plants.

President Corner – Danny Stocks

Eric said if you only can make one meeting this year make sure you attend the one that George is speaking at. He was right, George Vasquez of Zuma Canyon Orchids gave a great presentation and I am sure everyone that attended will agree the plant table was spectacular. We had a combined meeting with Santa Maria and the room was packed. We even had to set up more chairs. I think everyone that bought raffle tickets won at least one plant. Even Peggy won a plant.

In case anyone has not heard there is going to be an AOS judged show in Santa Barbara. It is December 8 and 9 at the Museum of Natural History. The theme for the show is Orchids the Friendly Addiction. We are going to go down and set up a display for the FCOS. We are always looking for help. We could use help setting up on Friday morning. You don't need to bring anything but imagination. If anyone would like

to help and needs a ride call either Eric, Larry or me. The one thing will need for the display is flowering plants. To make a nice display we will need lots of flowering plants. They do not need to be judged, just clean. I would love to take your plants down to the show. I will make house calls to pick them up.

Being Thanksgiving I reflect on the things I am thankful for. I am thankful for my family. I am thankful for a wife that understands that I need to spend time taking care of my plants. That I really do need to buy just one plant. That watering really is important. That will water for me when I am called away to work. I am thankful that I live in a country where I can do the things I enjoy. Some of my friends at work think I am silly for enjoying growing flowers. I am thankful for my friends in the Orchid Society. I am thankful there are other people out there besides me that see the beauty in orchid flowers. I am also thankful and honored to be the President of our club. If there is anything I can do to FCOS better please let me know. Aloha, Danny

Summary of the October meeting presentation—Chris Ehrler

FCOS and the Santa Maria Orchid Society so-hosted George Vasquez of Zuma Canyon Orchids, Malibu at the November meeting. George has been an American Orchid Society judge for 30 years, and AOS executive secretary for 17 years. He has made presentations throughout the world and his plants have received over 600 AOS awards. Hope you did not miss the meeting because everyone was amazed at the amount of info that was presented and the HUGE raffle table. I do not think anyone left without a plant. The following are some of the highlights.

His main topic was how to grow *Phalaenopsis* better but many of his techniques are useful for many different types of orchids. He stated that all orchids including *Phalaenopsis* grow best with 16 hours of daylight during the summer and 12 hours during the winter. *Phalaenopsis* like 900-1,500 foot candles of light. If you grow your orchids in bark you need to flood the media three times when you water to get it all wet. He is growing his *Phalaenopsis* in Chilean moss that holds 8 times more water than bark does. For a four-inch pot he only adds one ounce of water per week, so you cut down on your watering requirements. Try to keep a constant moisture level in the pot, but if you water the moss too much you can rot the roots (need to find the right moisture level). He puts styrofoam pellets (not the ones that dissolve) in the bottom of the pot before adding the moss wrapped roots of the orchid. This allows more air to circulate at the bottom of the roots and for excess water to flow out of the pot. If you do not over water

the moss, when you orchid has outgrown its pot and it is time to transplant you can simply remove the entire root mass and moss and place it in a larger pot with more moss. No need to disturb the roots. During transplanting if you make cracks in the *Phalaenopsis* roots, do not worry, as they will continue to function. If you are growing in bark you need to use a lot of nitrogen to make sure the orchid gets the nutrients it needs. But when growing in moss you need MUCH LESS fertilizer. He recommends using a solution of only 30 parts per million of nitrogen when you fertilize. If you use too much the moss will turn slimy green within six weeks. If you are growing your orchids in bark he suggested using a fertilizer without urea as the nitrogen source. The nitrogen sources will be listed on the product label.

He said there are always some pests that can survive in your growing conditions. If your humidity is too low, watch

out for spider mites. If too high, you need to watch for mealy bugs, and it is somewhere in the middle, scale will be happy. In other words watch your plants for pests. To kill the pests he suggested using liquid soap, alcohol or 409 instead of pesticides as they are safer and you can use them everyday if necessary. If you do use pesticides, he suggested that you switch the product you use every time you spray so that you do not end up with bugs that can withstand your favorite product.

Phalaenopsis like to have a nighttime temperature of 68°F. Instead of trying to keep the air around it at that temperature, he suggested that you put the pot on top of a heat mat and set the mat at that temperature. If you keep the roots happy and warm the orchid will grow well.

Five Cities Orchid Society
P.O. Box 1066
Grover Beach, CA 93483-1066

Orchid Calendar

Dates	Event	Location	Comments
Thursday, December 13 6:30 PM	FCOS Monthly Meeting	AG Woman's Club 211 Vernon Street Arroyo Grande	Annual end of the year Potluck and Silent Auction. See text above for what to bring and how to donate to the silent auction. NOTE EARLIER TIME THAN NORMAL.
Sat & Sun December, 8-9 2007	Santa Barbara Orchid Society Fall Show	Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History	Contact Eric, Larry or Danny if you have orchids you can donate to be used in the FCOS display. Open Saturday from 10am-5pm and Sunday from 10am-3pm. Admission to the museum allows you to see the show for free.
Sat & Sun, January 5-6, 2008, 10am-5pm each day	Peninsula OS Annual Show and Sale	Community Activity Building, 1400 Roosevelt Ave, Redwood City, CA	Admission \$5, Seniors \$3 and children and disabled folks are no charge. 10 vendors. More info at http://penorchidsos.org .
March 8-9, 2008	FCOS Show and Sale	South County Regional Center	Show Theme is "Orchid Carnival". More details in next newsletters. Don't forget the Friday night preview with proceeds to the AI