



February 2009 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: Anne Bachmann	

Our Next Meeting (by Eric Holenda)

Our very own Chris Ehrler will present a short slide program on his recent visit to Hawaiian orchid growers, where greenhouses keep rain out rather than heat in. The tropics are well known to produce explosive growth and friendly people, both of which Chris will discuss.

Normally February is our show prep month. We do have a few show issues to address; however the March meeting will be devoted primarily to show organization, with the late show dates of April 4-5. Rosemary will bring a score or more of the green tablecloths that she needs volunteers to iron them. Barb has the printing done. Posters, 1/4 sheet handouts, and Friday Night Preview tickets will be available. Thanks again to Central Coast Printing for donating the printing costs. We need all of you to spread the word with enthusiasm, putting up posters and giving the handouts to all you meet.

Lest we forget, the main ingredient of a show is blooming orchids. We need all of you to bring forth plants for display. Prepare your plants NOW. Spikes and buds need to be nurtured and protected. Avoid heartbreak by baiting for snails and slugs, staking spikes for attractive display, and remaining vigilant for frost, heat, and/or wind damage. Perseverance produces blue ribbons!

Our Show Theme is Orchid Stampede, and we're looking for cow-type items to create the proper ambience. If you have any show-worthy props such as wagon wheels, old boots, tumbleweeds, horses, saddles, Stetsons, etc. contact Bonnie or Eric.

President's Message (Danny Stocks)

I really enjoyed Gene's presentation last month on *Laelia anceps*. He had a great display of primary and secondary hybrids in bloom. Now that I know how easy they are to grow, I will be shopping for one or two at the upcoming shows. Speaking of shows, if you haven't already done so, mark your calendars for April 3, 4, and

5. Those are the dates of our show. The show committee has been working hard and this show looks as if it is going to be the best one so far.

This is the most important part of my message. **The next meeting will be at the Arroyo Grande Fire Station.** We will be meeting at the same time 7:30 pm. In February we are not able to meet at the Women's Club, so as in the past we have the upstairs meeting room at the Arroyo Grande Fire Station reserved. The fire station is located at 140 Traffic Way in Arroyo Grande. Parking is on the west side of the building and accessed from Station Way, which is the same road as Miners Hardware and the Post Office. Danny

January meeting summary (by Chris Ehrler)

At the FCOS January meeting we were pleased to have Gene Baum from Lompoc speak to us on culture of various species and hybrids of the genus *Laelia*, with concentration on the popular *Laelia anceps*. The genus was named from its two-edged flower stalk. Species of this genus grow in the wild in Mexico usually growing on trees in the full sun and wind. They are also found growing on rocks that are covered by leaves and mosses. The different species are found in different habitats. During the rainy season from May to October they get soaked daily and are thoroughly wet throughout the night. *L. anceps* in the wild generally blooms from the end of October into November just as the pseudo-bulbs are fully developed. About the end of February new roots will begin to appear at the base of the pseudo-bulbs. This is during a period when a light rain to fog prevails. The pseudo-bulbs of plants that are growing in the full sun are generally large, hard and reddish in color, while those growing in more shady conditions have longer and thinner bulbs and leaves. Most of the above information was supplied by Gene and was originally published in 1887 in the Gardener's Chronicle.

Gene also handed out a full color handout showing blooms of the Mexican *Laelias*, including *L. albida*, *L. anceps*, *L. autumnalis*, *L. furfuracea*, *L. gouldiana*, *L.*

rubescens, and *L. superbiens*. The handout was produced by the Santa Barbara Orchid Estates (SBOE) where Gene has been working off and on for a few years. In our area *L. anceps* will grow quite well mounted to a tree (excluding pines). They grow best with about 1,500 to 3,500 ft/candles of light, which is quite bright.

Depending on your growing conditions and how you have them planted or mounted, you will need to water daily to weekly from April to November with less water generally being required the rest of the year. SBOE suggests fertilizing with a balanced fertilizer during the April to November growing season.

Gene brought a large number of blooming Laelias and explained the differences between the blooming patterns and which had been used by hybridizers. He also showed a *L. anceps* from Guatemala that was in spike and still a ways away from having open blooms. Depending on where they came from originally and what the plant's parents were, the bloom can be quite different within the *L. anceps*. The *L. anceps* with lavender blooms generally

bloom from November to December and those with white blooms are open from December to February. He does not have a lot of luck growing his *L. anceps* mounted due to afternoon drying winds at his house, but generally grows them in crushed granite as is done at SBOE. When the plant starts to have its roots grow out of the pot he just puts the plant into a larger pot without removing it from the plant from the original pot. He said they do not like to have their roots disturbed and this treatment disturbs the roots very little. During the winter Gene only waters his *L. anceps* on sunny days. If it is cool he might not water for up to 10 days. He grows his under 50% shade cloth that is over a corrugated plastic roof. They get morning sun and afternoon shade. He also said that they will not bloom if they do not get enough light.

Orchid Calendar

Dates	Event	Location	Comments
February 12 7:30 p.m.	FCOS Monthly Meeting	AG Fire Station 140 Traffic Way	
February 20-22, 2009	58 th Annual Santa Clara Valley Orchid Society Show and Sale	Westgate Mall, 1600 Saratoga Ave, San Jose	Over 3000 orchids for sale. Admission free Info: 408-229-2747
March 5-8	San Francisco Orchid Society 57 th Annual Pacific Orchid Exposition	Fort Mason Center, Festival Pavilion, San Francisco	Theme: " <i>Green... With Envy</i> ". Show and sale will offer a unique look at the importance of respecting the environment in all aspects of horticulture and emphasizing the importance of conserving the varied natural habitats that orchids need to survive. For more info Call 415.665.2468 or visit www.orchidsanfrancisco.org
March 13-15	San Diego County Orchid Show	Scottish Rite Center 1895 Camino del Rio South	Friday 4pm-8pm; Saturday 9am-6pm; Sunday 10am-4pm Admission \$4
March 20-22	Annual Santa Barbara Int'l Orchid Show	Earl Warren Showgrounds	" <i>Orchid Escape</i> " Friday, Saturday & Sunday Hours: 9am – 5pm General Admission \$12
April 4-5	14 th Annual Five Cities Orchid Show and Sale	South County Regional Center, Arroyo Grande	This year's theme is " <i>Orchid Stampede</i> ". That right this is our show. Friday night wine and food Fund Raiser for the Central Coast Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association. Orchids will be judged by AOS judges. Seven vendors will be bringing along many great plants so bring along your checkbook.
April 25	Santa Clara Valley Orchid Society Greenhouse Tour		Six greenhouse open for touring and sales from 9am to 2pm