



June 2007

Newsletter

<u>Affiliations</u> American Orchid Society The Orchid Digest	<u>Proud Supporter of</u> Alzheimer's Association of the Central Coast
President: Chris Ehrler	Vice President: Eric Holenda
Secretary: Linda Kipe	Treasurer: Christina Holenda
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Newsletter Editor: Chris Ehrler	

Our Next Meeting

Our next meeting will take place on June 14 and ORCHIDS 101 will not be held. Our general meeting will begin at 7:30 PM and the presentation will be by the three amigos Larry Vierheilig, Eric Holenda and Jeffrey Thompson. Our program is titled, "What's Wrong With My Orchid?" Our panel of three experienced orchid growers will examine and diagnose your sickly, sulky orchids and recommend a treatment. This meeting is particularly intended to help our new members to understand orchid growing here on the Central Coast. Please bring in any of your orchids you have questions about and we'll try to help you understand who you're sharing your house with. Questions of a general orchid nature will also be welcomed.

Treat fairies are Sally Mellen and Patty/Peter Avotins.

Bruce Norman wanted to thank everyone that has sent cards or called him to express their condolences after the passing away of his wife Betty.

President Corner – Chris Ehrler

Our July meeting in will be our midyear BBQ and potluck. FCOS will supply the cooked meat (beef and chicken) 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 not put in on the auction tables.

After dinner we will have our 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 the blank sheet to you. If your plants are not in bloom and you have a photos of it bring it along so bidders can see it in bloom. If you are still looking for some great deals on orchids, please bring along your checkbook and bid high and

often on the plants. I can almost guarantee you will be happy with the price you will pay for your new plants.

We will also have our annual elections at the July meeting. The two positions that are open are President and Vice President. Someone has volunteered for the President position but the VP position is open at this time. So give me a call if you are interested. Remember the positions are quite easy.

The show committee is looking forward to getting a theme name for next year's Orchid Show, so its time to start sending me your suggested names. The person that comes up with the winning name will receive a \$50 gift certificate to SLO Gardens Orchids in Arroyo Grande. The nursery owners, FCOS members Rudy and Anne Bachmann, volunteered this certificate again this year. Don't forget to thank them for this great contribution.

I asked Bryce Augustine were to get the Peter's fertilizer that he discussed at our April meeting and he said he gets it at Western Farm Supply. Peter's is now owned by Scotts and has been renamed 'Peters Professional' and can be found on the web at Scotts Horticulture. They have named the two formulas that Bryce talked about as '20-10-20 Peat Lite Special' and '10-30-20 Blossom Booster'. I was sure Bryce had said 30-10-20 during his presentation but it looks like the fall/winter fertilizer should be the 10-30-20 formula. That makes more sense when I think about it. Most folks suggest if you change your fertilizer during the year that you use a lower nitrogen (the first number of the three on the label) when the plant is not growing as much. But, many orchid growers tend to use the same fertilizer formula throughout the entire year. So figure out what works for you and stick with it.

Summary of the May meeting presentation

The presentation at our May meeting was by FCOS member Bob Asbell of Asbell Orchids, the only local cymbidium hybridizer and grower. He said the challenge is to develop great color, size, shape, form and flower count when you make a new hybrid. He showed a large number of slides of his past crosses that have been quite successful. His planting mix is about 40% fine fir bark, 40% medium bark and 20% sand. He likes redwood bark better but it is more costly and difficult to find. When transplanting he throws away all the old bark and plants in a pot that the orchid can stay in for 3-4 years. He generally removes all the back bulbs and tries to keep a minimum of three green bulbs on each newly potted cymbidium. He suggests using 20-10-20

fertilizer (any brand) but one without urea as a nitrogen source. He fertilizes from June 1 until December or January, and then uses just water for the rest of the year. He said if you continue fertilizer throughout the year the cymbidium will continue to put energy into growing and not into blooming. Cymbidiums are hardy to 30 F and should be protected below this temperature. Try to keep the maximum

temperature below 90-95 F. Cymbidiums need lots of sun to grow and bloom well and Bob suggest giving them morning and afternoon sun but protecting them from midday sun. They flower better when the leaves are slightly yellow and not deep green.

Five Cities Orchid Society
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Orchid Calendar

Dates	Event	Location	Comments
Thursday June 14, 2007	FCOS Monthly Meeting	AG Woman's Club 211 Vernon Street, AG	Larry Vierheilig, Eric Holenda and Jeffrey Thompson will present a program titled, " What's Wrong With My Orchid?"
July 13-15, 2007	Santa Barbara Orchid Estate Orchid Fair	Earl Warren Show Grounds Santa Barbara	Over 50 orchid vendors from around the world. Admission is FREE but parking costs \$5/vehicle. Fri-Sat from 9AM-5PM and Sun from 10AM-4PM. More info at www.orchidfair.com or call 1-800-553-3387.