



June 2008 Newsletter

Affiliations American Orchid Society The Orchid Digest	Proud Supporter of 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

Thursday June 12th is the date for our annual BBQ Potluck and Silent Auction. Setup is at 6:30pm with dinner beginning at 7:00pm. FCOS will provide Chicken and Tri-Tip BBQ'd to perfection (hopefully). Members should bring a salad, side dish, or dessert to share. Attendees should provide their own table service and beverages. We do not have alcohol insurance so please leave it at home.

After the elections, we will have our silent auction. This is a major fundraiser for FCOS and helps keep the cost of our dues low. Please make donation of extra orchids or ones that have not grown well for you or orchid related items. It is also a good time to divide and repot your healthy plants, bringing the divisions for sale. It's also an excellent time to expand your orchid collection by being the highest bidder on choice plants you don't currently own. Remember if you bid on items, you should stick around for the close of bidding, so you can collect and pay for all plants or items where you are the successful bidder.

President's Message

Like many people that grow orchids I was influenced by someone when I was young. My family lived with my grandmother in Pacifica. She had a large yard with many different types of flowers in it. Against the back wall of her house, on the patio facing east, she had a dozen or so cymbidiums. I can remember watching the spikes grow with many beautiful flowers. Well my grandmother now lives in Yreka. She is 88 years old and in poor health. She knows I have cymbidiums and every time I talk with her she tells me she is going to come and visit to see them. The reality is, however, that she cannot make the 10 hour drive. My dad also lives in Yreka. Every spring I try to go up to visit him and do a good spring cleaning of his house and yard. As I was preparing to go up there this year I found out that my grandmother was in the hospital. I thought instead of her coming down to see my cymbidiums I would take some up to her.

As many of you know I work out at Diablo Canyon and we had a large outage this winter. I was working 13 hours a day, 6 or 7 days a week for about 80 days. Consequently I did not have time to do anything with my orchids except keep them watered. None of my cymbidiums spikes were staked so the spikes were bent some of the flowers were opened upside down. They were definitely not something to be proud of.

I cut about 20 spikes and put them in a plastic bucket. I brought two cymbidium plants with several spikes each and

finally the Paph. that I brought to our last meeting. I got to my dad's and decided to take the cut spikes to the hospital. I was amazed at the reactions of the people and nurses. They were in awe of the crooked, bent, upside down flowers that I was carrying. When I brought them into my grandmother's room she was in tears. She sat up in her bed and looked at each spike. She had me take a spike to the nurse's station. She gave one to her doctor. She had me take one down the hall to one of her friends that were also in the hospital. It made me feel good to bring joy to so many people. Over the next few days, total strangers would come to my dad's house and ask to see the orchids. It was funny, the one Paph. that I brought that is hard to get to bloom no one even really looked at. It was the crooked, bent, upside down cymbidiums that they wanted to see. When my grandmother left the hospital she gave many of the spikes to people she knew. She even made the person driving her home go by the cemetery to my mom's grave to put one on it. When she got home, she called me to come over and she had me put each spike into a different vase. Instead of putting them in her house she put them on her front porch so everyone could see. It was still freezing there at night so every night she would have me come over and bring them in. After a couple of days she had given most of her neighbors spikes.

That trip put something in perspective for me. I have begun to have a more refined taste, so to speak, when it comes to orchids. I look at them differently than I used to. I know what good form is. I know what is uncommon. I know what is hard to grow and bloom. I had almost lost sight of the reason that I started growing orchids in the first place. Any orchid is beautiful. Just having them bloom for you is accomplishment. No matter what they look like people admire them. When you share them it makes people happy. I am sure everyone in the hobby started at the same place and for similar reasons. Take the time to remember why you started growing orchids to begin with.

Thanks to FCOS members Bob and Dan Asbell for hosting us and SMOS at their nursery for an open house and greenhouse tour. Thanks to all those that brought food for the luncheon. Aloha, Danny

May meeting notes

At the May meeting we had the privilege of a slide show trip to Borneo with our own Christina and Eric Holenda from a trip they took in March 2007. Borneo is situated just above the equator. Due to palm oil plantations and hardwood exporting there is a lot of orchid habitat that is being destroyed. There is also a large amount of land that is being

used for rice production. They were able to stay with some local families in their longhouses. They visited a Slipper Orchid Recovery Project. They saw *Paphiopedilum sanderianum* growing a partial sun on vertical open cliff faces. They also showed some photos of the plant with the largest flower in the world. I do not recall the name but the bloom can be from 1-2 feet wide. They also visited Mount Kinabalu which is a single large granite mountain that is famous for many different orchid species including *Paphiopedilum rothschildianum*. They saw many different coelogynes and bulbophylums in this area. They also saw a pygmy Malaysian elephant (max height 7 ft) and five species of monkeys. When they visited the lower elevations Christina was happy to hear there were 15 species of pythons, monitor lizards, and eight species of hornbills that lived in the area.

News from the new AOS SB Judging Center

The American Orchid Society California Central Coast Judging Center is up and running. IF you are interested in having one or more of your orchids judged, you need to take

them to judging the center by 6:30 pm on the third Wednesday of any month. The dates for the rest of the year are as follows: June 18, July 16, August 20, September 17, October 15, November 19 and December 17. The judging takes place during the Orchid Society of Santa Barbara’s monthly meeting so you will learn something new when you attend their meeting and listen to their presenter.

Two FCOS members each won an Award of Merit (AM) for their orchids during the first two judging events at this center. Eric Holenda won at the April meeting for his *Phragmipedium ecuadorensis* 'Christeria' (AOS score 83) and Larry Stabler won for his *Encyclia citrina* 'Snake' (AOS score 89) at the May meeting. CONGRATULATIONS. Photos of these two plants were part of the email version of this newsletter so if you are getting this via USPS, you miss the photos. Give Chris your email address and get all future newsletters with their photos.



Encyclia citrina 'Snake' AM/AOS



Phragmipedium ecuadorensis 'Christeria' AM/AOS

Orchid Calendar

Dates	Event	Location	Comments
Thursday, June 12 Dinner starts at 7pm- Don't be late	FCOS Monthly Meeting	AG Women's Club, Arroyo Grande	BBQ, potluck and silent auction. See above for more details..
June 14, Noon-8pm	Orchid Digest Speaker's Day	Huntington Library and Botanical Gardens, San Marino, CA	Theme: "Those Marvelous Miniature Orchids". The distinguished speaker will be Henry Oakley from England. Four seminars, Dinner and the evening speaker's presentation for \$60. A number of vendors will be selling their orchids at this event. Make reservations by June 7 by contacting Simone Friend at (562) 431-1247 or orchidssimonef@aol.com

July 11, 7:30pm	Santa Barbara Cymbidium Society Meeting	Louise Lowry Davis Recreation Center, 1232 De La Vina Street, Santa Barbara	Dr. David DuPuy will be the guest speaker. He will be talking about cymbidiums and how to grow them better. Don't miss his first US lecture.
Friday-Sunday July 11-13	SBOE Orchid Fair	Earl Warren Show Grounds , Santa Barbara	28 th Annual Santa Barbara Orchid Estate International Orchid Fair. Meet author Dr. David DuPuy and purchase his new book "The Genus Cymbidium" or "The Orchids of Madagascar". Lots of vendors.