



Florida West Coast Orchid Society

Orchid News & Views

June 2008 Volume 6, No. 6

Meeting Information

June 12, 2008

7:00 pm— Educational Class

Bill Nunez - 'The Importance of a Good Flush'

7:30 pm— Featured Speaker

Jim Roberts - 'What's wrong With This Picture'

- Don't miss this very informative meeting.
- Remember snacks.
- Introduce yourself to our new members. They want to meet you.
- Our guest will be bringing plants to sell.

www.fwcoss.org

Florida SunCoast Orchids is led by Jim Roberts, a leader in the growing orchid industry of Florida, operating throughout the state of Florida as well as supporting national market demands.

Jim Roberts has been growing Orchids over 25 years in climates ranging from cold Minnesota to hot SW Florida growing conditions. He has traveled extensively in search of orchid treasures in Hawaii, South America, and Europe, seeking the plants that will grow and bloom best for his clients.

Formerly, Jim has had careers of mortgages, retail management, teaching and music. He now leads Florida SunCoast Orchids in its quest to become one of the prime growers and suppliers to the retail hobbyist market for quality orchid plant selections.

*FWCOS
Orchid News & Views*

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14444 Neptune Rd, Seminole, FL 33776
Content must be received by one week past the
monthly meeting for inclusion in the following
months newsletter. Ads must be in high resolution
(at print size) Picture format: .TIF, .GIF, .JPG or
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The Florida West Coast Orchid Society (FWCOS)
Meets every 2nd Thursday of the month at Pinellas
County Extension.

*Operating Procedures
for Membership*

Membership—the term of membership shall
be for the calendar year. Annual dues for the
first annual member in a household shall be
\$18.00, each additional annual member in a
household and not receiving a newsletter
shall be \$12.00.

Members renewing before December 31st
may receive a 10% discount for the early re-
newal. For new members joining from July
to December these months will be prorated
at \$1.50/month in addition to the next year's
membership of \$18.00. In the case of a
household with life or honorary members,
they shall be considered the first annual
member of a household. Lifetime member-
ship is \$180.00.

*FWCOS
Board of Directors 2008*

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Trustees: Roy Finley 727-866-2436
us029817@mindspring.com

Trustees are elected for 3 year terms.

From Our President's Desk

Hello Orchid growers!

Below is a photo of those who were FWCOS volunteers on May 1 at the Botanical Gardens. What an asset to the club you are. We will, again, at the June meeting, honor volunteers with a gift orchid to show our gratitude as a club for your contribution of time and hard work.

Another thing I want to acknowledge is how much we appreciate those of you who bring plants to our meetings for judging. It is inspiring to see the various varieties in bloom and I personally really enjoy this segment of the evening. We are so blessed to have judges who are members of FWCOS and provide their insights and expertise to all of us.

Many thanks to Corrine Arnold for a very successful Field Trip. Many good reports have come in describing a great time as they visited three greenhouses [Ritter's, Chapmans and Krull-Smith]. From what I hear, the bus was eventually loaded with people and orchids.

Quite a few people from FWCOS attended the Redlands show and sale near Homestead. Again, reports

of a fun trip and lots of orchid purchases have filtered back to me.

As a reminder, we will be scheduling some Saturdays in June to volunteer at the gardens. We need about 150 hours more to satisfy our commitment for 2009, so please plan on coming out, enjoying the time together and having a great lunch. For those of you that can volunteer during the week, here are the contacts for you to schedule your time with:

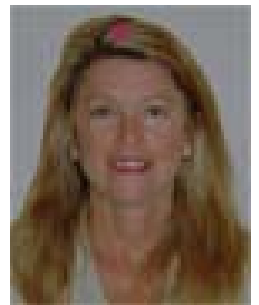
Mondays: 8am to noon working on Retention Pond Restoration; Contact Andy Wilson 727-582-2135

Thursdays: 8am to noon working on various maintenance activities; Contact Bob 727-582-2081

Fridays: 8am to noon working in the Tropical Walk area; Contact James 727-582-2581

Enjoy your bloomin' orchids!

Pam



May Bloom Table



Top Left: Paph Gloria Naugle

Displayed by Jim and Emily Clarkson

To the right: Slc. Love Fresh

Displayed by Jim and Emily Clarkson



To the left: Phalaenopsis parishii 'Emily'

Displayed by Jim and Emily Clarkson.

Meetings and Events

JUNE 2008

June 12 FWCOS Monthly Meeting

June 14—AOS Judging , 1:30 pm, Harry P Leu Gardens,
1920 N Forest Ave, Orlando

June 19—Tampa Bay Orchid Society Monthly Meeting
7:30 pm at Seminole Heights Methodist Church, Central
Ave and East Hannah, Tampa

June 24—Tampa Orchid Club Monthly Meeting 10:00
am Ragan Center, 1200 East Lake Ave, Tampa (about 2
blocks east of I-275)

June 25—AOS Judging Tampa, 7:30 pm
Tampa Garden Club, 2629 Bayshore Blvd, Tampa.

August 3 —Coalition for Orchid Species Symposium,
Contact: Lou Lodyga, 8100 SW 88 Ct,

Miami, FL 33713; (305) 595-9675;

llodyga@comcast.net.

Purchase Martin Motes New book. Members \$15 – non
member \$18. Remember ... Martin will be our keynote
speaker September 11th. We have books for sale at the
meetings, so get yours now.

To receive Martin Motes Newsletter, you can email him at
vandas@mindapring.com and he will put you on his
newsletter list.

Egads! What's Next

Things sure do happen fast nowadays.

With so much science here.

It wasn't long ago that they

Said, "Give your orchids beer."

Now if it wasn't bad enough.

To teach our plants to drink.

They tell us not to have bad thoughts.

Because our plants can think.

One has to be most cautious now.

This I can plainly see.

For they have recently found out

That plants have ESP.

We'll have to treat them tenderly.

And see that we don't vex.

For if we do, they'll likely get

A very bad complex.

So if a plant of yours won't bloom.

Just pick it up and say.

I'm sorry I've offended you.

Won't you forgive me, pray?

I'll put you in the choicest spot.

And give you lots of room.

But please, oh please, I beg of you.

Won't you relent and bloom?"

Clarence S. Lundsten

Reprinted from the Orchid Advertiser

(1973 FWCOS News and Views)



Our June Guest Speaker is Jim Roberts [see left] who owns Florida Suncoast Orchids and will speak to "Whats Wrong With This Picture " Members, please bring in those plants who appear to be unhappy or unhealthy. Jim can suggest to you how you can make it happy again.

From Our Members

The Secrets of Vanda Culture Revealed

By Jack Majewski



When I was a twenty year old I purchased my mother an *Ascocentrum miniatum* for Mother's Day at a local Sears garden center. She enjoyed it until it finished flowering and then hung it in a tree in the back yard. It became my mission to keep it alive. I joined the American Orchid Society and started spending my Saturdays roaming around the original Jones & Scully's greenhouses close to the Miami International Airport. The greenhouses were full of the best orchids money could buy. Unfortunately, at the time I didn't have any money. But the days roaming these greenhouses were well spent as I picked up many cultural tips from Bob, Tim and most of all Tony. Tony could grow everything and anything to perfection. I remember seeing *Rhynchostylis gigantea* growing in 5-foot square baskets that were unbelievable. To this day I have never seen them grown any better. I guess I was drawn to the vandaceous genera for their color and the fact that they bloomed several times a year.

The word "Vanda" is derived from ancient Sanskrit, and originally referred to the sacred mistletoe found on oak trees, the oak being *Vandaca*. Sir William Jones adopted the term in 1795 to cover all epiphytes including orchids. Robert Brown retained the name when he established the genus *Vanda* in 1820, based on the orchid that today is known as *Vanda tessellata*, but which originally was known as *Vanda roxburghii*.

Vanda species are found only in the Eastern Hemisphere. The range of distribution spreads in a broad arc from northern India to the Mariana Islands and southward to southern India, Sri Lanka, and even to the Northern Territory of Australia.

And now for the secrets! There are no secrets to growing Vandas or any other genera; there is only good culture. Good culture, for the most part, is not about what you do to your plants; it is about the kind of environment you provide for them.

Environment is the combined interactions of light, temperature, moisture, humidity and movement of air.

Problems and opportunities created by environmental factors vary from one greenhouse, patio or tree to another and are in fact, different in different parts of the same greenhouse, patio or tree. So, I can't tell you what to do to your Vandas, and if you were to try and replicate what we do it may be totally wrong for your growing environment. But, by knowing what constitutes a good environment, together we can strive for optimal conditions for each of our particular circumstances.

One thing you have to understand is that optimal conditions are not static or independent of one another. Requirements are not the same for seedlings as they would be for a mature plant; they change as a plant grows. Conditions and needs also change with the seasons and even the time of day. Because of genetic differences, ideal climates are not the same for plants of the same genus. An ideal climate for *V. coerulea*, for example, is not ideal for a *V. sanderiana*. *V. coerulea* requiring a somewhat cooler climate than *V. sanderiana*. However, *V. dearei* is especially sensitive to cold, and some of its hybrids inherit this trait. Basically every plant has a different set of optimal conditions and they change constantly.

So, the bad news is it's absolutely impossible to optimize all of the factors I have mentioned. But, even Mother Nature doesn't provide ideal conditions. So what can we do? We do the very best we can and fortunately, Vandas are very forgiving. They are genetically programmed to grow and bloom if given half a chance to do so. Given that opportunity they will develop the abundant root structure on which the growth of the rest of the plant depends. So we can grow *V. coerulea*, *V. sanderiana*, and *V. dearei* and their hybrids because each tolerates some departure from their ideal. We simply find a cooler location for *V. coerulea*, the warmest location for *V. dearei* and something in between for *V. sanderiana*.

Which brings us to the question, what are the basic environmental requirements for vandaceous plants?

Temperature They require warm temperatures, some more than others. (Optimal conditions, 60-70 degrees for normal lows, 80-95 degrees for normal highs)

Abundant Moisture Vandas are monopodial in growth, as are phalaenopsis so they have no pseudobulbs to store energy, Vandas should be watered as often as possible under your given conditions. Unlike phalaenopsis that should not be allowed to dry out completely, Vandas do need to dry completely between waterings. But, if the plants are in baskets with no media this can be a matter of a few hours on a bright sunny day. So, collections that are hand watered could conceivably be watered as often as two or three times a day. Conversely you would want to water less when cold and overcast. (Optimal pH 5.8 to 6.5)

Humidity 60 to 80% is optimal (not much of a problem here).

Bright light Vanda's require bright light, but not of an intensity that the leaf temperature rises much above the temperature of the surrounding air. In short, bright filtered light. (Optimal conditions are 6,000 foot-candles and long days of 12 hours or more.)

Steady air movement Steady movement of air is highly beneficial, but the chilling effect of rapid evaporation at low temperatures or the desiccating effects of constant currents of hot, acrid air are deadly.

The right climatic conditions must be combined with good nutrition and Vandas are heavy feeders.

Fertilizers: Nitrogen promotes vegetative growth. (For plants of the Vanda alliance most of the nitrogen should come from nitrates. Ammonium and urea forms require warmth and bacterial action to convert them to nitrates. i.e. potting media)

Phosphorus is vital for plant respiration and blossoms.

Potassium plays an important role in plant metabolism and root growth.

Steady cultural and climatic conditions are best. Rapidly changing conditions lead to leaf drop and other manifestations of stress, because the plants cannot adapt to changes quickly enough. Any problems you might have, like leaf drop, will generally occur at the change of seasons.

Now that we have defined what constitutes an optimal environment how do you know you are you providing a good environment?

There are two main indicators: roots and leaves. The leaves should feel firm to the touch, not limp or desiccated. The roots should be abundant and branched. They should be plump with long green tips (from ¼ to 1 inch). If you want your plants to continue growing in the winter months the key is keeping the temperature above 60 degrees. (My motto is "Don't grow the plant, grow the roots and the plant we take care of itself.")

It's not that cattleyas, phalaenopsis, dendrobiums and paphiopedilums aren't wonderful in their own right, and we certainly grow some in our collection. But... few other orchids have flowers with the breath-taking beauty, the wide range of rich colors, and wonderful texture of today's Vandas and Ascocendas and their combinations with other genera. The individual blossoms are attractively shaped and pleasingly presented on erect inflorescences. The plants are floriferous both in number of flowers and in frequency of flowering. Most bloom two, to three times a year. Some are hardly ever out of bloom. Their flowering period is not limited to any single season, and their flowers are long lasting. With reasonable attention to sanitation, the plants are not much troubled by insects or disease. In short they are the perfect fit to our West Coast environment and with a just little attention to there needs anyone can grow great Vandas. Happy Growing!!!



Field trip participants by
the bus



Upper left: Stacy Siebenthal and white Phalaenopsis she won

Upper center: Mr Chapman presenting a cymbidium to Field
Trip Director, Corrine Arnold.

Upper right: Cherie Mollow on the bus with her orchids

Lower right: Bob McKinney on the bus with his Orchids



FWCOS FIELD TRIP

Need to Hang a Pot Temporarily?

(Dave Tribble Contributing Editor—Reprinted with permission from: *Illinois Orchid Society Newsletter, Vol 56, No 5*)

Here's an easy way to do it. If you're like me you have a bunch of supplies around. Grab a couple of wire rings (fig 1), invert, stick in the pot & tie a string thru the small loops & hang (fig 2 is a 4" hanging plastic pot).



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

Fig 3 is a 5 1/2" clay pot hanging from a single (larger) wire ring.

A Word On Growing

by C Ferguson Beall

(Mr Beall is one of the nation's foremost commercial growers and a past president of the AOS.)

From Alicearas to Zygopetalum, but most particularly on such thins as Paphiopedilum and Miltonias, the finest grown plants are those which get personal attention. Some Universities are now running experiments on extra-sensory perception in plants. Before you pooh-pooh the idea, remember that it will be difficult to prove that plants have feelings, but it would also be ridiculous in this day and age to flatly state that something cannot be so. There is so little known, and we are only on the threshold of so much new knowledge that the least we can do is keep an open mind.

Meanwhile, treat your plants as though they do have feelings. If it is a cold rainy day, don't choose that day to come in and point a cold stream of water at them. A polygraph machine would show them screaming for help. By the same token, if you come home from being away for two or three days, and the heat is on, the plants are parched, give them a nice cool drink of

water, even if it is just before their bedtime. This has the makings of personal attention: to be able to sense their immediate needs.

Regardless of variety, the biggest need is always for water as soon as they are dry. But, don't give them a drop if they are chilled, clammy, damp, and not using anything. Sometimes it takes a plant three weeks in a plastic pot to use all its water. But when it does use the water up, then it is generally ready for spring and will dry out more often in the future. In good growing weather seedlings will thrive on heavy soakings twice a day.

Practice and get experienced in observation, and then be attentive to your plants' needs daily. It sounds like a drag, but not if it is a plant that may make you a fortune, or win the sweepstakes in your show. Their growth is in direct proportion to the care used in supplying water. The 'cork' roots love to swell up with water, dry out rapidly and swell up again.

FWCOS June 1970—Vol XII Number VI

**Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting
Florida West Coast Orchid Society**

April 29, 2008

In Attendance:

Bob Barrett, Cheryl Finke (via speaker phone from Canada), Leslie Belew, Chad Whetstone, Michael Palandro, Corinne Arnold, Jack Majewski, Donna Sitton, Roy Finley, and Tina Kendall

Absent:

Pam Heath, Chris Smith, and Bill Nunez

The meeting was held at the offices of Harper, Van Scoik, 2111 Drew St., Clearwater. Having declared a quorum, the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

Old Business:

The minutes of the January 15, 2008 meeting of the Board of Trustees were reviewed. Chad moved the minutes be accepted and Bob seconded. The motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

Chad presented the Board with a recap of the auction. He expects that when all the receipts are in the auction will net approx. \$7600. The expenses included purchased plants, rent, food, books and miscellaneous items. The reasons for gross sales at least \$2500 greater than any auction in recent memory are: 125 people signed in compared to around 85-90 in the past; and, the average sale was approx. \$100, which is large in comparison. After talking with Pam previously, it was decided that a letter would be sent to those who signed in inviting them to future meetings and thanking them for supporting our society. With the sign in sheet from the 2007 auction, we can build a database and possibly send a postcard next year to announce the auction. All of Martin Motes books were sold, and Cheryl has ordered more. It was agreed that we would hold the auction at the same venue again next year. Cheryl was complimented by all for a great job!

Chad presented the Board with a Balance Statement for the first three months of 2008. With the auction monies, the checking account has a balance around \$12-13,000. Since there are not a lot of additional expenses prior to the fall show, Chad suggested moving some of the excess cash to an investment account with bonds instead of CDs, due to the low returns at present. He agreed to talk with TD Waterhouse next week. Jack made a motion that Chad move the excess in checking to an investment account and Donna seconded. The motion passed. In addition, Chad renewed the Florida corporate status for the society.

Jack and Bob had agreed to be on the Reconciliation Committee with Chad and after several hours reviewing the records found the figures to be in order. It was decided that when the societies total resources exceed a certain level that the Board deems adequate, funds will be budgeted to support

conservation, a college researcher, or some other educational purpose. A cushion of \$45-50,000 was discussed, and it is expected there will be a line item in the 2009 budget. The figure will be dependent on if the society is paying rent for its meeting room. It is believed that we are probably close to completing the 200 hours for 2008, and Pam was expected to confirm this with Andy on Thursday. We have until October to complete the 200 hours for 2009. There was much discussion regarding the agreement Michael had signed last October to use the meeting room. There was concern about if the room would even be available on our regular meeting night in 2009 if we did complete the 200 hours. Leslie agreed to review the documents that Michael signed last fall and had given her at that time.

Field Trip:

Corinne reported that 32 people had signed up for the bus trip. Cheryl had given her a liability release form for all participants to sign. The itinerary was discussed and she requested a \$200 check for the bus driver's tip.

Speakers:

In May, Mark Jones will speak on orchid judging. Jim Roberts is planned for June, and Martin Motes in September.

Other Business:

Pam had provided Bob with a list of items she wanted discussed. Pam is going to schedule work days for Saturdays in May. The society will provide a picnic lunch for all volunteers on Saturdays. Pam has receipts from the work day on 4/26 to give to Chad at the next regular meeting. Roy has prepared an order from Carmela's of blooming plants for all volunteers at the auction and at the Gardens, who will be recognized at the next meeting.

Pam asked the Board to approve FWCOS letterhead and Donna agreed to design this. Donna also agreed to investigate lapel pins similar to some she owns.

Pam also suggested having someone responsible for creating a 'welcome pack' for new members. There was discussion on what could be in these and how to get the supplies. Tina agreed to be the New Member Coordinator.

Bob has confirmed 11 vendors for the fall show. There will be 4 less vendors at this year's show. There was discussion regarding the show plants, both for the vendors and club members.

Roy would like to have a member plant sale on a Saturday morning open to the public. There was some discussion of dates, possibly in the fall, so as not to conflict with working off our rent at the Gardens.

Bob motioned that we adjourn at 8:30 and Chad seconded. The next meeting was scheduled for July 22.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Belew

Secretary, FWCOS

Map to Pinellas County Extension Center



Heading West, (toward Indian Rocks Beach) Turn left from
Ulmerton Road onto 121st Ave., then go right across 125th Street.

Turn left and go through the double gates
Look for flagpole to enter at the main entrance

12520 Ulmerton Road
Largo, Florida 33774-3602
Ph. 727-582-2100

Educational Class starts at 7:00 pm



FWCOS
c/o Diane Jones
14541 Iroquois Ave.
Largo, FL 33774