

The Orchid Enthusiast

The Newsletter for the Central New York Orchid Society

Volume 9: Issue 6 June 3rd, 2007 CNYOS is affiliated with the American Orchid Society and the Orchid Digest

Spring is finally here for good! Also, have you paid your dues yet?

Hello everyone,

Our June meeting will be our Annual Spring picnic which will be held at Dave Ditz's house in Baldwinsville, NY. If you have questions or need directions, contact Dave. If it should rain we will hold it at our regular meeting place at St. Augustine's Church in Baldwinsville, NY. Format will be a dish-to-pass; Members with last names ending with A-M can bring a dessert item. Members with names ending with N-Z can bring a main course item. If you have something special, please ignore the suggestion and bring your best goodies! It would a good idea if everyone were to bring a lounge chair or two. Also is suggested that each bring their own drink items.

In this issue:

Meeting times:	pg. 1
CNYOS Calendar:	pg. 1
Misc. notes:	pg. 2
Previous minutes	pg. 2
Volunteer schedules:	pg. 2
Show Table	pg. 2-3
Main article	pg. 3-5
Directions to picnic	pg. 5

Meeting/Event Calendar

June 3rd Annual Spring Picnic site to be determined

August 5th *Note:* We will be having a meeting in August to help prepare for our Fall Show and Sale, which will be held the end of September

Sept 9th CNYOS meeting - please note the meeting will be the second Sunday of September due to the Labor Day weekend

Sept 22nd-23rd Our Show will again be at the Beaver Lake Nature Center in Baldwinsville, NY

Please note that we will be having a first-ever meeting in August., on Sunday the 5th. We have finally determined that our 2007 Annual Fall Show and Sale will be held in late September, on the 22nd and 23rd, with setup on Friday the 21st. We tried several different show dates, but there were conflicts with other show dates in our nearby area. Even if a show isn't right next door, often the judges and vendors that would be present at our show are also scheduled to be at the competing show. Due to the early Fall Show date, we determined that more time to prepare was necessary. We are aware that many will have conflicts with Summer Plans, but it will be helpful if all that are able can attend the meeting. There will of course be a Show Table and refreshments, and possibly a beginner's meeting. Someone will need to volunteer for bringing in snacks for this meeting. If you have volunteered to bring in refreshments for any of the Fall/Winter meetings, please let Charles know so that he can update the volunteer list that he has kindly lost somewhere in his apartment. (Bad Newsletter Editor) Thanks!

We had a good showing at our May meeting and Annual Auction, though several members were instead attending the African Violet Society show. A few members were involved in some seriously spirited bidding, and the many donated plants were deeply appreciated. A tremendous Thank You is given to the vendors who donated plants for our auction.

Don't forget to bring your flowering orchids for the Show Table!

2007 CNYOS Dues are now due, and should be paid to our Treasurer Carol Haskell as soon as possible. Carol Haskell 102 Wynthrop Rd. Syracuse, NY 13209 315/468-0811 chaskell33@earthlink.net

If any of your contact info has changed, then please let Carol know asap. It is our policy that if members have not paid their dues after a few months, they will no longer receive their newsletters. Please keep your membership up-to-date! We don't want anyone to miss out on all of the activities happening this Spring. Yearly dues are \$15.00 per individual, or \$17.00 per family.

Misc. Business

Club Vice-President Kim Boronczyk has orchid supplies for sale. Please contact Kim at 315-455-7587 before regular meetings to discuss what she has available and can bring to the next meeting.

The club has an orchid book library at our meeting location. Please contact Judi or Tom to find out what is available and to sign out a book.

The Wolles are still collecting clothing, household items, baby supplies and other food and paper stores for the Living Hope Christian Center in Syracuse. Members can bring their donations to the meeting to give to the Wolles. Anyone who has ideas for Beginner's Session topics please feel free to contact Tom D. by phone at 315-687-3449

CNYOS Meeting Minutes - May 6, 2007

Judi opened the meeting at 2:20PM by explaining that we would have a short business meeting and then start the plant auction:

1. Judi noted that our next meeting will be the annual picnic on June 3, 2007. As usual, members will bring their own dinner service, drinks and a dish to share. The picnic will start at 2PM and will be held at David Ditz's home (directions to be included in the newsletter). If it rains on June 3, we will hold the picnic inside at the church as we did last year.
2. This year's CNYOS Show will be held the weekend of September 22nd and 23rd. The show will be held at Beaver Lake Nature Center and set-up will take place on Friday, September 21st. This is two weeks ahead of our normal show dates and occurs only two weeks after our September meeting. Because of this, we will be holding an August meeting to discuss show preparation and activities. Please plan on attending August 5, 2007, at 2pm at St. Augustine's Church.
3. Marlow's Orchids is holding their open house in June. The club will arrange a field trip if we have enough people interested in going. Arrangements will be made at the June meeting.
4. The Herb and Flower show at the Cornell Cooperative Extension in Oriskany, New York, is being held on June 23. Rick Braue cannot set up a club sales table this year. Kim Boronczyk said she would make the arrangements for this. Sign-up sheets will be available at the June meeting or contact Kim if you are interested in working at the club's booth.

Pat Cotter, Secretary

Volunteer Schedules

We will need two volunteers for refreshments for our new August Meeting, and those who have already signed up to bring in snacks for the rest of the year should contact Charles and let him know.

MAY SHOW TABLE

Please note especially all names and abbreviations in boldface, and correct or complete your records, including parentage and new registrations.

Cypripedium Alliance

<i>Phrag.</i> Jason Fischer (Memoria Dick Clemens x <i>besseae</i>)	Witkin
<i>Paph. hirsutissimum</i>	“
<i>Paph. niveum</i>	“

Cattleya Alliance

<i>C. intermedia</i>	Capella
<i>Lpt. bicolor</i>	“
<i>Blc.</i> Waianae Leopard (Peach Cobbler x <i>C. Penny Kuroda</i>)	Ditz
<i>Slc.</i> Jewel Box (<i>Gur. aurantiaca</i> x Anzac)	Weller

Vandaceous

<i>V. tricolor</i>	Witkin
<i>Cleis. birmanicum</i>	“
<i>Phal. cornu-cervi</i>	Ufford
<i>Phal. corningiana</i>	“
<i>Chsch. parishii</i>	Ditz
<i>Phal.</i> Hilo Lip (Hilo Beauty x Elaine Mishima)	Capella

Oncidium Alliance

<i>Milt.</i> Echo Bay (Woodlands x Rose Bay)	Frost
<i>Odna.</i> Memoria Martin Orenstein (<i>Aglaon</i> x <i>Milt.</i> Martin Orenstein)“	“
<i>Brs. verrucosa</i>	Capella

Pleurothallid Alliance

<i>Masd. caesia</i>	Witkin
<i>Stelis pusilla</i>	Braue
<i>Anathallis montipelladensis</i>	“
<i>Stelis villosa</i>	“

Miscellaneous

<i>Chysis bractescens</i>	Ditz
<i>Rbq. mooreana</i>	“
<i>A'rgs. articulata</i>	Daily
<i>Angcm. sesquipedale</i> var. <i>angustifolium</i>	“
<i>Coel. ochracea</i>	Braue

Iris Cohen

An Interview with Angel Lara

In April I had the occasion to be in Sarasota Florida for a few days. One of my favorite things to do while there is to see the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens. It's a world-renown center for tropical plant research, conservation and education. There are more than 20,000 plants in the greenhouses and thousands more comprising 9.5 acres of outdoor gardens. For someone visiting from Upstate New York where the gray of Winter still grips the landscape, a walk through Selby Gardens is nothing short of magical!

My first stop was the Tropical Display House. You get the feeling of a brief embrace of the rainforest with rich, wonderful shades of green everywhere. The plants seem to envelop you. Many brightly colored orchids are right before your eyes while others are more camouflaged, sitting on a branch above or tucked into a depression on an ornamental feature. Wonderfully buoyant, the air moves restlessly around the plant house. You also get a close-up look at some of the other epiphytes and bromeliads in their collection. It's likely that few people have ever seen pictures of some of these species, such as the *Nepenthes* from Borneo, much less viewed them from only an arms-length away.

Moving away from the walk you see many interesting plants in spots such as the Cycad display area with plants from tropical Asia, Mexico, Japan and Central America as well as native North American species. Further along the walk is the Banyan grove. If you've never seen a Banyan tree, it's a member of the Fig family (*Ficus*) and can grow very large. They have a very distinctive characteristic of developing aerial roots that drop to the ground and act as supports for the ever-spreading branches. There are plenty of other collections of plants to suit every horticultural interest. Natural presentation of all the plants is obviously important to those who maintain the collection.

While walking a second time through the tropical house, I decided to see if I could get someone to give me a peek at the greenhouses that are generally 'off limits' to the public. I was very fortunate to be introduced to Angel Lara, the Orchid Collection Horticulturalist. He reluctantly agreed to show me the intermediate house though he was very busy. Fortunately for me, I recognized many of the orchids and commented on the interesting methods he used for mounting Bulbophyllums. Perhaps it was the questions I asked, or the plants I recognized that surprised him, or just that we quickly found many areas of mutual interest, because he ended up showing me all of the greenhouses!

(The interview presented is based on questions I asked via email and our conversations as he showed me where he worked. You will see how knowledgeable, outgoing, and personable Angel is in his responses to my sometimes 'stiff' questions.)

TD- Angel, what is your official title and specifically what are your responsibilities?

AL- The official job title is Orchid Collection Horticulturist. I'm responsible for all aspects of the collection from watering and fertilizing to repotting and applying chemicals. I also work with the curators and staff to enhance the collections. I teach classes, work with students, interns and volunteers as well as write articles for publication and the culture sheets seen on the Selby web site. We also put on five AOS orchid shows a year.

TD- Where and how did your journey into working with plants begin?

AL- Actually, I guess my journey began in the womb! My Mother would visit my Father at an orchid nursery in Cuba called Soroa Orchids, a well-known nursery in the mountains. He was building the living quarters for the nursery workers. Actually after moving to Miami, my Mother would make me climb our spiny citrus trees to mount her orchids on them! I got hooked on orchids one day when she pointed out a *Cattleya maxima* she had which was in bloom in the crotch of a citrus tree. From that point on, I worked in nurseries (not just with orchids) during summer breaks and eventually worked in orchid nurseries to pay for college.

TD- Who were your major early influences and in what specific ways did they influence you?

AL- Obviously, my Mom. Cubans usually restrict themselves to agricultural gardening. Plants they grow need to either be edible or medicinal in order to justify taking space and time. But my Mom was different. Also, a close friend named Lynne Roth really opened my eyes to the possibility of a career in horticulture. She directed me toward public botanical gardens and one in particular, the New York Botanical Gardens. I spent 6 years working there, an equivalent to 20 years working in the industry, as far as exposure to the diversity of plants and the challenging work environment is concerned. I was the Botanical Gardener in charge of the ferns, tropicals, cacti and succulent collections. These were 100-year-old collections plants. I was also involved in the production of tens of thousands of seeds, cuttings, bulbs, perennials and annuals for the outdoor gardens and annual shows. My wife, Maida Stanley, also influenced me. We met and worked together at NYBG. She is a plant geek like the rest of us but also has a degree in Botany. She has a great ability to simplify the science, chemical and related textbook information for me.

TD- How did you get the position you've got now?

AL- I guess I was the best candidate at the time. I had applied a year before I got the job while working at the New York Botanical Gardens but wasn't even called back. Weird, the position opened again a year later and I got offered the job.

TD- Do you have a favorite group of orchids?

AL- I guess Bulbophyllums are pretty cool. The weather here is really good for growing them. I grow them in slatted cedar baskets which allow for frequent watering and fertilizer while allowing for excellent drainage to reduce rotting. Their flowers are so interesting, having a jaw (labellum) on a hinge, and some of the flowers have a foul smell. So what more could you ask for?

TD- What about a specific orchid favorite?

AL- It's a toss-up between *Dendrobium senile* and *Dendrobium toressae*. Miniature *Dendrobiums* are great! *Den. senile* does really well in Sarasota. I bought the plant in New York and barely kept it going. It produced plenty of growths but no flowers. After we moved to Sarasota with its rainy Summers and dry cool Winters, it finally flowered and flowered! A very cool orchid from Burma. The *Den. toressae* is just as cool. It's another miniature that blooms seemingly year 'round and has very tiny, compact leaves. This orchid should be grown primarily for its leaves and overall look, but its' small flowers are surprisingly interesting.

TD- How are you growing these two *Dendrobiums*?

AL- They are grown mounted even though *Den. senile* is thought to do better potted. I've had luck with it mounted in the intermediate greenhouse although it could be grown cool. Stop the watering in Winter and provide more light and it's off and running making flowers. The *Den. toressae* is best grown cool but we've had luck growing them under different temperature extremes. I have 3 plants, one in the cool house, one in the intermediate house and one in the hot house. Surprisingly, it does well in all conditions but grows best in the cool house, mounted.

TD- Since you've grown orchids in New York, what conditions do you think we should try to duplicate to match your success with Bulbo's?

AL- Warm temperatures, high humidity and the shallower the container the better. As I mentioned, I like the shallow cedar baskets but tree fern plaques work as well. They want to be moist but not soaking wet. Up North, it's a bad thing to wet down a Bulbo's leaves as standing water can cause lots of problems. Around here it can be done at anytime of the day, which makes their culture much easier. By the way, a great way of growing Masdevallias, Stelis, Restrepias, Restrepiellas, etc. is to mount them on a small piece of cork and place the cork piece with the mounted orchid in an orchid pot. This allows the root ball to maintain cool and airy conditions while being able to keep the plant hydrated by syringing daily.

TD- You work with some very interesting people here. Can you tell us about them?

AL- While working here at Selby I've had the luxury of working with Harry Luther and Stig Dalstrom. I've learned a great deal from these two great minds. Harry Luther is known as the 'Bromeliad god', a title to which he is well suited. He also knows an immense amount about not just orchid and bromeliad culture, but has a great practical technical understanding that extends to plants in general. This kind of experience is hard to come by and takes a long time to acquire. Trust me, I pick his brain every day! Stig Dalstrom is the 'living orchid god'. Originally from Sweden, he started at the garden as an illustrator. Through his work he quickly earned the respect of his peers and is now the curator of the OIC (Orchid Identification Center) here at Selby. He also has a great working knowledge of orchids. He's mostly into terrestrials, something I'm getting used to.

TD- Do you have any advice for someone new to growing orchids?

AL- Know your orchid. Not just by name but personally. Conversations with plants are real if restricted to non-vocal observation of their responses. They're talking to us, we just have to be able to stop and listen. When that leaf gets spots or shows signs of tip necrosis, that's the plant talking. Your response should be "I need to watch my leaf wetting or overhead irrigation", or maybe "I need to treat with a fungicide". If the leaf tip dies back, you might suspect root damage or root loss. Everything is a reaction or response to something. Start with the accepted name of the plant and you can do research and develop an understanding for that orchid.

TD-What are your personal goals for Selby Gardens?

AL- Well, I've accomplished my original goal, which after seeing the collection was recognizing that it was in desperate need of revitalization and turning it around. The collection had taken a nose-dive. Now after a year-and-a-half, I finally have it in an organized and manageable form. Eventually I'd like to move up to Greenhouse Supervisor and make a more productive impact on our garden and collections.

TD- I know you also mentioned to me your desire to fill the trees with all kinds of epiphytes, so while walking along the paths you'd be able to see them as they grow in nature.

AL- That's correct. We already have some up but Selby is known as an epiphytic garden. We need to double or triple the amount of mounted plants; not just orchids, but epiphytic ferns, bromeliads, aroids etc. for people to see.

TD- I want to thank you for taking so much time to answer my questions. I'm sure we've just created a new destination for orchid lovers from Central New York! I look forward to my next visit!

-Tom Daily

Directions to Dave Ditz's House and Spring Picnic

Dave lives on 7733 Morgan Road in Baldwinsville, NY phone number 315-635-8148

To get to Morgan Road, take county route 48 (state fair blvd) and if heading east take a left; if heading west take a right onto Morgan. If necessary Members can meet at the church and drive over together. Please call Dave if further directions are needed or use a mapping service like Mapquest.com

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The CNYOS Newsletter, *The Orchid Enthusiast*, is a publication of the Central New York Orchid Society and is distributed to the Society's members ten times per year, prior to all club meetings, events or functions.

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The Central New York Orchid Society meets at St. Augustine's Church, 7333 O'Brien Rd., Baldwinsville, at 2:00^{pm} on the first Sunday of each month from September through June, with Beginner's Sessions at 1:30p.m. right before the regular meetings. Yearly dues are \$15.00 per individual, or \$17.00 per family. Dues should be paid to the CNYOS Treasurer, Carol Haskell

The Central New York Orchid Society
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June Issue - Meeting Sunday June 3rd

June Meeting: 1:30p.m. Beginner's Session? - Open Discussion
Regular meeting: 2p.m. Spring picnic at Dave Ditz's house Baldwinsville, NY, if rain meet at St. Augustine's Church, Baldwinsville