

## COC President's Report, AGM 2015

This is my first report as the President of the Canadian Orchid Congress. Since the Board of Directors (BoD) and the executive team were elected 7 months ago in Gormely, Ontario, we have made tremendous strides in our internal governance and communication. You will hear from various reports of the work accomplished in this short amount of time in today's AGM. I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a few of these accomplishments and work that are ongoing:

1. We have started modernizing the COC site, where the web infrastructure has now been successfully migrated to an easy to use and updatable Wordpress template. COC BoD members email addresses have also been created so that members are no longer obliged to use their personal emails. This not only professionalizes the COC image, it also enables effective knowledge transfer and information management on moving forward.
2. The BoD has successfully applied for and received approval from TechSoup on various technology products to enable us to be more effective in conducting our business. The board and the executive team had met a couple of times via online meeting with great success. We will continue to take full advantage of available technologies to enhance our effectiveness.
3. The COC Insurance Program was renewed without any issue, with very little delay and follow up this year. I would like to thank the member societies for their due diligence in submitting their applications on time. I also want to thank Dianne Gillis for her leadership in managing this important file on behalf of the COC.
4. We have entered into serious partnership negotiation with the AOS and OSPF, particularly on topics of education and Outreach. While no concrete activities have been agreed upon, there are a number of action items to be announced in the very near future; stay tuned.
5. Orchid Journal, the COC social media presence on Facebook, had achieved tremendously attention with not only followers in Canada, but globally. Our first VP and Facebook Administrator, Marlene Young, will represent the COC at the upcoming European Orchid Congress in London, UK in a couple of weeks to participate as a panelist amongst other newsletter editors of key orchid organizations around the world.

These are only highlights of what had been achieved the last 7 months. A great deal of strategic planning has been done and there are a number of activities the team wishes to undertake. Moving forward, the board and the executive team at large will focus on members outreach, as well as education. There will be a number of resolutions propose at today's meeting so the team can spring into action. I look forward to those discussions and decisions.

Respectfully submitted,

Calvin Wong  
President, COC



## **28<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting, Canadian Orchid Congress** **Vice President's Report/Orchid Journal**

### **Overall objectives:**

Repositioning of the COC in the current market

Assessment of societies/hobbyists' needs and objectives within the new marketplace

### **The COC on Social Media/Facebook ORCHID JOURNAL**

Social media's focus is our secondary markets

- continues to lead the big 5 of like-minded organizations by generating well above average interaction with orchid hobbyists
- has proven success in highlighting Canadian societies, shows, growers & photographers
- works with photographers here and in the U.S., including Ron Parsons, Eric Hunt and Fred Clarke with their kind permission
- has lead the pack in using mini-series as an educational and marketing tool that provides information/discussions on different subjects, interacting with over 2,000 hobbyists a week
- mini-series on terrestrial orchids showed a significant interest in Native Species as well as orchids in the garden
- has gained international attention both as a marketing tool and educational tool and will participate, by invitation, at an Editorial Forum, European Orchid Congress, in London, England this April.

Almost all Canadian societies now participate/promote using Facebook

### **Projects completed/in progress COC Vice-President**

**Software subsidies for non-profit (Tech Soup)**

**Webinars & GoToMeeting software sharing**

**Webinar Coordinator/Moderator**

**Website updates/new content**

COC CONSERVATION  
2014 REPORT

**Certificate Award**

Dr. Joyce and Dr. Allan Reddoch, members of the Ottawa Orchid Society, and as independent researchers, were honoured with COC Certificate Awards for their long term orchid conservation activities in the Ottawa Region. After their 49 years of dedicated field study and publication, this award is well deserved.

**Herbivores of Canadian Orchids**

Deer, slugs, and snails are known challenges to our wild orchids and to those wanting to grow artificially propagated plants in gardens or to reintroduce plants to habitat. Some native insects, including cutworms (caterpillars) and a weevil, can also seriously damage orchids including the protected *Platanthera praeclara*. These insects that feed on orchids are now being identified, documented, and studied to learn more about their impact and natural control.

**Pest Incidence at Shows**

We hear from members of the public, show goers who have purchased orchids at a show only to find that they also brought home unwanted guests in the form of mealybugs and greenhouse thrips (*Heliethrips*) especially. Not only is this embarrassing for organizers and impossible to track after the fact but negative word-of-mouth publicity could affect show attendance. We counsel society members to quarantine all new acquisitions but not the show-visiting public. It is recommended that an educational device be created for member societies to post at their shows and to make available through various media.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn HS Light  
Conservation, Canadian Orchid Congress

**COC 2015 BUDGET**

|                                | <b>PROPOSED</b> | <b>Actual</b>   |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>REVENUES</b>                | <b>2015</b>     | <b>2013</b>     |
| Membership                     | \$ 1,900        | \$ 1,980        |
| Insurance                      | 2,700           | 2,673           |
| AGMs                           | 500             | 592             |
| Interest                       | 100             | 149             |
| Donation                       | -               |                 |
| Miscellaneous                  | 0               | 75              |
| <b>Total - Revenues</b>        | <b>\$ 5,200</b> | <b>\$ 5,469</b> |
| <b>EXPENSES</b>                |                 |                 |
| Insurance                      | \$ 2,640        | \$ 2,682        |
| AGM 2012                       | -               | 1,000           |
| AGM 2013                       | -               | 981             |
| AGM 2015                       | 1,000           | -               |
| President's Trophy             | 50              | 50              |
| Legal fees                     | 300             | 274             |
| Website                        | 150             | 150             |
| Electronic meetings            | ????            | 0               |
| Newsletter                     | -               | -               |
| Audit fees                     |                 | 0               |
| Travel subsidy                 | 1,000           | 400             |
| Banking                        | 50              | 52              |
| Miscellaneous                  | -               | 212             |
| Contingency                    | 200             | -               |
| <b>Total - Expenses</b>        | <b>\$ 5,390</b> | <b>\$ 5,801</b> |
| <b>Estimated Profit/(Loss)</b> | <b>(\$190)</b>  | <b>(\$332)</b>  |

# COC Newsletter and Website Annual Report 2015

*Jerry Bolce , Newsletter Editor and Webmaster*

## Activities

### Newsletter

I have produced the regular newsletters since the December 1998 issue and kept the mailing list current.

### Web Site

The website was moved to a different service provider, namely CANHOST.CA, where the domain name is also registered. The move gives us access to multiple email addresses, Wordpress and many other services. The domain name and hosting site were renewed for another year. It requires ongoing effort to keep current data such as vendors, society information and show dates. Current newsletters and other articles were added. A lot of time was spent choosing a Wordpress template, learning the ins and outs of Wordpress and moving a quantity of the COC website content to Wordpress. The move is incomplete pending direction on style and content.

### Other Work

In order to have important documents in a location and form where they are available to anyone in the executive, I put together and maintain an on-line archive of the history of the COC and minutes of past AGMs. Contact me for the link as they are not intended for the general public.

Because I keep the membership mailing list, I also am called upon periodically to do a bulk emailing of documents such as questionnaires, or notices. The revised membership form has greatly assisted keeping the membership mailing list current.

## Points for Discussion

### The COC Newsletter

The future form of the newsletter is part of a bigger discussion on the role of the COC and its relationship to the societies. Seeing as a wealth of information on orchids, articles and videos, is available on the web, should we be replicating that? As a means of connecting to the societies, would a regular email be better for conveying the activities and services of the COC? What photos are meaningful and would they not be delivered better via Facebook?

The newsletter, like most, is totally dependent on content providers. Lately the orchid articles have been Inge Poot's write-ups on guest speakers at SOOS. They are much appreciated by me and I recognize that one will not always be available. Again, in the context of polling the societies and their members, we need to determine the extent of readership and what they are interested in. Maybe there are better ways of waving the COC flag and keeping the societies informed. Too often when COC notices for action

are in the newsletter, the society people that should be aware aren't. I would also stress that one role of the COC Rep is to recognize issues, such as membership renewal, and forward the information to the appropriate members of the society.

The newsletter is emailed to three members of each member society – the President, Editor and COC Rep. It is hoped that the newsletter would be forwarded to all members of each society.

I think it is time for new ideas with a new editor.

### The COC Website

The question is – where do we go with the COC website? The move to Wordpress was to make it easier to support for people not familiar with html/css. The issue at the moment is the design and content of the website and who will support it in the future.

To determine what should be on the website, you need to define your targeted user groups and find out what their needs are. Polling the user base would be a good starting point. Also be aware that there is little need to replicate material that is already in abundance elsewhere on the web. Content needs to be generated, managed and updated by someone.

You must also define the level of support within the resources you have available. How much of the website is static, how much needs reviewing annually and how much needs updating weekly? How sophisticated (complicated) should it be? Do you have low level support people or someone with lots of experience? How long before a change appears on the website? Many society websites haven't been updated in over a year.

You can hire a technician to build a website but you still need to provide the content and define an appearance and structure. You must still review the content periodically, making necessary updates and eventually decide when the website is "tired" and needing redesign. Do you pay someone to make weekly updates or do you design a website so anyone can make the changes? Who fixes the screw-ups?

The COC website should be a source of information about the COC and its services. It should also be of assistance to the Canadian orchid societies and the orchid enthusiast. Among the things currently found there are culture information, orchid show listings, orchid vendors, import rules, and the COC newsletters.

The website is always in need of regular revision and updates. The content is only limited by the amount of effort and skill available. I see the web access using DSL as being fast enough now to deliver presentations/tutorials done with pictures or even video. Slide shows that have made the rounds many times could be given new life on the website.

## **August 2014 COC Toronto Annual General Meeting President's Report**

First of all I want to thank the Southern Ontario Orchid Society and especially Doug and Terry Kennedy for graciously hosting this Annual General Meeting for us. This is my fourth and last President's report. Jean Hollebhone our past president and nominating committee has after some arduous canvassing come up with a complete slate of officers, including a new president and two new vice-presidents to represent both the east and the west. Her efforts have once again raised the question of compensation for travel to annual meetings for your officers. Past practise of expecting the officers to pay for all of their own travel to these meetings has become unrealistic in today's economic conditions. I suggest we make a beginning on this matter by at least having the Board work out detailed policy proposals for this within a bulk travel compensation package covering all of your board (6 persons) not to exceed \$1000 per year. This can then be circulated to the members for input before coming back to a general meeting. Alternatively we may have to go to all electronic meetings. This meeting was offered with electronic access and only one member and one observer have requested it.

Your corporation is in good financial condition. We have been able to operate within our means without raising dues. These dues have now been unchanged since our beginnings. Any additional needs have been covered by auctions and donations. There will be a silent auction for COC at Orchidfest tomorrow. I invite you to donate and or bid on items.

The reports of the various committees are before you for you to consider. Each report represents significant work on behalf of the Congress. I have continued to maintain and distribute the library of digital and slide programs, some on disc by mail and in one case via Dropbox. Most societies that use these probably now have copies of all of the programs in their own files. We could use new programs.

The revised bylaws and articles of continuance are before you today in accordance with the directives of Industry Canada. In order for us to continue our incorporation these need to be passed by the Board of Directors and by a 2/3 majority by a members meeting. We need to submit those approvals to Industry Canada before October 17 this year.

I thank all of the COC member societies, the Board of Directors and the Committee chairs for their ongoing support during this difficult economic time. Our organisation is about promoting the growing and conservation of orchids and assisting our member orchid organisations in their endeavours. We need to keep the channels of communication open across our country.

Thank you. Peter Poot.