

# news

Volume 18.4 - September 2006

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## Editorial

What if you threw a party and nobody came? That is what happened to the COC Annual Meeting. Too few people registered to indicate that they were coming (there were four registrations) to constitute a quorum, so the meeting had to be cancelled. The expectation was that there were enough societies within driving distance that there would be an interesting exchange of ideas.

In hindsight, maybe it was a bad choice for holding it on a summer holiday weekend and maybe a few people were planning on attending but didn't bother to indicate so. And maybe participating in the COC is not high on the list.

What good is the COC? When the Federal Government sets the rules for importing orchids, it listens to big organized groups, like big corporations. Do you want a large company to advocate whether or not you can import an orchid and what the rules will be? What about conservation? Are you going to be heard when another part of nature is going to be paved over? Do you know how much money your society saves by joining the COC insurance plan? Has your society shown any of the COC slide programs? Have you visited the COC website?

The COC is all volunteers. They work to represent you, the orchid hobbyist, to different levels of government and other organizations. They work to support the Canadian orchid societies, both large and small. The COC needs your help. It needs feedback on how it is doing and it needs volunteers who will give their time and expertise. How can you help?

More immediately the COC needs your word on the package sent to each society by Margaret Blewett, the President. The slate of officers to be voted on is found on page 3.

*Jerry Bolce - COC Editor and Webmaster*

# The Notice Board

## Western Canada Speaker's Tour - 2006

The Western Canada COC speaker for 2006 will be Sr. Ivan Portilla from Ecuagenera. He will be visiting western societies on this schedule: 12th October in Winnipeg, 13th in Regina, 15th in Edmonton, 16th in Calgary, 17th in Lethbridge, 18th in Kelowna, 19th in Vernon, 23rd in Fraser Valley (White Rock), 24th in Victoria and 25th in Vancouver. That is quite a tour de force. Please check with the local societies for time and place. The COC is subsidizing the visit to each society to the extent of \$200.

## New Vancouver Judging Center

The AOS secondary judging site in Vancouver will have its start on the 9th of September 2006, at the Sea Island Community Centre, 7140 Miller Road in Richmond, BC. That is almost inside the airport boundary. This will be a fact-finding session with some training but no judging. The first AOS judging at this site will be held on the 14th of October, 2006. All Vancouver site judgments will be held on the second Saturday of each month, starting at 12:30 PM. So far, the personnel for the site will be:

Chair: Russ Volker (as VP for Pacific North West)

Vice chair and treasurer: Betty Berthiaume

Secretary: Ingrid Ostrander

Education: Ken Girard

These are the AOS judges. Clerk/Librarian is Marilyn Burritt

There will be six student judges so far, perhaps more will come later. Russell Volker will be sending out a formal invitation to all Western Canadian orchid societies when he feels the time is appropriate. We expect a number of our US judges to attend this first meeting.

## International Orchid Conservation Conference - March 19-24, 2007

Information and regular updates about the conference is now available at : <http://www.jardinbotanicolankester.org/ing/index.html>. Note that Early Bird registration deadline is October 15, 2006.

## Pronunciation Guide

The Education Committee of the MAOC has released the updated CD "A Pronunciation Guide to Orchid Names" by Gerda Ferrington. It is available for \$10. <http://www.midamericanorchids.org/>

## New Website

The Fraser Valley Orchid Society has a new website at <http://www.orchidbc.ca/>

## Guest Speakers

The Canadian Orchid Congress has produced an updated list of speakers who are willing to travel to a society meeting to talk on some aspect of the world of orchids. The speaker is sometimes a vendor of orchids and will normally have orchids for sale that may need to be preordered. It is up to the hosting society to make the necessary arrangements directly with the guest speaker. The list is available on the COC website.

## AOS News

The AOS is getting out of the book business. The AOS will team with Internet retailers Amazon and Orchids Books (a Canadian-based book distributor) to offer its members and customers easier access to and terrific prices for orchid, garden and horticulture books. See <http://www.orchidsbooks.com/> and <http://www.aos.org/>

The AOS has introduced e-AOS Awards Version 2.1 as a subscription service. The program features more than 12,000 award photographs, preferred name usage, a complete list of genera and synonym information.

The AOS web site now has available aids for newsletter editors, video clips of common questions, nomenclature changes, etc.

## New Slide Program

ORCHID PESTS AND DISEASES prepared by Marilyn Light, consists of 27 slides. This program helps you identify pests and diseases that often are introduced to your collection on infested or diseased plants. A sharp eye for telltale signs will help you keep pests and diseases out and to control them before they become a major problem.

## Introducing Faithe Prodanuk

My interest in orchids came naturally as I am an overall plant fanatic. I joined the Orchid Society in Saskatoon (Saskatchewan Orchid Society) over 10 years ago and have served as Vice President for 4 years, then President for 3 years. I was co-chair for the first Orchid Show held in Saskatoon. This was also the venue for COC 2002. It was a very successful event with a healthy donation made to COC as a result of a profitable silent auction and raffle.

I grow a variety of orchids and maybe with retirement they will stop screaming to me for some TLC. I have a dedicated plant room in our new home so that will also help. Professionally I was a Medical Laboratory Technologist/Educator/Clinical Coordinator/Quality Assurance Officer for a Pharmaceutical Research firm and have just retired and moved from Saskatoon, SK to Coldstream, BC. We live in a development on a hill 13 Km from Vernon. We arrived here on July 16 in the hot, hot dry summer time.

I am married and have one son in Calgary.

I believe in the COC as a parent organization that needs to get the member societies interested. Communication is key and we must develop a method that keeps member societies informed. The newsletter is great, but too impersonal. I would like to see us do something to make it possible for COC executives to visit member societies and give societies a reason for belonging to COC. COC needs to present as a helper to societies. I feel strongly about this. We need to 'market' the products we have.

We MUST have a method to communicate with all executive members and since face-to-face will not happen this year, let's set up a teleconference (or something). We need to try a different direction.

## Introducing Terry Zdan

Terry served on the executive of the Orchid Society of Alberta, and is a member in the Manitoba Orchid Society. In Alberta Terry championed protecting the ecological integrity of the Wagner Bog (Wagner Natural Area) while balancing transportation infrastructure development. He is a Scout Commissioner and organized local wilderness walks in rural Manitoba to show native orchids to scouts of all ages. Terry holds a Master's Degree in Environmental Design and now works in the area of sustainable development and transportation and is occupied with solving global challenges including climate change and energy efficiency. Terry's wife and two children live adjacent to his small greenhouse in Winnipeg that is overflowing with warm growing orchids.

## COC Election of Officers for 2006

The slate for the 2006 Election of Officers of the COC contains the following names:

President: Mrs. Faithe Prodanuk, Saskatoon OS  
1st Vice President: Mrs. Jean Hollebhone, Ottawa O.S.  
2nd Vice President: Terry Zdan, Alberta OS  
Secretary: Mrs. Terry Kennedy: Southern Ontario O.S.  
Treasurer: Mrs. Janette Richardson: Regina O.S.

These persons have agreed to stand for the stated positions.

All directors are appointed or re-appointed by the President.

We thank them all and hope that our affiliated societies will be so kind and send their affirmative votes to the current President:

Mrs. Margaret Blewett  
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10 March 2006

Respectfully submitted:  
Ingrid Schmidt-Ostrander,  
Immediate Past President, COC.

## About Orchid Names

Everyone and almost everything has a name. People's names (in most of the Western world) are like this: Mike Miller. Orchid names go the other way: Miller Mike. The inventor for the two-name system for all naturally occurring animals (including man as '*Homo sapiens*') and plants, was the Swedish botanist Carl von Linné (1701 – 1778). When you grow plants, they often come with a scientific name plus their popular English name – e.g.: *Viola tricolor* – Pansy. Most Orchids only have Latin or Greek names – here we are talking about the plants growing wild. *Cattleya labiata* is one that comes to mind. In a rather small book "The Handbook on Nomenclature" it is explained in great detail how to write these names. Not only must you write this first name '*Cattleya*' beginning with a capital C, you must also write the second word '*labiata*' beginning with a small 'l', like Miller Mike. The first word tells you the genus (plural = genera), which is the *Cattleya* group and the second word tells you what species it is (it is called the 'specific epithet'): *labiata*. There are a number of *Cattleya* species – can you think of a few? Besides the correct spelling of these names, we must also remember that all scientific names are to be written either in *italics* or they have to be underlined.

When people cross together two or more different natural species (singular and plural both are 'species'), the result of it will be called "hybrid". Names of hybrid genera can be divided into two groups:

- 1) Hybrids involving one genus, called intrageneric hybrid: *Paphiopedilum callosum* x *Paphiopedilum lawrenceanum* makes *Paphiopedilum Maudiae*; this involves two different species of the same genus and the plant's name will still be the same = *Paphiopedilum*.
- 2) Hybrids involving two or more different genera, called 'intergeneric' hybrids; there can be names of all kinds of combinations of their ancestral names, like Brassolaelia, Angulocaste and once four different species are involved (multigeneric hybrids) the names will end with –ara, like Potinara, Wilsonara; these are often names of breeders or famous persons.
- 3) There can be another kind of hybrid: these are crosses that occur in nature. For instance *Cattleya x guatemalensis* is a naturally crossed hybrid between *Cattleya aurantiaca* and *Cattleya skinneri*. Both these species plus a few others have been moved into a newly created genus called "*Guarianthe*"; so that natural hybrid will now have to be called *Guarianthe x guatemalensis*.

The second epithet of a hybrid will also be written with a capital letter at the start and it may also be the name of a famous person: *Paphiopedilum* Norito Hasegawa or Epic. (Epicattleya) Fireball or Blc. (Brassolaeliocattleya)

Victoria. This clonal name may consist of one, two or three words. By the way, there is also a *Cattleya* Victoria and a *Laeliocattleya* Victoria. Hybrid names are not to be italicized or underlined.

Please remember that the manmade hybrid genera must have the first letters of both names capitalized. The natural hybrid would be italicized or underlined, having an x added in front of either the genus or the species' name to designate this natural hybrid status.

Do you realize that all orchid hybrids are registered in large volumes of expensive books called "Sanders' List of Orchid Hybrids". It was started by the firm Sanders & Sons before the turn of the last century. Now the Royal Horticultural society keeps it up and adds all the new registrations continuously; of course it is computerized. Yes- every orchid has its pedigree recorded.

Now we shall look at some additional names on those orchid labels.

When an experienced orchidist or orchid breeder sees an exceptionally good flower, she/he may want to designate it as special and give it a special name – a 'clonal name' like Lc. Drumbeat 'Triumph'. These clonal epithets are written with a starting capital letter and set in single quotation marks. When growers divide any plant, they ought to give the divided pieces a clonal name to indicate that all these pieces come from one single plant, like when my *Paph. tigrinum* was divided, it received the clonal name 'Kittens'. When a plant receives an AOS (or other judging authority) award, the plant MUST be given a clonal name unless it already has one. Thus it now is *Paph. tigrinum* 'Kittens' HCC/AOS. Some large orchid firms use some of their exceptional plants and clone them; each single plant from this cloning must carry the same clonal epithet, like *Dendrobium* Hawaiian Gem 'Carmela'.

Sometimes, after all the different names on orchid labels, you will see capital letters. These usually indicate awards that these plants have received from orchid judges. There are a number of different judging bodies around the world; see Handbook on Orchid Nomenclature, pp137, like DOG, RHS, AOS and more. When an orchid receives an award, this award (in abbreviated form) should follow the name: Epic. Fireball 'Enewetok' AM/AOS or *Phalaenopsis* Little Virtue "Frier's Little Angels' AM/AOS. Some orchids receive awards from several judging organizations; then the awards are listed as: *Paph. Maudiae* 'Magnificum' AM/RHS-JC/AOS.

So, now you may understand a little better how these names are written and why.  
*Ingrid Schmidt-Ostrander*

## Root Advice

Having trouble getting roots to grow on your orchids? A little joke here: Someone said that he will sell you a *Paphiopedilum* with one growth for \$ 10.00; two growths plants will cost \$ 20.00 and so forth. If you do want a *Paphiopedilum* with roots, you have to triple the initial price.

The basic fact to remember is that roots are necessary to supply the plants with food, drink and air on a steady basis. Without roots, few plants will manage to stay alive very long. In the wild, the roots also hold the plants in place, whether it is in trees for epiphytic plants, in soil or on rocks for others. Rain, dew and fog will of course be involved, as is watering, fertilizer and an appropriate potting method in captivity. Some leafless orchids utilize their roots to achieve photosynthesis.

When you need to encourage (particularly epiphytic) plants to make roots, you must let the medium go quite dry, so the poor dears will have to send out roots to find water. You don't want your plants to shrivel and die, but you don't want the bases waterlogged and allow rot to settle in. Epiphytic roots need much fresh air, which will be available in a dryer mix – see below for some suggestions. You know how “damp” you need to have your clothes for ironing? Well, that is about how “damp” the mix may be – not moist, not wet – just barely damp. Some people also apply rooting hormones, vitamin B solutions and even high phosphorus fertilizers (10-52-10) that are said to stimulate root growth, as does bottom heat (put the plant over, but not on, a heating pad). Our tropical orchids will not send out fresh roots when it is too cold for them – they will go dormant or just give up and die. They can also die off easily in old, broken-down potting mix which will hold a lot of moisture but no air – this can even contain pathogens like fungi and bad bacteria which cause rotting of the roots and eventually kill the plants. Even though orchids and their roots thrive in a humid atmosphere, a constantly wet environment is only nice for water lilies and similar plants – it is death for orchids.

Also worth remembering is that plants on slabs etc. dry out faster, as do bare-rooted items, which may need daily misting. Small clay pots dry out very fast; small plastic pots hold a little more water; large clay pots can have wet centres; large plastic pots can hold a lot of water. This rule can be adapted by drilling many holes in the pots. Large grade mixes dry out faster than fine grade; moss can stay moist for weeks. Before you water plants in moss, you have

to find out what the middle of the pot feels like – is it still damp? Then wait a few more days. That is why I don't particularly like moss (only) as potting medium – I enjoy watering my orchids...

To avoid the wet centres in large pots, some people put a small clay or mesh pot into the pot first, then place the plant on top of that and surround the whole thing with potting mix. After observing how several of my orchids dislike having their roots touch those Styrofoam nuggets (they turn back from the plastic and try to grow the other way), I am not using these anymore. For some orchids, they work just fine by providing more (non-rotting) drainage. In both methods (inserting a small pot in the middle of a large pot and/or large drainage pieces in the bottom of any pot), the roots will have access to fresh air. There are the “Rand's Aircone” pots which allow good airflow through the potting mix. These pots are made of opaque plastic and even allow roots to photosynthesize. In clay or mesh pots, air will also come from the sides, and mounted plants grow like nature intended epiphytes to grow.

So, with all this “Root Advice”, all our orchids will grow roots like mad this summer, right? I sure hope so!

*Ingrid Schmidt-Ostrander*

### **Book Review -**

**Native Orchids of Nova Scotia - A field guide (2001).**  
Carl Munden, University College of Cape Breton Press Inc.  
\$25

This 96-page soft cover book will easily fit into the the backpack of avid naturalists and photographers but it likely will be in hand more often than tucked away. Why? There are 42 colour plates illustrating the life stages of Nova Scotian orchids. Maps and habitat details are used to familiarize the reader with what is likely to be found, when and where. This a very enjoyable work which illustrates the love of Carl Munden has for the topic. Copies are available from Windsor Greenhouse, Falmouth NS Jean Allen-Ikeson, and University College of Cape Breton Press Inc., Box 5300, Sydney NS B1P 6L2

# Conserving Our Collections: Planning for a Future

The next time vacation rolls around will we be wondering "Who will take care of the orchids?" A family emergency requires us to be absent for days, weeks or even months: who can take care of our orchids? Tragedy strikes and a serious orchid collector dies suddenly: who will take care of that collection of orchids? These scenarios are well known to the orchid community yet there is little effective planning at the individual, family, or orchid society level to deal with the issue of vulnerable plants. Without careful planning and activation of those plans, orchid collections can be quickly lost to inappropriate care, inclement weather, pests and diseases. Species in our collections should be of particular concern since they may not be easily replaced. While botanical gardens have contingency plans ready to implement in the case of emergency and staffing plans to deal with vacation and illness, rarely are we similarly prepared. For the serious collector who truly cares about conservation, the message is simple: Plan, plan, plan.

**Vacation planning** should begin weeks or even months before the first day of the long awaited trip. We may cultivate a trusted neighbour to stand in during our absence. We may rely on family members or even hire a plant care business to do the work. In all cases, the caregiver must be provided with training and walked through the daily routine. I leave printed instructions and create visual clues in the form of colored markers to highlight which plants require special care. We all know how a heavy hand at watering can spell death for some precious orchids and how others are always thirsty. While there is a mutual concern about damage to someone else's orchids and property, and all may be forgiven if all that happens is a broken spike, it still pays to be cautious: friendships have been fractured over much less and there may be liability issues. Be certain that the caregiver has contact information, understands that you have a backup plan, and knows what to do in an emergency.

Even with all our planning, things can go awry at the last minute. I have had that experience and I know how relieved I was that I had a backup plan in the form of another neighbor ready, willing and able to act as a replacement. Whew! In this instance, the problems arose before we left town and I was able to contact my substitute but what if it had happened during my absence? Having the alternate arrangements organized with full knowledge of the primary caregiver would help manage a smooth transition. We must have a backup plan just in case the worst happens. Plan, plan, plan.

**Contingency planning** is needed for the unexpected events including prolonged power outage, floods, hurricanes and fire. I have had experience with all these challenges and was grateful that I had a contingency plan. It was not a written plan but I had thought about what I could do in the event of emergency. Backup generators do provide power when you need it but you must already have a generator on hand as well as fuel to operate it until either power is restored or you have moved the orchids to a secure location. You may have only a short time to select plants to 'save' so it is a good idea to label your collection accordingly as is done in some public collections. This way, the most valuable plants are more likely to survive. Of course, sharing divisions of selected plants with growers at a distance is always a good way to lower risk when tragedy strikes.

**Succession planning** is probably the least thought about but should be seriously considered by anyone having a collection of species or breeding stock. Even with detailed directions as to the care and disposition of a collection, unless we tell others of our intent, no one may learn of those wishes before the plants have succumbed. It goes without saying that all plants should be labelled and that useful records are stored somewhere safe.

For those inheriting orchids, the plants may be especially important as they represent a living remembrance of a loved one and their green thumb. Often the family member knows nothing about orchids but despite that is managing to keep a very special plant alive. They are ready to do whatever to keep this legacy alive and thriving but they need help with potting, division, etc. This is when orchid societies can assist whomever asks for help. Given the size and type of the plant, recommend a suitable pot and the most appropriate potting material. Offer to repot the orchid or provide additional advice at a meeting. Your good turn will turn into a learning experience for everyone and perhaps line up some new orchid friends for the grower.

## To summarize:

**Plan for vacations** Identify who can take care of your orchids when you are away. Discuss options with family, friends and neighbours. Ask for suggestions from orchid society members or contact house sitting businesses that also provide plant care services. Prepare a plant care schedule.

**Plan for contingencies** Consider how to take care of the orchids during a power failure, in summer heat or winter cold, or what plans to have in place if you suddenly become ill or have to evacuate the premises. Have a list of the most valuable plants which must be saved if at all possible. Mark these plants so that they may be quickly located and removed to safety.

**Plan for succession** Keep records up to date and plants labelled. Identify who you want to take care of your orchids once you no longer are able, be certain that they are willing, and share this with your family.

*Marilyn H. S. Light - Copyright 2006*

## SOOS Editorial

The SOOS Summerfest weekend was to have seen the 2006 Canadian Orchid Congress (COC) Annual meeting at the TBG on Saturday. This was a last minute bit of organisation as no Canadian orchid society had come forward to host this meeting. The thinking was that with the Orchidfest attraction sufficient delegates from Canadian orchid societies could be brought to Toronto to have this meeting. A not unreasonable assumption considering that there are some eight societies within reasonable driving distance of TO. However, apparently only four advance registrations were received and consequently the meeting was cancelled.

One has to wonder why at least the eight societies in Ontario could not all find delegates to send? Is a national organisation so unimportant? There were people from Nova Scotia, Montreal, Winnipeg, Ottawa, Kingston, and RBG at Orchidfest. Was the price of gasoline that high? Or did we have that old bugaboo of notices sent out into the ether and not passed on to the right people. I recall a very early meeting of COC where we discussed that phenomenon and decided that all communications with societies should go to at least four persons in each society to be sure. I know summer time is high family holiday time and therefore difficult for scheduling boring meetings and there was a \$25 registration fee disincentive, but there were some carrots. A fun Saturday night barbecue at the Kennedys, judging Sunday morning, and great speakers and orchid sales Sunday afternoon.

Some were heard to grumble that COC was no longer needed. I beg to differ. COC was originally established to help Vancouver and Canada attract the Vancouver World Orchid Congress. I was its second president after Wally

Thomas. In the early years we worked hard to try to get the government's ear on the CITES issue. It was an uphill effort that did not go well, but that needs to be continued. Remember the squeaky wheel gets the oil. We need a Canadian organisation to represent our point of view. COC has given us better collective insurance rates than even the larger societies could get on their own. A small society on its own cannot afford to insure itself. COC has provided organisation for speaker tours and canned programs that have benefited the smaller more remote societies. COC provides a national forum for sharing ideas and taking joint action.

Yes, COC is needed and should continue. The executive hopes to organise a web meeting to replace this year's lost annual meeting. I wish them success, it is an idea worth trying in this time of high transport costs. (The opinions expressed are those of the author}

*Peter Poot. -(reprinted from SOOS September Newsletter)*



## COC Slide Programs

**Cattleyas** - by Ken Girard.

**Oncidiums** - by Gordon Heaps.

**Fragrant Orchids** by Marilyn Light.

**Hardy Orchids and Their Culture** by Bill Bischoff

**Phragmipediums** by Ingrid Ostrander

**Lycastes** by Ingrid Ostrander

**Orchid Pests and Diseases** prepared by Marilyn Light

More information on ordering the slide programs is available on the COC website.

# COMING EVENTS

## 2006

Les Orchidophiles de Québec have changed their show dates from November to April 14-15, 2007.

Veillez prendre note que Les Orchidophiles de Québec ne présenteront pas "Orchidofolie " en novembre 2006. En effet, nous avons reporté cet événement aux 14 et 15 avril 2007. D'ici peu notre site web sera mis à jour et nous vous invitons à aller le consulter. Nous comptons sur votre compréhension et espérons vous voir en avril 2007.

**Sept 23-24:** Central Ontario Orchid Society, Cambridge Hespeler Arena, 640 Ellis Road, Cambridge, ON "<http://www.coos.ca/>"

**Sept 29-Oct 1:** The Foothills Orchid Society, Calgary, Alberta annual show. at the Winston Heights Mountview Community Hall, 520 - 27 Avenue NE, Calgary. "<http://members.shaw.ca/foothillsorchidsociety/>" Contact Barbara Hart, e-mail: [bahart@telusplanet.net](mailto:bahart@telusplanet.net)

**Oct 21-22:** Eastern Canada Orchid Society at the Days Inn Hotel, 1005 rue Guy, in Downtown Montreal "<http://www.ecosorchids.ca/>"

**October 28-29:** Fraser Valley Orchid Society Show & Plant Sale will be held at the West Langley Community Hall, 9308 208th St., Langley, B.C. "<http://www.orchidbc.ca/>" Contact Merv Lutes at [lutesara@yahoo.ca](mailto:lutesara@yahoo.ca)

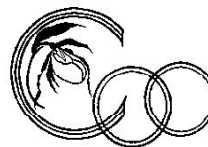
**Nov 11-12:** Niagara Region OS, CAW Hall 124 Bunting Rd, St. Catharines, Ont Contact: Tom Cunningham, Show Chairperson Email: [tessiercunningham@cogeco.ca](mailto:tessiercunningham@cogeco.ca) Phone: 905-934-8289 Mail: 11 Winfield Court, St Catharines, L2M 7K6

## 2007

**March 10-11:** Orchid Society of the Royal Botanical Gardens, 680 Plains Rd., Burlington "<http://www.osrbg.ca/>" Show chair is Ben Boers, email [bboers@cogeco.ca](mailto:bboers@cogeco.ca)

**March 19-24:** Orchid International Orchid Conservation Congress San José, Costa Rica <http://www.jardinbotanicolankester.org/ing/index.html>

**COC Web Site - <http://www.CanadianOrchidCongress.ca/>  
This newsletter may be found there.  
Please send in your show information - date, location, contact, etc.**



news

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Editor: Jerry Bolce

The purpose of COC news is to inform members of the meetings, policies of the COC, to profile members, and to provide technical information regarding happenings, trends and techniques in orchid cultivation across the country and around the world.

We welcome your suggestions and contributions. Deadline for each issue is one month before the issue dates previously announced.

Recipients of this newsletter are strongly urged to pass a copy on to other members of their society

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