



OSGKC
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Orchid Society of
Greater Kansas City

OSGKC News

ORCHID SOCIETY OF GREATER KANSAS CITY www.osgkc.org April 2009

OSGKC April 19th Meeting: Growers Tour

By Glenn Lessenden

I hope to see everyone on April 19th for the Growers Tour. Many thanks to the growers who have made their spaces available to us.

1:00 : Lance Jesse, 9 East 56th Street. Lance grows in his home and outside during the summer.

2:00 : Jami Parkison, 7337 Terrace St. [Two blocks west of Ward Pkwy]. Jami has built a greenhouse since the society was at her house a few years ago.

3:00 : Tony King and Jason Thoran, 7415 Woodson St. Tony grows in a lightroom in his home. A brief informal meeting will follow at Tony's house.

[See maps on page 3.]

May 2009 Program Change

Due to health problems experienced by Leo Schordje, who was our scheduled speaker for the May 3 meeting, there are some minor changes for that date.

The topic, "Growing orchids under lights," will remain the same. The speaker will change from Leo to Ernie Gemeinhart. Ernie comes highly recommended, and I feel fortunate to maintain the program with relatively little time to make arrangements. Ernie will offer plants for sale, available for viewing

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Guide to exhibiting orchids

from AOS

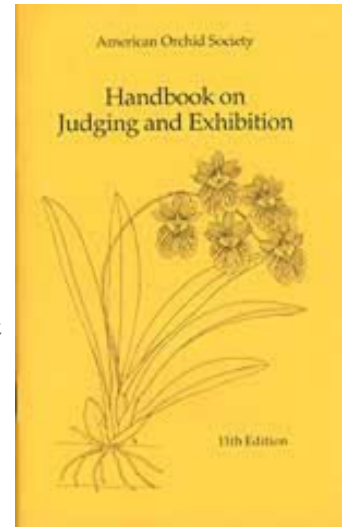
Second in a three-part series

[Last month summary: *The American Orchid Society Handbook on Judging and Exhibition* provides a point scale for judging each of the four areas of focus.]

Let's look at these four areas separately and see how they relate to planning an orchid exhibit. Starting from the bottom up...

LABELING

Any AOS-judged orchid show requires that all orchids be accurately and legibly labeled. A full ten points of the score is allotted for labeling. There is no excuse for not getting the full ten points. If you are putting in an exhibit for a society where the plants come from many sources, be sure you know the name before accepting a plant for consideration. Bring reference books or a laptop for spell checking. Typically, labels are done on



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The Science of Orchids

By Susie Hanna and Al Clinton

Ever wonder why the plant tag on your orchid is marked 4N?

In the 1960s, botanists discovered that the application of the chemical, Colchacine, to plants could double the number of chromosomes. The effect was to create larger flowers with a more standard shape, increased flower numbers, and better presentation. Stronger, faster-growing, more vigorous plants have also resulted from this enhanced propagation method. At least that's the goal, but sometimes, 4N plants can be slow-growing, so you're not guaranteed a high performing, award-winning plant.

All plants have two pairs of chromosomes, one set from each parent. This is called 2N, also

referred to as Diploid. With the aid of the chemical treatment the chromosomes are doubled and the resulting plants are then called 4N, or Tetraploid. This is all good news for the grower looking for high quality plants, but a more complex outcome for the hybridizers. When you cross a 4N with a 2N the result is a 3N, or a plant with three sets of chromosomes, which can produce sterile plants, a dead-end for a breeding program.

Altering chromosomal count is not unique to the world of orchids. Most of our commercial crops are now Tetraploids, resulting from efforts to increase crop yields to feed an ever-expanding population.

So watch for 4N on orchid tags next time your shopping. It might just be that show-stopper you're dreaming of.

From the President

Congratulations to all of us! Once again, I am so proud to be a member of this Society! It never fails to amaze me what we can accomplish when we work together on a project. The success of our March Auction exemplifies this, as we nearly doubled the amount we made this year as compared to last year's auction. Thanks to all of you that contributed to make this event such a success! Every contribution mattered, including donating excellent plants and orchid-related items, bringing refreshments, helping with set-up and clean-up and bidding and buying. Special thanks to all the volunteers helping with registration, sales tables, introducing plants, tallying results, and check-out. Special thanks to our auctioneer, Tom Reagor, who probably strained his voice as he never took a break over the nearly three-hour auction!

Having helped plan auctions for several years now, I believe that one of the most critical elements to a successful auction is the ADVERTISING. We had 56 people who registered for this auction and 22 of those were nonmembers. Ten people brought coupons for a free orchid, with five coupons from the website and five coupons from *The Gardener*. When asked at the registration how people heard about the auction: five indicated website, six newspaper, three flier, six *Gardener Magazine*, two television, and seven indicated friend. Thank you to David Sosland who got information in *The Kansas City Star* newspaper and on television. Thank you to Tony King for the website information and *The Gardener* advertisement, both with coupons. Also special thanks to all of you who told your friends and especially brought your friends to this important event—it made a difference. The success of this event now brings us within several hundred dollars of a balanced budget for this year! That is totally awesome!

Monica McNamara

March 2009 -- Spring Auction Report

At our Spring Plant Auction held Sunday March 15, our members once again came through with some great plant donations from their extras/divisions/etc.

We had approximately 200 total plants available for sale which netted the society a total of \$3,254. The actual auction portion sold 150 total lots, with the remainder sold from the sale table.

The big item of the day was of course the 6' X 8' greenhouse with accessories which was silent bid throughout the auction and then opened to floor bids at the very end, bringing \$355.

This year we took most of the non-blooming plants out of the auction proper and sold them from a back table at \$3 & \$5 each (approximately 40 - 50 plants). This allowed us to give more attention to auctioning plants that were in bloom or with photos of them in bloom. It seemed this resulted in better prices for those auctioned plants and allowed people who were looking for a cheaper plant to just pick through the sale table for one of those plants.

Another element that helped boost this year's auction was the pre-auction promotion which brought in 56 total registered bidders, 22 of whom were not OSGKC members.

Thanks again to everyone who helped make this year's auction a success and to all those that donated plants, art work and plant-related materials.

What can we do to make next year's auction even bigger and better? Send your suggestions to the OSGKC Board.



Support OSGKC Sponsors:

Bergman Orchid Farm
Bird's Botanicals
Oak Hill Gardens
r.f. Orchids
Windy Hill Gardens
Whippoorwill Orchids

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at his website:

Enlightenedorchids.com. When you go to the website, you will find that most of his plants are paphiopedilum hybrids and that his speaker fee is \$200. He has agreed to wave any part of the fee that is covered by plant sales. So, be sure to order liberally and support the OSGKC, and have him bring the plants so we get credit for them.

Exhibiting - AOS, con't from 1

poster board cut into strips, then the individual labels are cut as they are done. A piece of floral wire with a "u" bent into it is taped to the back of the label. This light gauge wire can be inserted into a pot or bent to hang from a branch of foliage. For many years, black poster board with a gold pen was popular. I have used a stone-gray and black calligraphy marker with good success. Greens, especially olive, are also popular. Just be sure that the labels are discreet and do not draw attention from the orchids themselves. They should be big enough to read but no bigger. I have seen exhibits with bright green labels that looked atrocious. Making sure that the person doing the labeling has good penmanship and is familiar with orchid names will make the job go much smoother. Having a list of all the orchids being considered for the exhibit is also helpful.

VARIETY

Variety, which accounts for 20 points, may sometimes be difficult for the hobbyist to control. If you are on a committee that is putting in a society exhibit you only have the plants the members provide to work with. If you are a hobbyist putting in your own exhibit you only have your own plants to work with. It is important to know what plants you will have a few days before you actually begin putting in the exhibit. This will give you ample opportunity to solicit additional plants in any areas that are deficient. Variety in an orchid exhibit

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Exhibiting - AOS, con't from pg. 2

can be many things: variety of color within a genus (such as many different colored Phals.), variety of flower sizes within a single genus, even variety of colors within a single species. The glossary of the Handbook on Judging and Exhibition defines "variety" as "Both as numbers of different genera and variety within one or a few genera." Unusual species can add interest to any group of plants. Obviously, judges find evaluating exhibits with a great variety of genera to be easier than evaluating those with variety of other types.



QUALITY OF FLOWERS

This pretty much speaks for itself. An exhibit with high quality flowers will almost always score higher than one that may excel in other areas. Keep in mind that this is an exhibit at an ORCHID SHOW, orchids must predominate. The exhibit with healthy, well-flowered plants will always catch the judges' eyes. Do not use diseased or otherwise unhealthy orchids. Do not use flowers that are past their prime or not fully opened. Do not, under any circumstances, use any artificial plant material. Do not manipulate flowers in any way (other than staking) to improve their appearance. Choose the highest quality hybrids and best species clones that you can possibly find. Flower quality counts for 35 points.

GENERAL ARRANGEMENT

This may be the hardest area for the average person to grasp...this is the "artistic" part. It accounts for a full 35 points of the total score. Let's look at the components of "General Arrangement" one by one. As you will see, they all interact with each other. Keep in mind that we are discussing the whole exhibit, not

just the flowers. **BALANCE** refers to the *visual weight* of one side of an exhibit compared to the visual weight of the other side. An easy way to evaluate the balance of your exhibit is by squinting your eyes and

comparing the visual weight of the left side to that of the right side. The heavier side will appear as a more dominant blob than the less heavy side. A small

grouping of light-colored flowers can have the same *visual weight* as a large grouping of dark-colored flowers. A balanced design is satisfying to look at so try to keep your exhibit visually balanced. **CON-**

TRAST is the difference between various elements in an exhibit. This could be a grouping of pink flowers against a dark foliage background or a small yellow spray Oncidium grouped with some large yellow Cattleyas.

Contrasting elements can be different sizes, colors or forms. Contrast adds interest and texture to an exhibit. It is a good idea, however, to use contrast sparingly. Indiscriminate contrasting elements can create a confused appearance that is uneasy to look at. Judges particularly frown upon color contrast (see *color flow*). **DOMINANCE** refers to the attention getting qualities of certain elements against the other elements of a design. Dominance can be a result of size, form or color.

A few orange Cattleya hybrids would be a dominant element in an exhibit of mostly pink and white Phalaenopsis. It is easy to make our props unintentionally the dominant element in our effort to make a statement. Keep in mind that we are doing an orchid exhibit...*orchids must predominate*. **PROPORTION** refers to the relationship between elements of a design; a group of dark Vanda flowers may be twice as big as the group of lavender Cattleyas, the Vanda flowers may be half as bright, they may have equal balance. Proportion lends coherence and serves to tie all the elements of a design together. **SCALE** is the specific proportion of size relationships of different elements.

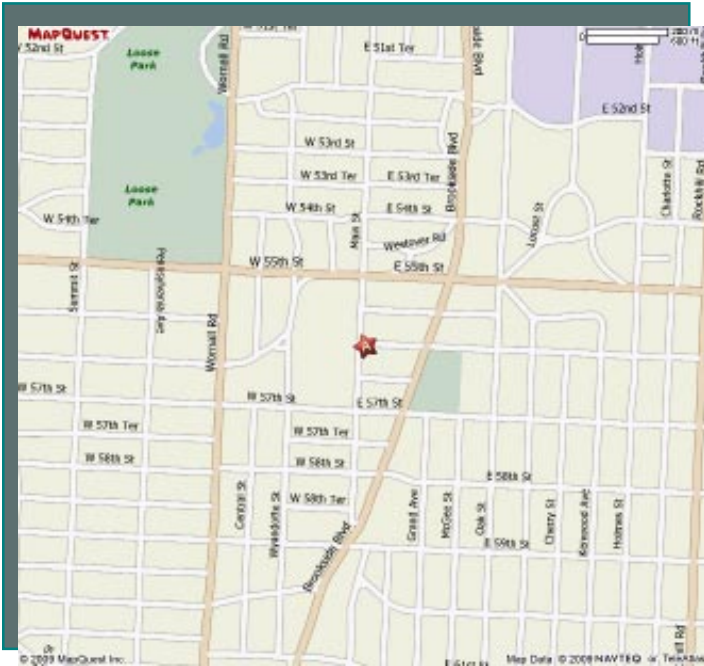
RHYTHM is the lifeblood of a design. Without rhythm an exhibit is static and lifeless. Rhythm is created by the use of the above components in various combinations to create movement within a design. Repetition of color or form, gradual change in form, size or color and diagonal or serpentine lines are all

used to create rhythm in an exhibit. A frequently used device is a pathway to lead the eye into the exhibit and create rhythm and movement.

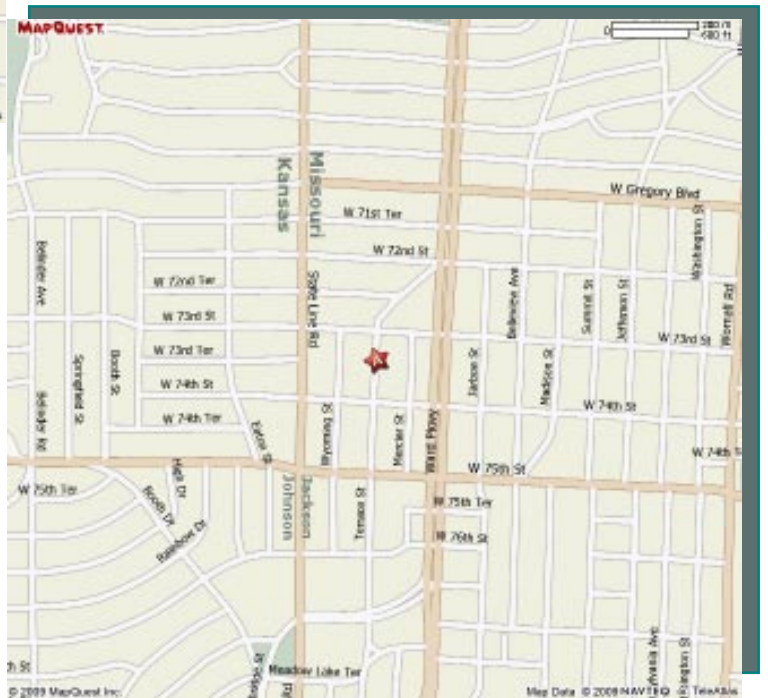
[See next month's newsletter for a description of the four key areas.]



April 2009 - Growers Tour Maps



*Lance Jesse
9 East 56th Street*



*Jami Parkison
7337 Terrace St.*



*Tony King and Jason Thoron
7415 Woodson St.*