

# Diablo View Orchid Society

<http://www.dvos.org>

a 501c3 corp

## Thursday June 12, 2003

5:30, Dinner with the Speaker No Culture Session This Month!! Raffle Table by Gold Country Orchids ~8:30 Speaker's Presentation

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[Cue music: Frankie Lane: 'Do Not Forsake Me, Oh My Darlin']

Two men face off in the heat of the noonday sun. Fingers twitch by their holstered weapons, eyes narrow against the sun's glare. A lonely breeze skutters a leaf across their path. Thin lips curl into a cruel smile.

One shot rings out. One man falls, now a heap in the dust. Dead. A woman wails in grief.

"You done it now, Stranger." A voice calls out from an alleyway, where most of the townsfolk cower. "That was **ALAN KOCH**'s best potter. You better shake the dust of Lincoln off yer boots quick as you can, afore he finds out."

The stranger spins his pistol back into its holster. Sneers. "Who is this 'ALAN KOCH'?"

"He's one mean mother [oops, sorry, wrong movie] He's the head of **GOLD COUNTRY ORCHIDS**. Came out here when this country was nothin', built the finest orchid spread north of Sutter's Fort. And now you gone and killed his best hand." [spits] "Gonna be hell to pay for that one."

"That the same Alan Koch who used to run with the Hetherington Clan, down in Southern California? Grows them sissified mini catts, them Pink Dolls and Keepsakes, them Tiny Titans and [sneers] Orpetti and Laelia hybrids? Ha, that stuff even fits on windowsills and under lights. Hear tell he runs a few head of Paphs and Phals on his ranch, too. I can smell 'em from here. Word has it he's fast on the draw where awards are concerned." [eyes narrow] "But I'm faster."

A young woman's voice gushingly calls out "He's big and tall. And strong! And he can kick your butt." followed by her mother's 'Hush up, Sara Lou! Get back to the ranch! Someone send for the Marshall!"

The stranger draws his weapon again. "Hell, I know 'im. Send him out here and I'll send him to meet his Maker, too." He cackles in glee, spinning the pistol on one finger.

"Mister, I don't think you take my point." A man peeks out from hiding, hat in hand. "Now that you gone and kilt the best potter in the county it means all the wimmen folk are gonna have to go back to work pottin' up orchids... They ain't gonna cotton to that notion." [The woman wails again. "And I just had my nails done!"]

The stranger blanches as a crowd of 30-40 women brandishing frying pans and rolling pins converge on him from the alleyway. "There's the pole cat! String him up!" "I'll teach you to take away my Saturday's off!" "Who's gonna get the kids to soccer practice now, you idiot?"

The stranger turns tail and runs off, his feet raising little clouds of dust, into the setting sun. "That'll learn 'im!"

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The Moveable Feast returns to DJ's Bistro, mostly because the food is great, and there's a heap of it for cheap. Sybil's arranged a fixed dinner menu choice of 4 items, incl salad Reserve space: Voice Mail msg 975-5202; Pager 925-210-5043

DJ's Bistro – Austrian/Czechoslovakian food 1825 Sutter Street, Concord 825-3277 Dinner Menu costs \$15 includes tip, NOTE: wine extra. If you want to eat call Sybil Mc Gowan (925) 975-5202	Next Board Meeting June 19 <sup>th</sup> 7:30 PM Alice Tomassini's House 3 Woodside Court. Danville (925) 648-7667 (You can come too!)
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## Membership News

Two new guests visited at the May general meeting: Laltia Rajagopalan from Pleasant Hill and Venk Reddy from San Ramon. No new members to report.

Membership count is 85.

If you are a DVOS member and never received an 'official' DVOS nametag, please send me an email or give me call before the 9<sup>th</sup> of June, so I can prepare one for the June meeting.

A note to our guests who attended our general meetings prior to April 2003: please be aware that this will be your last newsletter. If you would like to continue receiving it and enjoy the meetings and participate in the club's benefits, send in your application and dues or bring them to the next general meeting.

Ulrike Ahlborn,  
Membership Chair  
Phone 510.741.6762  
[Membership@DVOS.org](mailto:Membership@DVOS.org)

## DVOS Show Table Awards

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place - Ascofinetia Cherry Blossom owned by Phyllis Arthur
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place - Zygo. Arthur Elle owned by Phyllis Arthur
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place – A No Name Cattleya Hybrid owned by Akiko Ogawa
- Please note Akiko also owned the Max. tenuifolia that took 3<sup>rd</sup> place last month.
- Lancer P. Smith Medallion – Den. Cuthbertsonii owned by Barbara Tague
- LWIBFTVFT – Slc. Rocket Burst owned by Nathalie Smith

Our judges were awakened from hypnosis and proclaimed loudly that it didn't affect their judgement at all. So say they all: Shirley Kerr, Naomi Chamberlain and returning visitor Alayne Hansen.

<http://www.dvos.org>

## Wear Membership Badge = One Free Raffle Ticket

Yep, the Name Badge promotion continues on! Why? Because we want to know who you are, of course!

## Alan Koch/Gold Country Orchids

Also has a web site that features his orchids as well as the Phalaenopsis hybrids of Echo Valley Orchids owned by Scott Collins. <http://www.goldcountryorchids.com/>  
Alan will deliver PRE-PAID pre-orders to our society. BE SURE to tell him which society you are with so he knows which one to bring your plants to.

## Refreshment Corner

We enjoyed an excellent refreshment table in May. Our appreciation goes to all the members who provided food and beverages. The following members have signed up for June: **Alice Tomassini, Karen Moonitz, Dave Altman, Akiko Ogawa, Kathy Ames, Jane Holcomb, Naomi Chamberlain and Jeanette Bean.** Beverages will be provided by: **Tonky Bofill, and Juan Bofill.**

If, for whatever reason, any of you can not attend the May meeting, please call **Antonieta Bofill** (925-609-8443) or **Esther Yee** (925-825-8194) in advance of the meeting.

Antonieta Bofill  
Esther Yee

## DVOS DOERS

President: **Linda Daraskavich**  
Vice- President: **Sybil Renee McGowan**  
Secretary: **Alice Tomassini**  
Treasurer: **Barbara Tague**  
Board Members: **Juan Bofill**  
**Naomi Chamberlain**  
**Parky Parkison**  
**Brad Piini**  
**Phyllis Arthur**

Membership: **Ulrike Ahlborn**  
Greenhouse Tours: **Dan Chiappone**  
Refreshments: **Esther Yee & Tonky Bofill**  
Hostesses: **Madge Fordyce & Naomi Chamberlain**  
Raffles and Sales: **Nancy Pak**  
Librarian: **Phyllis Arthur**  
Historian: **Nathalie Smith**  
Newspaper Announcements/Ads: **Your Name Goes Here!!**  
Newsletter: **Kathy Barrett** ([mormodes@hotmail.com](mailto:mormodes@hotmail.com))  
Webmaster: **Nick Doe**  
Nice Guys: **Nancy Pak, Dave Tomassini and Parky Parkison** for hauling around the projector, sound system, lights, raffle tickets, business cards and whatever else this club uses or needs.  
They could use some help!

## DVOS ORCHID SHOW AND SALE COMING SOON!!!!!!

An old DVOS tradition will resume again this Fall. After a several year hiatus, the Society is planning an orchid show and sale, to take place on Saturday and Sunday, October 11 and 12. Under the title “**Fall Orchid Festival**,” the two-day event will be held at the Pleasant Hill Community Center, 320 Civic Drive, off Taylor Boulevard, in Pleasant Hill.

Planned activities include orchid displays, orchid sales by DVOS and commercial vendors, ribbon judging and trophy awards, potting demonstrations, plant raffle and the always anticipated “plant doctor.”

Show and Sale hours will be: 9:00AM to 5:00PM on Saturday and 10:00AM to 4:00PM on Sunday.

Volunteers are already being signed-up for the event. If you would like to volunteer please contact David Tomassini at (925) 648-7667 or Juan Bofill at (925) 609-8443.

The success of this show and sale is greatly dependent on member participation, so please consider volunteering.

- Juan Bofill

### AOS Awards, Pacific Central Judging Center

Oakland, May 19, 2003

Paphiopedilum Gloria Naugle Saint Basil

Award: AM 82, Exhibitor: José J. Del Toro, csb

Paphiopedilum rothschildianum Saint Joseph

Award: AM 82, Exhibitor: José J. Del Toro, csb

Paphiopedilum Transvaal Warwick

Award: HCC 78, Exhibitor: Fred Jernigan

Paphiopedilum lowii Gliding Hawk

Award: HCC 79, Exhibitor: Japeth Ko

Paphiopedilum superbiens v. curtisii Sauron

Award: HCC 79, Exhibitor: Tom Merics

For more award information please visit the following website: <http://www.aospacificcentral.org>

- Lois E. Miller

## New Lifetime Members

Once again the Society honors those individuals who's past efforts, on behalf of DVOS, make it possible for current members to enjoy a vibrant organization. At the June 12<sup>th</sup> General Membership Meeting, Lifetime Membership Awards will be presented to the following founding members: **Don Baker, Stan and Dale Dinsmore, and Scotty and Beverly Young.** We congratulate all of them for a well-deserved recognition.

-Juan Bofill

### DVOS Lifetime Member Profile

**Name:** Don R. Baker

**Birthplace:** Salt Lake City (1933)

**Childhood** (or where I grew up): Salt Lake City and Sacramento

**Family Members and/or Pets:** 9 children – between my wife's 5 and my 4 children, and 22 grandchildren.

**Occupation:** Inventor, Writer, Chemist

**How I became Interested in Orchids:** By tissue propagation of Phalaenopsis orchids

**Favorite Orchid:** Phalaenopsis

**Other Hobbies and Special Interests:** Tracing ancestry; Rocks & minerals; Travel

**Favorite Way to Mellow Out:** Play on the computer looking for ancestry

**Favorite or Unusual Memories:** Legally growing radioactive opium poppies as a Ph.D. thesis project at UC Berkeley.

**Special Accomplishments:** 204 US Patents – 2 commercial herbicides.

**Your Plan in 5 Years:** Stay active everyday

**Favorite Quote:** “The harder I work, the luckier I get” – Ben Franklin

### DVOS Lifetime Member Profile

**Name:** Dale S. Dinsmore

**Birthplace:** Fairbanks, Alaska

**Childhood** (or where I grew up): Fairbanks, Anchorage, and Seattle

**Family Members and/or Pets:** 3 cats – Sunshine, Mr. Kitty, and Mr. Purrky

**Occupation:** Volunteer

**How I became Interested in Orchids:** Married Stan

**Favorite Orchid:** Don't have a favorite.

**Other Hobbies and Special Interests:** Vireyas, traveling, Hawaiian language and culture, “tour guiding” visitors, Hawaii Concert Society, line dancing

**Favorite way to Mellow out:** Who needs one living here?

(Dale Dinsmore continued)

**Your Plans in Five Years:** to have traveled to the places I've always wanted to see and be at home in Hawai'i just enjoying life.

**Favorite Quote:** Sayings of Ralph Waldo Emerson, perhaps from Winston Churchill "Never give up!"

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### DVOS Lifetime Member Profile

**Name:** Stan Dinsmore (Stanley H.)

**Birthplace:** Huntington Park, Calif.

**Childhood** (or where I grew up): Downey, Calif.

**Family Members and/or Pets:** Wife: Dale, Children – They've flown the coop now: Sons: Daniel & Kendal, Daughter: Danika. Pets: 3 Cats, Sunshine, Mr. Kitty and Purrkey.

**Occupation:** Retired Electronics Engineer

**How I became Interested in Orchids:** I have been interested in horticulture and gardening all my life. In 1958 I saw an ad in the Los Angeles Times for the liquidation of an Orchid Nursery (one of the well known growers, Ozella's). I bought 5 plants but I needed to find out how to grow them. At the LA County Fair there was a booth put up by the Orchid Society of Southern California. I joined and have been hooked ever since.

**Favorite Orchid:** I have several that I might call my Favorite Orchid. Paph Mem. Rex van Delden FCC/AOS, Blc. Oconee, come to mind but whenever a nice one comes into bloom that becomes my current favorite!! Like the song "If you can't Love the Girl that you want, Love the Girl that you are with".

**Other Hobbies and Special Interests:** Here in Hawai'i we have the perfect climate for growing Vireyas, tropical Rhododendrons. They are easy to propagate by cuttings and we have a local Vireya Society. They make very nice pot and landscape plants, and have a wide range of shapes and colors. The Stock Market keeps me very busy also. Of course I am involved with the Hilo Orchid Society and I am the Web Master of our Web Site

[www.hiloorchidsociety.org](http://www.hiloorchidsociety.org). As you may know we just finished the hosting of the 2003 Spring Meeting of the AOS. We put on a world Class Show. We keep very busy – all of the retirees that I know say, "When did I ever have time to work?!!!"

**Favorite way to Mellow out:** Most every week I attend a jam session of guitars and ukuleles. I play the ukulele. Also attend a weekly class in the Hawai'ian Language ('Olelelo Hawai'i).

**Your Plans in Five Years:** Keep living the full life of joy and fulfillment.

### Pop Up for Spring

Well, we all knew it was coming. This last month's article in The New York Times states that asparagus is the closest relative to the orchid. The word orchid is derived from the Greek word for testicle, based on the shape of the backbulbs of many orchid species. Asparagus must also be a Greek reference to some phallic symbol. Right??? The Greeks used the word asparagus to mean "spring up". Well, there has got to be an anatomy lesson there somewhere but I'm not sure if it's appropriate.

The Times article stated that new DNA evidence supports the fact that an orchid's nearest relative is the Asparagales family. This family includes asparagus, amaryllis, onions, irises, daffodils, agaves and yuccas. The article goes on to say that orchids have been around for at least 90 million years. That doesn't say much for those of us who can't keep an orchid alive for a summer!!!!

-- Neil Armstrong

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### Drowned Paph

By Antonio Ariza

I love Paphs but always had trouble with them until a couple of years ago, when I drastically changed my way of growing them. I'm a postgraduate science student and I decided to read a few scientific papers about soil and atmospheric conditions around India, South East Asia and Borneo. This is going to be a bit long-winded but I hope you like it.

Most people over water Paphs because they don't understand how they grow in the wild. Paphs generally grow in very shallow soil or humus pockets where there is a maximum of 1-2 inch layer of humus/leaf litter, but generally a lot less than this. Below this litter there is the ground rock and, as a result, the whole place has very good drainage. The humus is NOT soil and looks a lot more like half decomposed old plant debris, with lots of dry leaves and sometimes a bit of moss here and there. This stuff is full of air pockets and dries quite fast under tropical conditions, even during the rainy season when it rains for hours (generally in the late afternoon) as this is also the hot season and the compost will be barely moist the following day. The heat in the morning and noon dries the soil and creates a very humid atmosphere around the leaves while decreasing the humidity around the roots.

Many Paphs need extremely good drainage, specially those sections containing lithophytes (as opposed to tropical woodland terrestrials) that grow on rocky hills and mountain slopes where there is only a little humus in pockets among the rock faces of the hills/mountain slopes, hardly any large vegetation covering them (trees and such) and, as a result, good air movement that keeps the atmospheric humidity relatively low. To these species belong bellatulum and company as well as rothschildianum and company and they will rot in a question of a few days if the compost they grow in becomes stagnant. This is also the result of acidity (stagnant organic media become acidic very soon) as these species tend to come from limestone country or grow in ultramafic soil and as a result their roots can't cope with the coupling of wet feet and the excessive acidity produced by bacteria decomposing the wet and dead organic matter (bark chips and Paph roots!!!).

The fact that most Paphs are terrestrial misleads people into thinking that a good terrestrial mix for orchids is the best growing medium for them. WRONG!!! (at least in my humble opinion, that is). These media retain too much moisture and become sour (acidic) in no time once they start to break down. However, they can be used successfully if you are prepared to repot your Paphs every so often. Paphs actually like to be repotted and you'll find that they will produce lots of new roots shortly after being repotted. If you prefer to repot only once a year or every two years then I recommend bark as a growing medium for Paphs. I have found that they don't like to grow in a medium consisting only of inorganic material.

I grow all of my Paphs in standard pots, which I fill to half of their height with large gravel (nearly 1 inch in diameter, limestone is ideal for certain species, as already mentioned, but any type of stone will do) to provide good drainage and large air pockets. Then I put the Paph inside and fill around the roots with large grade bark pieces for all the medium to large species and medium grade bark for the small species. I do not compact the bark and leave large air pockets in this layer as well. The small species related to bellatulum (section brachipetalum, I think) also get a top dressing of medium gravel to keep the surface of the compost dry and help water to drain away from the crowns of the plants. Small Chinese species (micranthum and company) don't need this extra protection. I don't encourage moss on top of bark anymore as I've found that it accelerates the decomposition of the compost and makes it sour after only a few months (at least under my conditions). Strangely enough the roots of many orchids will grow happily in the moss but die once they penetrate

in to the bark layer below after it has gone slightly sour.

Several of the Paphs are potted in the way I described but with clear plastic pots instead of normal plastic pots and I water all the Paphs when I see that the lower part of the bark layer is nearly dry in those pots. This might take 4-6 days in summer (I live in Scotland and the max-min temperatures are 18-28 degrees C at that time) and every 10-12 days in winter (13-20 degrees C). Indian species such as Paph insigne and its relatives stay in a slightly cooler place and get watered every 15-17 days (10-17 degrees C). They are in a very bright place where they get about 2-3 hours of dappled sunshine in the late afternoon (which we only get in summer in this part of the world). All Paphs get repotted once a year at the end of May unless they are in bloom. The bark mix decomposes rapidly after one year and Paphs seem to hate mushy bark even if you keep it reasonably dry.

The surprise of my life has been the discovery of growing orchids in pure sphagnum moss. All my seedlings are now weaned in the stuff when they come out of their flasks and those few plants that start to rot or I want to propagate are potted in it as well. Sphagnum has antibacterial properties and, even though it is acidic, it does not harm the roots of lime-loving plants. The harm is generally the effect of microbes that like acidic conditions and against which lime-loving plants have no defenses, but these microbes can't survive in living or fresh sphagnum (beware of old, dead, compacted sphagnum as it will decompose and harbor bacteria). I have several Paph seedlings growing in pure sphagnum and they love it. They have much better root systems than seedlings in bark mixes and, to my surprise, these are all seedlings of limestone lovers. The most surprising is Paph sanderianum, which grows like mad, as well as Paph St. Swithin, which always tended to rot before I started to treat my Paphs as "cacti that like a humid atmosphere".

And that's enough of my ramblings.

Happy Growing

Tony

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The above was shamelessly stolen from the web. I stockpiled it against the day I'd need filler. Who'd a thunk it would come in handy? Once again, always take advice with a grain of salt. If it helps you, good. If you think it's total trash, then line the bottom of the birdcage with it.

K Barrett

**Local Vendors****Livermore**

\*The Orchid Ranch\*  
Fordyce Orchids - Cattleyas 925-447-1659  
<http://www.fordyceorchids.com>

Orchids Orinda - Phalaenopsis  
Tonkins Orchids - Paphiodeilums

**Concord**

Nathalie Smith  
1507 Lavetta Way; 925-685-8904  
(by appt. only); orchid supplies

**Oakland**

\*Orchids Fiori D. Amore\*  
Paolo & Nina DiCandia  
510-530-4884 (by appt. only)

**Walnut Creek**

\*Orchid Gallery\*  
Jing Ho  
1501 N. California Blvd.

**Vallejo**

\*MGM Orchids\* Mariano G Morales  
(707) 557-2716 (by appt. only)

**San Leandro**

\*The Paph House\*  
Francisco Baptista & Fred Jernigan  
375 Warwick Avenue, San Leandro, CA  
510/ 635-2845, (by appt. only)

**Lafayette**

\*Diablo Disas\* <http://www.disas.com>  
Michael Gallagher

3 Maloyan Lane  
925-283-8450 (by appt. only)

**Danville**

\*Commercial Plant Services\*  
David & Alice Tomassini  
3 Woodside Ct.; 925-736-7630

**Half Moon Bay**

\*D & D Flowers\*  
Greenhouse located in Half Moon Bay  
(925) 969-1246 (by appt. only)

**Australia**

\*Adelaide Orchids\* <http://www.adelaideorchids.com>  
Stephen and Robin Monkhouse  
16 Pine Road  
Woodcroft, South Australia 5162

**Diablo View Orchid Society**

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