

Excerpts from the May 98 DVOS Newsletter

May Interview

by Rick Sumner

There are a lot of very talented growers in the Diablo View Orchid Society. Many are people who have grown orchids for many years and have a special feel for what each plant needs. Some have pursued orchids as if they were a second career. This column is dedicated to finding and exposing the dedicated (addicted) souls for whom orchids form a significant part of their lives.

This month our guest is Bernice Lindner, one of the 10 or 12 original DVOS members. She lives in Danville with her husband, her cat, and her greenhouse full of orchids. Involved with orchids since 1976, she belongs to three area societies: DVOS, Oakland and San Francisco.

DVOS: So, how did you get involved in orchids?

Bernice: I was working in Berkeley where they had an unused electron microscope, so they decided that I should learn how to use it. So, while I was learning the electron microscope, they had a plant there, a Phalaenopsis. I knew nothing about Phalaenopsis at the time, so I asked if it was for sale. I was told I could have it for \$2. From that point on I was hooked on orchids. And that Phalaenopsis lasted long enough to furnish all the flowers for my daughter-in-law's corsages.

DVOS: So you were hooked on orchids pretty much from the start. How did you get involved in an orchid society?

Bernice: While riding home on BART and reading a copy of the AOS Bulletin a man asked me if I belonged to the orchid society. Turns out that he was interested in orchids too, so we started carpooling to the Oakland Society meetings.

DVOS: When was this?

Bernice: This was back in '77. I met Dick Emory who told me that the San Francisco Society had better speakers and invited me to go to one of their meetings.

DVOS: How was it that you came to be involved in the formation of Diablo View?

Bernice: A bunch of us met at Marlene's house (Marlene Lundquist - whose husband was introduced at the March meeting). We each contributed \$10 and that's how the society started. Lancer took over as Secretary-Treasurer and you know the rest from there.

DVOS: How have orchids affected your life?

Bernice: I've been on 5 collecting trips to Panama and Cost Rica, Ecuador and Peru collecting orchids. It has been a great learning experience! Come on out to the greenhouse and I'll show you.

Conclusion: Bernice's greenhouse contained a delightful assortment of orchids, all in bloom. Bernice Lindner is truly a talented orchidist! Thanks Bernice.

Indoor/Outdoor Group News

by Dan Chiappone

Our first meeting was held on April 19th. Attending members decided on a format for future meetings and also planned the next two succeeding meetings. We decided to meet once a month, alternating between Indoor and Outdoor themes. We will focus on Outdoor growing in May. Our topic will be 'Everything You Wanted to Know About Growing Cymbidiums and Zygopatalums Outdoors'. As a novice I tried to grow Cymbidiums in doors for 3 years without a bloom. Last year I joined our Society and attended a repotting session given by Paolo d'Candia, owner of Fiori d'Amore. Paolo is one of the Bay Area's foremost commercial Cymbidium growers. After following his advice, my cymbidiums produced multiple spikes in January and have beautiful flowers. Thank you Paolo. I have arranged with Paolo to give our new group his expert advice for our May meeting. All interested members are invited to join us at his home and greenhouses in Oakland, Sat. May 16th at 2 pm. More Information and directions will be provided at our Society's next general meeting in May.

For Indoor growing we decided to invite an accomplished Indoor grower to the home of a volunteer from our group. Their role will be to offer advice on various topics such as: location; lighting; watering; fertilizing; temperature; humidity and potting medium for selected orchid types. Our focus in June will be on Phalaenopsis orchids. Marcia hart has graciously volunteered her home for our June meeting, on June 2, from 7-9pm. However due to the size of any volunteer's home, we are limiting attendance to the first 25 people to sign up at our Society's meetings. More information and directions will be provided at our Society's next general meeting in May.

Future Meetings and topics will be discussed and decided on at the end of the outdoor session at Paolo d'Candia's in May

May Growing Tip

by Rick Sumner

May is a month to continue April's repotting and I know that you are just sitting on the edge of your chair with anticipation for more repotting :) May is generally a great month for repotting your evergreen Dendrobiums. First check to see that they have begun a new shoot and see if the plant is potbound. If the shoot looks like it has no room to grow, then it is time to repot the plant. Dendrobiums require a pot only large enough to allow one additional year's growth. Do NOT overpot! Dendrobiums like to be a bit rootbound, so plan to repot into only a slightly larger pot. By the way, the preferred type of pot is clay rather than plastic, since clay tends to drain and dry more quickly than plastic pots.

Begin repotting, much like any other plant, by removing the plant from the current pot. If the pot is clay, this may take some soaking and may even require that the old pot be broken in order to remove the plant without damaging the roots. Once out of the pot, trim any dead roots and spray with an approved fungicide before repotting into the new pot. Many growers use a potting medium of bark.

A better medium contains ingredients such as lava rock and perlite, as these ingredients do not break down, lasting longer than bark. Remember, Dendrobiums like to be crowded in their pots, they like to dry out thoroughly between waterings and they don't like their roots disturbed. Plan on permanence.

The April Greenhouse Tour

Dennis Olivas' GH in Half Moon Bay

By Kathy Barrett

It was a beautiful day on the coast. The weather co-operated and was sunny and mild. Dennis was a wonderful host, providing cookies and juices for hungry hobbyists. Dennis planned a little Q&A session which was much appreciated.

I had thrown him a curve by asking for a short session on *Barkerias*, because a future speaker will discuss Mexican *Laelias* for the DVOS. Dennis handled it with aplomb. He deflasked some *barkerias* for us by simply unscrewing the top of the flask, shaking off the agar and popping the resulting plant mass into a plastic pot with a lining of fine bark in the bottom and fine bark lightly covering the roots. It seems *Barkerias* do not like a lot of potting medium. In nature they grow with their roots sparsely spread over the trunks of trees, so the key to this genus is not to bother the roots. He repots by just popping the plants into the next larger pot once the roots have encircled and overgrown the present pot. Its amazing how much information Dennis can pack into a short amount of time.

Dennis shared a cute potting tip for 'potting' epitants using 'virgin' wine corks - note: the corks must never have been used to bottle wine! The tannic acid in a 'used' wine cork will wreck the epitant roots! He takes 4 corks, holds them in a square shape, placing the epitant in the small space at the center of the square, and secures the cork square with plastic coated wire. (Many orchidists use old phone wire - the same thing that ties *Vandas* into their baskets.) This square then fits perfectly into a 2" plastic pot. The pot can then be hung or placed on the benchtop. Another tip!! If you hang the pot, do it so the plant is horizontal or with a slight downward angle to it. This keeps water from collecting in the 'fans' and causing ROT!

Dennis mentioned that, with 6000 sq ft + of greenhouse plants that he has, it is difficult to repot all at once. Therefore he stressed that he goes through the GH at intervals and looks for the plants that are actively growing at that time, and repots them then. It is well known that orchids should be repotted, ideally, when the new growth starts. This allows the plant to establish itself. However, many people just repot in the Spring at their convenience, or because many books say to repot at that time. He does this even with *Cymbidiums*, whether they are starting a new growth in the Spring or Fall. His preferred potting medium is fir bark, either fine or medium grade - depending on the moisture retaining requirements of the plant. He'll mix this as 4 parts bark to 1 part Perlite. And he uses plastic pots. Potting mediums should be selected according to the owner's watering style. If you are a heavy waterer, then choose a medium which drains rapidly. If you water less frequently, then use a medium which retains more moisture, such as sphagnum moss. There is a technique to using moss, however, to ensure that you still have enough air get to the roots. He has seen people

alternately layer styrofoam peanuts in the bottom of the pot, then moss, then peanuts, then moss, to allow for good aeration.

He waters once a week, in an 'adapt or die - survival of the fittest' - mode. He will fertilize with a balanced fertilizer at 1/4 strength or, more recently, he has started using Jerry Rodder's Wundergrow Plant Tonic. Wundergrow is formulated for high light/heat situations, and is not recommended for low light. We can ask Jerry Rodder about that when he comes to the DVOS meeting in May. Jerry is the Culture Session speaker for the evening. Dennis 'top waters' his plants with a hose. He keeps it simple!

Bartley Schwartz also opened his Highland Tropicals greenhouses. He offered a variety of Catts, Paphs and other intergenerics. He had a wonderful Masd Celine Dion in bloom, and Dave Tomassini talked him out of a division of Soph. coccinea in bloom. Bartley was accompanied by his 2 birds, Molly and ?, who perched on his shoulder the whole time.

We wound up the day by having lunch at Barbara's Fish Shack, on the water in Half Moon Bay, which came highly recommended by Dennis and staff, and boy were they right! The food was excellent and the company superb! You shoulda been there!

Last update 01/25/18

[Home](#) | [Awards](#) | [Gallery](#) | [Links](#) | [Email Us](#)