



March 2020 Newsletter

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to friends who might be interested in knowing about Five Cities Orchid Society and encourage them to subscribe at www.fcos.org.

Our Speaker for March 12th is Jan Plested, an FCOS member and well regarded grower of orchids on both sides of the Atlantic.

Jan will present photos and growing suggestions for the large and diverse members of the genus *Dendrobium*. Our meeting will start at 7:30. Details can be found on the "Events" page at www.fcos.org. Join us for dinner with Bob at the Quarter Deck restaurant, 1500 W. Branch St., Arroyo Grande at 5:30 on March 12th. [Confirm with Ed Lysek.](#)



Jan will share her growing secrets for *Dendrobium* orchids - a diverse genus with many species suitable for growing outdoors in our central California climate.



Chris Ehrlers' award winning Dendrobium speciosum at least year's Santa Barbara International Orchid Show.

Our February speaker, Bob Asbell did an amazing job teaching us how to grow cymbidium orchids.



Bob Asbell who owns Asbell Orchids was the guest speaker at FCOS's February meeting. He started by speaking about the history of orchids in California with an emphasis on *Cymbidiums* which he has been hybridizing for many years. *Cymbidiums* used to be grown as cut flowers with the flowers being mainly used to make corsages. White was the only color that florists wanted. But Bob and many other growers prefer to grow *Cymbidiums* with a variety of colors, although after 40 years of hybridizing he said there are few very good yellow *Cymbidiums*. Hybridizers are working to get wider sepals and petals. Diploid *Cymbidiums* have 40 chromosomes while tetraploids have 80 and triploids have a chromosome count of 60. Bob mentioned there are six elements that distinguish orchids from other plants. Orchids have three sepals, two petals and one lip. Along the central coast of California *Cymbidiums* will grow very well outside. At Bob's nursery and lab, once the seeds have germinated and become large enough, they replant a total of 40 small orchids into each sterile flask. Once they are large enough they are then transplanted into rows in small bark. At that point they are placed in a warm room until they become established. When they get larger they are then placed into individual pots. They water their *Cymbidiums* two times/week with overhead watering. They water long enough for water to come out the bottom of the pot. In reference to temperature they have seen that *Cymbidium* flowers will freeze when exposed to 23-27 °F while the back bulbs can make it to about 15 °F. He said there is much debate about fertilizer type and application rate. They use a mixture of 20-20-20 with trace elements. They apply fertilizer year round but alter the concentration during the year. From Jan-June they use very low

concentrations. They have found that higher concentrations during this period will cause the *Cymbidium* to grow more and bloom less. Bob also stated that it takes about 7-8 years from seed production to first blooming in *Cymbidiums*.



"Uncle Ed's Catt" oil on canvas by our own FCOS member Mary Carole Larson. On exhibit (not for sale) at the show "Orchids: Nature's Masterpiece" at Studios on the Park, 1130 Pine Street, Paso Robles, CA from March 5-28. *More details below.*

Orchids: Nature's Masterpiece

Art and orchid show at Studios on the Park, Paso Robles. Click www.studiosonthepark.org for the complete schedule of events, times and locations. Most of the art on exhibit is for sale and many of the orchid plants will be available for purchase or raffle at the April 9th FCOS meeting.

March 5 - Thursday - 12-6 PM Show opens. 25 artists exhibiting their interpretations of orchids in a range of media including oil, acrylic, glass, fabric and metal, set among blooming orchid plants. Featured artists Carol Woodin and Marcia Whitmore have had their watercolors published in Orchid Digest and the AOS Bulletin.

March 7 - Saturday - 6 PM “Art after Dark” enjoy wine, meet several of the artists and visit Studios on the Park for an evening in Paso Robles.

March 17 Tuesday - 2-4 PM Book signing with **Ron Parsons and Mary Gerritsen**. Your chance to purchase a signed copy of “Bay Area Guide to Orchids and their Culture” and the AOS Guide “Orchids and their Culture” and have them signed by the authors.

March 17 -Tuesday - 6-9:30 PM **Ron Parsons presentation “Rare and Unusual Orchids” at the Park Cinemas, Paso Robles**. Limited seating. \$20 Tickets can be purchased at the cinema or at www.BrightEvent.com (service fee applies). Price includes a glass of Oso Libre wine at Studios following the presentation. Limited seating, this event is expected to be sold out. Great way to celebrate St. Patrick’s Day.

March 19 Thursday - 1-2 PM A concert among the artwork and orchids by the Templeton Ukulele Conspiracy, an event not to be missed!

March 22 - Saturday - 2-3 PM “Orchids De-mystified...how not to kill your Trader Joes orchid” Learn how to care for *phalaenopsis* (moth) orchids. Simple to follow advice to keep your orchids happy and maybe even get them to bloom again. \$20 includes an orchid to take home to practice your new skills. Limited attendance. Tickets (\$20) may be purchased at Studios or at www.BrightEvent.com (service fee will NOT be added to this ticket).

March 25 - Wednesday - 2-4 PM. Kids paint pots - art instruction by Studios on the Park children’s art coordinator, Michelle Rollins. Paint a terra cotta pot and then receive an orchid to take home, care for and bloom. Suitable for children 8 and older. Call the Studios to confirm, attendance is limited. 805-238-9800.



My *Tillandsia* - fat and happy, dilute fertilizer every week, regular water and bright filtered sunlight. Happy but dull green all year long.

And if you have a few air plants that just don't seem to develop much color, below is some advice.



WOW! Brian Kollenborn of Air Plant Alchemy, Carpinertia's *Tillandsia bulbosa*.

Brian's secret to highly pigmented *Tillandsias*: Do not fertilize for 3 months or more, increase light levels and reduce watering. This stresses the plant and produces intense coloration.

25th Annual Central Coast

ORCHID SHOW & SALE

Sponsored by Five Cities Orchid Society f @

APRIL 4 & 5, 2020

Saturday 9-5 | Sunday 10-4

South County Regional Center
800 W. Branch Street
Arroyo Grande, CA

Admission: \$6
Children 12 or under Free

Show Info: FCOS.org



Hi Ho SILVER

Celebrating 25 Years



Oncidium N.R. Orchid Lane FCC/AOS
Grown by Bob Asbell, Arroyo Grande, CA
Photo by Chris Ehrler

ORCHID SHOW PREVIEW BENEFIT

FRIDAY, APRIL 3

6:30 pm - 9:00 pm Tickets: \$35
call 805.489.0683 or 805.242.0536
or online at FCOS.org



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FROM THE SHOW CHAIR

Our Show is fast approaching. Here's what we need from you:

SPREAD THE WORD. Post on Next-door, email your friends, pass out flyers, put up posters.

BUY / SELL TICKETS. The Fri Nite preview is only \$35.

VOLUNTEER. Alice Swope has the sign - up sheet to serve on Sat. or Sun.

RIBBON JUDGES. I need nine people to help ribbon judge on Friday, April 3, 1 - 2:30pm. No judging experience necessary.

PLANTS. It is an orchid show, so we need all members to bring their blooming orchids. Right NOW you should be anticipating what will be blooming, and begin cleaning, grooming, staking flowers, so your orchid is all it should be. Bring plants to the Regional Center on Thursday, April 2, between noon and 5pm (earlier is better).

Five Cities is again displaying at the Santa Barbara Show, March 13 - 15. I will be going down to set up on Wednesday (That is the day before our regular March meeting). If you have plants for that display, call me well in advance. 929 - 5749.

CLUB DISPLAY — We're doing a Lone Ranger theme, so we need the following items

An old small tent. Canvas, not nylon. Ranger clothes. Cowboy shirt, pants, black boots and black hat. Also cowboy long johns. And, a black mask. A six shooter and holster (preferably toy).

Welcome Home



Take a moment to go to www.fcos.org and purchase your ticket for the Friday night Orchid Show Preview Benefit.

A very worthy cause benefiting [Welcome Home Military Heroes](#) and [Honor Flight Central Coast California](#) and a fun evening. Remember, there are a limited number of tickets available for this event.

Five Cities Orchid Society will collaborate with the Central Coast Cactus and Succulent society and the Girl Scouts of California's Central Coast in offering childrens activities during the 25th Annual Central Coast Orchid Show & Sale. Saturday April 4, 9:00-5 pm and Sunday April 5, 10- 4 pm.

Inspire kids with orchids, succulents and other companion plants. Kids will learn about orchids, where they grow and how to grow them at home. Make Orchidgamy paper orchids, color, create and decorate a succulent display and receive an orchid to take home. Looking for donations of succulent cuttings, soil mix, pots, decorative pots, succulent and orchids plants. Family Fun activities, Free to kids 10 and under. For further info contact Jeff (jsp1440@aol.com) or Michelle (michelle.k.ralson@gmail.com).

- 843 unique website visitors in 2019
- 743 unique website visitors for 2020 - in only 2 months!
- Both FCOS Facebook and Instagram pages are also showing increased followers.

Orchids are really great!