



The Backbulb

The Carmel Orchid Society

Volume 46, Number 8
August 2003

Our August Speaker: Roberto Vasquez Chavez

Roberto Vasquez Chavez has an extraordinary background and depth of knowledge in the orchid field. He was born in Cochabamba, Bolivia on the day of the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, and attended primary and secondary school at the American Institute in Cochabamba. He later got his degrees in Business Administration and Botany at High Point College, High Point, North Carolina.

His present activities consist of botanical investigation, specializing in the Orchidaceae, Cactaceae, Passifloraceae, Bromeliaceae, and Heliconiaceae.

Mr. Chavez is a member of the International Nature Conservancy, as well as being the Founder and President of the Botanical Society of Bolivia. He holds the title of Associate Investigator at the National Botanical Herbarium, La Paz, Bolivia, and is the Editor of the *Bolivian Botanical Society Magazine*. He has been the author and co-author of papers concerning the description and publication of one genus and more than 200 species new to science.

Mr. Chavez' impressive credits include international speaking engagements at

the World Cactus and Succulent Congress in Monte Carlo, Monaco (1978), Friends of Cacti, London, England (1978), the World Cactus and Succulent Congress in Mexico City, Mexico (1980), the 11th World Orchid Conference in Miami, FL (1984), the Biodiversity Symposium, at the University of Bonn, in Bonn, Germany (1996), the 15th World Orchid



Pleuro. immersa

Conference in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (1996), the International Orchid Exposition in Misiones, Argentina (1998), the 16th World Orchid Conference in Vancouver, Canada (1999) and New York Speakers Day (2001).

Among many other articles on the discovery of new species published in *Lindleyana*, and several German publications like *Friends of*

Orchids Publications, his publications include *Orchids of Bolivia*, *several Icones*, Dodson and Vasquez, and *Orchids of Bolivia*, Vasquez and Ibsch.

We are grateful that Mr. Chavez has taken the time to address our Society. Let's welcome this knowledgeable and respected expert.

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Pat Landee



Odontoglossum Alliance Culture

These New World Tropics, high-altitude orchids are popular where cool temperatures prevail. The Colombian miltonias (truly Miltoniopsis) and showy odontoglossums have striking sprays of flowers. Culture is similar for hybrids in this group, some being *Odontonia*, *Odontioda* and *Vuylstekeara*.

LIGHT levels should be bright. An east window or a shaded south window in the home is ideal; western exposures are usually too warm in most climates. In a greenhouse, levels from 2,000 to 5,000 foot-candles are acceptable; some Miltoniopsis growers demand the pink flushing in the plants' leaves which results from the high light levels. If summer day temperatures are high, light levels can be reduced to cool the growing area.

TEMPERATURE is critical for these plants; day temperatures below 75 to 80 degrees F are preferred year-round. Night temperatures of 55 to 58 degrees F are best. Short periods of warmer day temperatures may be tolerated, especially if humidity and air movement are at optimal levels and nights are cool.

Miltoniopsis plants prefer night temperatures at the upper end of the range while many odontoglossums thrive at 50 to 55 degrees F at night.

WATER should be plentiful, coupled with perfect drainage. The potting medium should just start to dry before watering again. "Accordion-pleating" on miltonia leaves is a symptom of insufficient water or humidity, and may appear on plants of other genera if severe. This may mean watering every two to seven days, depending on weather, pot size and material, and type of potting medium.

HUMIDITY ideally 40% to 80%, is important for all these orchids, coupled with moving air. In the home, set the plants on trays above moist pebbles, with the

pot resting above the water. Misting is beneficial, but in the mornings only. Evaporative cooling in a greenhouse increases humidity while cooling the air and is highly recommended for these orchids in most climates. Fogging the air or dampening the floor with water also helps cool and humidify.

FERTILIZER should be applied regularly while plants are actively growing. Applications of 30-10-10 formulations twice a month are ideal for plants in a bark-based potting medium. A 20-20-20 formulation should be used on other media or on slabs. If weather is dull applications once a month are sufficient. Some growers use a high-phosphorus 10-30-20 formulation bloom booster as plants approach flowering.

REPOT as new growth emerges from the base of the plant which is usually in the spring or fall. These orchids like to be very pot-bound, so when repotting leave only enough room for one to two years of new growth. A fine-grade potting medium with excellent drainage is required; since the medium is kept moist, annual or bi-annual repotting is normal.

Usually the lowest one-quarter to one-third of the pot is filled with drainage material, either crock shards, rocks, or Styrofoam "peanuts". Spread the roots over a cone of potting medium and fill in around the roots with potting medium. Firm the potting medium well around the roots by applying pressure. Keep humidity high and the pot dry until new roots form. A vitamin B1 compound may help establish newly potted plants.

Prepared by: Education Committee, American Orchid Society, 6000 S. Olive Ave., West Palm Beach, FL 33405 (407) 585-8666.

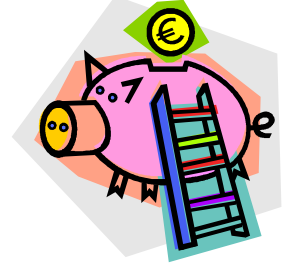


Odontoglossum Margarete Holm



Photographs courtesy Sally Straus

Treasurer's Report June, 2003



Checkbook Balance on June 1	\$8,732.52
June income	505.00
June expenses	(2,276.59)
Checkbook Balance on June 30	\$6,960.93

CD balance on June 15 was **\$7,490.41**

Please note: Vendors' dues are paid up until next May.

A Reminder ... If you are enrolling as a new member, or are simply renewing your membership, please make sure that we have your **current** address and telephone number (and email, if you have one). We want to make sure you get your *Backbulb* regularly! Use the form below to make any changes, please.

Carmel Orchid Society, I nc.

Affiliated with the American Orchid Society



Monthly meetings at 7:30 PM on the first Monday of each month (Except September and December) at the First Presbyterian Church of Monterey, 501 EI Dorado, Monterey. Membership **\$ 15.00** for a single or **\$ 20.00** for two at the same address, **\$ 25.00** Vendor membership. Please make checks payable to the Carmel Orchid Society and mail to:

Carmel Orchid Society—Membership
P. O. Box 2454
Monterey, CA 93942

Application for Membership — Please print

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

Member of the
American Orchid Society?

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Yes No

Email address _____

New Member Renewal



Upcoming Events

Carmel Orchid Society Monthly Meeting

Monday, August 4, 2003, at 7:30pm
The First Presbyterian Church
510 El Dorado Street
Monterey, CA 93940
Speaker: Ernie Campuzano of Butterfly Orchids in Newbury Park, CA.

Monterey Bay Orchid Society Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, August 12, 2003, at 6:30pm (second Tuesday of every month)
At the Community Bank, Community Room, 6th Floor, 301 Main Street, Salinas, CA. Entrance on Alisal. For more information, call (408) 375 6871.

Carmel Orchid Society August Board of Directors' Meeting

Monday, August 18, 2003 at 7:30pm
Location to be announced.

Carmel Orchid Society Annual Greenhouse Tour

Sunday, September 21, 2003
Meeting at 8:15am at the K-Mart shopping center parking lot, Highway 1 and Canyon Del Rey, Seaside.

Current and Former Board Members Honor Bill and Ida Hale

The current Board of Directors, some honored past Board members and a few of their good friends gathered at the home of COS Board President Jim Nybakken and his wife Betty to honor Bill and Ida Hale for their over-thirty years of service to the Society.

It is hard to imagine what the Society would be like today without the tremendous outlay of time, energy, expertise and resources provided by the Hales over the years. Your editor has only been a member of the Society for two years or so, and has observed these wonderful orchid-lovers pour their hearts and souls into the well-being of the group. Along the way, we have learned so much about tending and appreciating these bewitching plants, a good deal of it from Bill's repotting chats before meetings.

Bill and Ida were presented with a beautiful and rare paphiopedalum by their good friend Terry Root of the Orchid Zone, who was called by Bill, "the best orchid grower in the world," high praise indeed coming from someone regarded as having ten green thumbs when growing the plants himself.

The Board also presented Bill and Ida with a beautiful and rare volume of orchid illustrations that delighted the recipients, as it was intended to do.

We all owe Bill and Ida Hale a great debt of gratitude for the consistent and long-term efforts they have put into the Society that gives us all so much pleasure. Thank you both!



From left: Board President Jim Nybakken, Ida and Bill Hale, Terri Root of Orchid Zone



A plaque for Bill and Ida

Roberta Singer, past Treasurer, with caterer and MayFaire originator Deric Wenzler



From left: Phyllis and Jack Blakemore, Carol Easton, Jeff Salmon



July Goodies Volunteers

Ellie Mamon, our hardworking and infinitely reliable Hospitality Manager, tells me that our August Goodies Volunteers are:

Lesley Olson
Linda Beard
The Jongens
Janette Ford
Carolyn Salmon

Our wonderful members who bring the goodies have consistently outdone themselves, and it is almost fair to wonder if there is some kind of competition among the Volunteers to see who can tickle our taste buds the most elaborately! Whatever the cause, we all thank the excellent chefs among us who delight us so!



Bud Seagraves Chat on Orchid Environment and Nuclear Science

Your editor was educated at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), but is aware that some of his fellow COS members were not the beneficiaries of a science and engineering background. When Bud Seagraves came to talk with us about his research and solutions for maintaining an optimum orchid environment, he found, at least in me, a receptive and very appreciative audience. I could tell, however, that many of you were baffled by the engineering detail that he gave us.

Now, don't get me wrong. I *loved* his chat! I understood all the charts, the relative humidity, temperature and pressure diagrams that he had along. I was trained as a nuclear physicist! He was talking directly to my engineer's brain, and it all made perfect sense to me. When Bud showed us this four foot by seven foot chart of all phases of wa-

ter under any atmospheric pressure and temperature from pure vacuum and zero degrees to 100 atmospheres at 1,000 degrees, I dug it! But when he then turned to the chart and with obvious satisfaction said, "This chart says everything you need to know about water," well, that might have been true for him, but it was a bit of a mystery for most of the members. What exactly did those graceful intersecting curves actually mean when it comes to keeping a greenhouse humid enough for phalaenopsis? How warm do you keep the greenhouse? How much water do you pump in during the day? Questions like that.

Bud brought along some interesting humidity maintenance devices and showed us how to use them, and, I suspect, one or more of our members will acquire them. I ended up wanting one of those fog generators, but I don't have a greenhouse, and the fog would probably make my upholstery moldy, so that's out for me.

Anyway, Bud treated us like we were all nuclear scientists, a great compliment from a nuclear engineer, and I appreciated it. I hope that the rest of the COS membership took the chat as a compliment as well.

A Note from Your Editor

As noted in the last month's *Backbulb*, your editor will be traveling to the far East for the entire month of August, and will have to hand the editing duties over to someone else temporarily, or the *Backbulb* will simply not be produced. I don't know exactly which it is at the press time, but we will do our best to make sure that you don't miss the important September issue.

We hope that this temporary absence doesn't cause anyone a headache or inconvenience. If you have any questions about meetings, times, events and so forth, please contact one of the Board members listed on the last page of the *Backbulb*.

Several of you reminded me that I was going to publish Ernie Campuzano's contact information so they could buy more New Zealand potting moss. It is in the box to the right.

Thanks,

— Editor

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 All naturally liquefied:
 Guano, Super Guano II, Super Guano Plus



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