

# GARDEN ISLAND ORCHID SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

GARDEN ISLAND ORCHID SOCIETY IS AFFILIATED WITH THE AMERICAN ORCHID SOCIETY

## GARDEN ISLAND ORCHID SOCIETY UPCOMING EVENTS



Blc. Aaron Kobayashi x Sc. Beaufort  
photo by Ada Koene

**General Meeting—April 4th, 2014—please note this is the first Friday.** The meeting will start at 6:30 pm in the United Church of Christ in Hanapepe and Dennis Olivas will be our featured speaker. Dennis, living in the California Bay Area, is a member of our society and an American Orchid Society (AOS) judge. Dennis will share with us his most favorite EASY orchids to grow. Al Sugano will have the Learning Center at **6:00 pm** right before the meeting.

**2013 General Meetings:** June 13th, August 8th, October 10th, and December 6th.

**Other 2013 Events:** The Orchids in Paradise show at the farm fair is August 21st through the 24th.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Let's talk meeting display table. I am looking forward to viewing the display table at our upcoming meeting since it's always exciting to see what our members are growing in their gardens. Having the displays at our meetings, gives us all additional opportunities to show our orchids. Every year, I hope that I will have orchids to place in the Spring and Fall Shows and I have been fortunate with the help of fertilizing to enter some of my orchids. The meeting display table is for orchids that bloom in between the shows. There are two benefits from this 1) showing my success to others who personally relate to the struggle and 2) receiving an additional door prize orchid. How great is that, walking out of the meeting with two new orchids. Please bring in one of your blooming orchids so we all can celebrate your successes and to pick your brain on how you did it.

The upcoming meeting is on April 4<sup>th</sup>, just a week before our Spring Show. Show chair, Gwen Teregawa, will have lots of information to share during the business meeting. This year's Spring Show display theme is Orchids in Wonderland. Make sure you look for the rabbit peeking out of the greenery. As a reminder, there is an article in the newsletter on preparing your plants for the shows. It's going to be another great show!

Finally I'd like to give a big thank you to the members who purchased our fabulous cookbook at the last meeting. It is truly a gem with beautiful orchid pictures and delicious

### MARCH—APRIL 2014

#### In this issue:

Coming Events	1
President's Message	1
Did you know?	2
Spring Show	2
February Notes	3-6

recipes from our members. Cookbook chair, Karen Harlow, will be bringing the cookbooks to our general meeting if you didn't have a chance to buy one yet. We also will be selling them at the Spring Show; so get yours now before they sell out.

Elizabeth Borchelt, President

## BOARD 2014-2015

- \* **President:** Elizabeth Borchelt
- \* **Vice President:** Gwen Teragawa
- \* **Secretary:** Kimberlee Kain
- \* **Treasurer:** Lee Anderson
- \* **Awards:** Mildred Konishi
- \* **By Laws/Ex-Officio:** Carol Kanna
- \* **Membership:** Bobbie Agena
- \* **Newsletter:** Karen Harlow
- \* **Show Display:** Nancy Nakama

## DID YOU KNOW?

The door prize plant for February was Dtpa (Yu Pin Kin Kan x P (Salu Spot x Yellow Peoker)) x self. Check to see if yours came with a tag.

We'd like to welcome new members Barbara Adair and Lynn Mori.



## SPRING SHOW

Plans are being finalized for the Spring Fantasy Show in April. The theme is Orchids in Wonderland and will be held at the United Church of Christ in Hanapepe. Our show will be held on April 11th (1 PM to 7 PM) and April 12th (9 AM to 4 PM). Set up is on Thursday afternoon, April 10th at 1:00 PM. Dennis Olivas will be joining us again at the Show providing expert advice on how to take care of orchids and doing live demos.

Volunteers will be needed to help set-up, tear down, security, and other areas. Sign up sheets will be available at the meeting in April. Many of these activities earn Makana points you can redeem during our December meeting.

The Spring Show is our main fund raising opportunity for the year. The food booth will be providing tasty plate lunches—like baked salmon and beef curry, and baked goods starting on Friday at 11:00 AM. Barbara Prigge of Keoki's, in the Lihue industrial area, is donating 50 kalua pork plate lunches for Friday. If you'd like to volunteer to make some baked goods, deliver them during the show set-up or Friday morning April 11th. Because of space limitations, there will be no art sales booths this year; only club crafts and orchid vendor sales.

Please bring your blooming orchids for the show. All member's orchids will be needed to ensure our show is as spectacular as previous years.

Ribbons/Awards - Both ribbons and cash awards will be given. We have five places (1st-\$10, 2nd-\$7, 3rd-\$5, 4th-\$3 and 5th-\$2) for each category. The Best in Show prize is \$50. Judging will take place on Friday morning.

Plant name tags—Those bringing plants to display should notify Karen Harlow by April 4th either thru email harlows@hawaii.rr.com, mail PO Box 597 Kalaheo 96741 or at the April 4th general meeting. Provide the complete name of the plant and the owner's name (as you wish it to appear on the label). All Display plants must arrive between 1:00 PM and 4:00 PM on Thursday afternoon to allow the display team to finalize the display.

If you have any questions, please bring them up at the April 4th general meeting!

## PREPARING YOUR PLANTS FOR THE SHOW

In the [June 2012 Newsletter](#), Scot Mitamura, provided detailed instructions on how to prepare our orchids for show. Below are some general notes but the 2012 newsletter has specifics by orchid type (please review the [newsletter](#) for more information):

You need to make sure when you bring an orchid to a show that there are no slugs or any other bugs. Using a simple spray of rubbing alcohol will kill whatever your plant may have. Check for ants. 99% of the time if you have ants it is because your plant needs to be repotted. The medium breaks down and ants make a nest inside.

Sterilize your tools first. Cut off leaves that may be old or spotted. Take flowers off if there are spots on them because it will affect the new flowers in bud. Cut it so it is visually nice, don't do it too close and catch the leaf by mistake. Take out any weeds; you don't want to spread them to someone else's orchid.

You can cut off some of the leaves if it helps to show the flowers better. Tidy things up and keep the leaves away from the flowers. Sometimes it just needs a little support. Accentuate the natural beauty. You want flowers facing the audience.

## FEBRUARY MEETING—AL SUGANO

Al Sugano was our guest speaker at the February general meeting. Al provided some great information on taking care of orchids and expanded on information he has provided in the learning centers and the general meetings last year. Below are the highlights and Al has encouraged us to follow-up with any questions in future learning centers and meetings!

Though there are many activities that promote the growth of orchids – like fertilizing or repotting -- it really is the practice you do most often to the plant that affects it the most. That is watering. We water so often it becomes mechanical without thinking. But all the things, like the medium, fertilizer, etc. depends on the water. If the medium is dry, the fertilizer just sits there rather than getting transferred to the plant. The practice of watering should be looked at before we do anything else.

We can grow all these orchids in the same medium (bark, perlite, sponge rock) and they would do ok. But because we want to learn how to expand and promote orchid growth, we should know the basics of the orchid needs and alter the media based on the needs. If we had to eat rice every day, some of us would be OK with that. Depending on our individual experiences and culture, some folks like Spanish rice or fried rice so we can tolerate it. Just like with the orchids if you only use bark, some of the orchids would enjoy it and some would not.

Al brought various orchids to explain the different watering needs of orchids. On [page 5](#) is a pictorial view of the moisture requirements for various orchid types. Rather than using a schedule (i.e. 3 times a week or once a week) for watering orchids, use the feel of how much water should be in a pot. Everyone has a different environment for growing orchids. It's different depending on where you live – how much rain, how much wind, etc.

### Questions:

**What kind of fertilizer should we use?** There are hundreds available with different dosages. There are sixteen elements that plants need to grow healthy. Three of these we don't need to worry about because the plant gets them from the air and water. The primary elements for plant growth is nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium. There are secondary, micronutrients, elements also like calcium. All the nutrients are important it is a matter of the concentration. An element chart that you may be familiar with from high school or college, shows each of these nutrients with either a minus or a plus. That indicates how the plant responds to the element. Nitrogen has a positive side. The plant responds to it quickly, almost like an electrical cord plugged into an outlet. Negative, like ammonia nitrate, the plant absorbs it but it is moving around in the pot and not attached. When you get fertilizer look at ingredient label. To promote roots and flowers, phosphorus is important. For a small plant like the Phalenopsis we are potting, nitrogen promotes the plant's structure.

**Do you really have to fertilize?** There was a lady in Oregon who had an orchid for 8 years and never fertilized it but it still grew and flowered. How is that? The plant was probably getting some fertilizer from the water. Water companies put out reports that show what is in the water. There are requirements for a certain level of contaminants. There are many elements/contaminants in the water which may be in the 13 critical elements that plants need.

Fertilizer attaches itself to the plant and takes in a charge and grows. When fertilizer is left with media for a long time you'll see white on the pot, usually on the base. All fertilizers are salt, when they are in a solution they are moving around and then they settle. When they dry, it becomes salt. Some plants are sensitive like Phalenopsis. Al doesn't use Nutricote because it is always releasing.

Instead fertilize with liquid solution and flush it. This gets most of the salt out so the plant can continue to grow. Al keeps the plants small in small pots because it is easier to flush out the salt rather than a larger plant in a large pot. That is his preference.

Continued on page 4.

Above Al is walking thru the moisture requirements of various types of orchids.

## FEBRUARY MEETING—AL SUGANO (CONT'D)

### What do we do about pests?

Look at insects at a hierarchy of control. Most damaging insect is thrips. It is hard to know you have thrips and you wake up one morning look at your orchid and they are silvery white. They are piranhas for orchids. Overnight they can take many plants. The bottom side or top of leaf the epidermis is gone. Thrips damage the epidermis layer and then suck the life out. You need to toss these plants out so it doesn't spread to your other orchids. To control thrips, you need to get an insecticide that is labeled for thrips specifically. Other insecticides won't work.

If a leaf is discolored, it is probably spider mites. Because spider mites are not insects, you need to make sure the products you are using specifically states it will take care of spider mites – a miticide. If you have an insecticide for aphids or other insects, it won't work to get rid of spider mites.

What insecticide you use is dependent on what problems you anticipate. Below are four insecticides Al reviewed at the meeting. These are available at Walmart or Home Depot.

Bayer Advanced Tree & Shrub Protect & Feed – Al was having trouble with hibiscus and gardenias looking sick. He couldn't keep up with the spraying. Al found this product. It is a granular so there is no spraying. You make a ring around the plant (it tells you how much to use) and in two weeks it was gone and it is still gone. It also takes care of scales. So after reading the label for smaller pots, Al put ½ tsp in all his Cattleyas and today he doesn't have any problems with scales. No spraying.

Bayer Advanced Insect Killer – This product is labeled for thrips, spider mites and the rest. Al likes to have 3-4 product options so the bugs don't get immune to any one option.

Bayer Advanced 3-in-1 Insect Disease & Mite Control – This is good for thrips and spider mites. It also takes care of black spots on the leaves.

Malathion Insect Spray Concentrate – This product you have to dilute and will last you a long time. The odor is almost pungent.



**What about the alcohol/409 mix for treating insects?** This is very effective and instantly kills the insects. But, you have to go back every 10 days or so and re-inspect. It is a very safe way but takes continual review. You need to make sure you are using the original 409 (green) in the mix.

**Do you trim roots?** There are two types of orchid. With the single stem the roots are underneath or are on

the inside, base of the stem. All the new roots will emerge on the outside. Remove old and you will have a cavity under the stem.

The multiple stem orchids, like Cattleya, are directional. The youngest are on the front. Al usually takes out the oldest ones in the back. Remove those roots because they will rot as you repot. Trim roots from back and the front is new and healthy. Sometimes it is more beneficial to put in a smaller pot and remove the older growth, rather than putting into a larger pot. You leave the bulbs because it does provide photosynthesis. They will not grow new roots. Keep 3 or more stems to promote healthy growth.

**What if you have too many roots for the pot?** This is a good problem! Look at the depth of your pot, trim the roots that are longer than the depth of the pot. Another option, is to take the plant and twirl around the pot and the roots will compact more into the pot. You don't want to remove too many roots especially for young plants like the Phalenopsis door prize today.

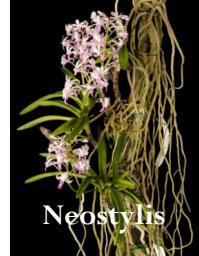
**How do we pot/plant the door prize Phalenopsis:** For something like this and all young plants, the best thing is to use the sphagnum moss (instead of bark which can be hard on a young plant). The length of the root is bigger than the pots we have and this is the exception where you don't want to trim because it is so new. You don't want to jam the roots in. Take plant, before you put in pot you wrap sphagnum around the root system. You want it fairly tight at this stage. When they are older you will want it looser so it doesn't hold too much water. You then put in pot. How long do leave it in this size pot? Wait until      Continued on page 6.

# Orchid Moisture Requirements—Key to Watering

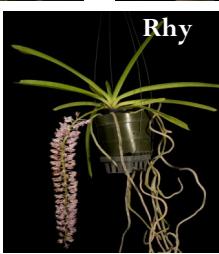
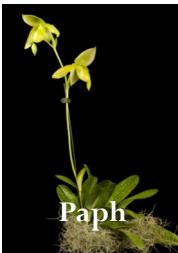
Water Abundantly when grown in hanging baskets or mounted



Schedule (dry out somewhat between watering)

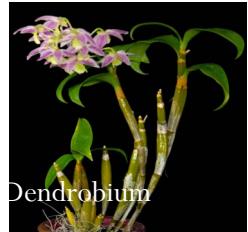
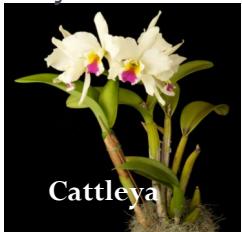


Keep Moist



Not pictured: Miltonia & Masd

Dry Out



Not pictured: Laelia

Note: Except for the first group the medium is based on bark and expanded sponge rock mix.

## GARDEN ISLAND ORCHID SOCIETY

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### FEBRUARY MEETING—AL SUGANO (CONT'D)

you get a new leaf (next year or this summer) and you'll get new roots. Leave in until roots start emerging out and move size of pot slowly, keep it confined. Keep sphagnum damp all the time. How do I water it? First time, get small bucket and fill with water, soak plant and let it sit for a few minutes. When watering from the top, you are not sure at this stage of development if it is getting enough water even when you see it running out of the bottom. So once you've done this, you'll get a feel for how heavy the pot is and you can monitor the moisture level based on how light the pot gets as the water is used up and then re-water. Fertilize is not critical at this time. You can use Nutricote or soluble fertilizer. Watering is important at this time. If you lose the roots of this plant, it won't recover.



Above left, Stella chooses which door prize plant she wants to repot and take home. Carol and Bobbie help members with the supplies for potting their plants. Above right, Evelyn Tsubakihara, Lorraine Kawane, Barbara Adair, MaryAnn Kusaka, Mildred Konishi, and Eugene Jimenez are potting their door prizes with the sphagnum moss provided. Al is demonstrating the proper way to pot.