



January, 2018 Newsletter

Also online at eaos.org

From the President's Desk

It was nice to see so many at the Hills Restaurant for such a lovely evening and delicious meal. Many of you were lucky to win the beautiful orchids and poinsettias.

Thanks to Joann and Helen for coordinating the event and taking care of all the details so we could sit back and relax and enjoy. Thanks, also, to Neal and Eunice for doing the raffle table.



I hope you noticed the large, beautiful real Christmas tree in the lobby. It was spectacular.

Can you imagine that December is almost gone and Christmas and New Years are almost here? Where did the time go?

It's time for dues and they are \$15 per household for the year. That is quite a great bargain. It helps to pay for our speakers, our hall rental, etc. Don't forget to bring your check to the January meeting to pay your dues.

Also in January we'll be having sign up sheets for our show which is March 2nd and 3rd, with set up on the 1st. We have many lists and many opportunities for you to help our club put on our great AOS show. Please volunteer for as many opportunities as you can. The more you do, the more you'll enjoy it and the better the show will be. If you are new to the club, this is a great way to meet and socialize with the other members and display your beautiful orchids. I know that Mary Commer is looking for someone to work with her in the kitchen and learn what she does. She helps feed the volunteers and the vendors during the show. We have lots of great cooks and we all eat very well. Mary will need to have you sign up for your famous dishes also.

Calendar

Meetings on the 2nd Monday of each month at Christ Lutheran Church, 701 N. Indiana Ave., 6:30 pm.

Jan. 5 – Setup for SOS show

Jan. 6&7 – Sarasota Show

Jan. 8 – Regular Meeting - Mickey Carnell, Speaker



EAOS officers and the Schattauers enjoy the annual holiday dinner.

This is your club and we want to have programs that you enjoy and can learn from. If you have any suggestions for speakers or programs, please let us know and we'll see what we can do to present them.

Our January show at Sarasota is January 5,6,7, 2018. Hopefully we'll have some beautiful plants blooming for the show. Be sure to register them with Ken Woodward. I am sure he'll have some information in the newsletter that you'll want to check out about the show. For the next three months we'll have shows and we'll need to take really good care of our orchids and keep them clean and staked and ready for the show.

Have a wonderful, Happy New Year to you all.

Mary Anne DiGrazia,

EAOS President

Sarasota Orchid Show

We need your blooming orchids for the Sarasota Orchid Show. Now is the time to prepare the orchids that you want to show. Remove dead leaves and old flower spikes. Make sure that the plants are free of insects. Clean the leaves. You'll be surprised at the ribbons you can win.

Register your blooming plants on Jan. 2nd and 3rd. Send the names of the plants you want to enter to orchids@eaos.org. List the full name of the orchid as shown on the label, the color(s) and the approximate size of the flower (emailing a picture would help). You can expect a return email either saying that the plants have been registered or asking for further information. Also see our PowerPoint presentation which you can find at <http://eaos.org/showprep1.pdf>.

Bring your registered plants to the Sarasota Auditorium at 10:30 am on Friday, Jan. 5. The show is on Jan. 6 & 7. Pick up your plants on Sunday Jan. 7 at 5 pm. If you cannot bring your orchids to Sarasota, let us know when you register and we will try to find transportation for them. Other shows will be: Feb. 2-4 in Venice and Mar. 1-3 in Englewood.

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Shooting Stars and Everlastings ~

By Ken Slump

Orchids Offer a Range of Flower Longevity

It is interesting to consider how long any flower should or could last if it is not cut from the plant. Certainly the stems, roots and foliage of most plants are much more durable than their flowers.

When you think of such temperate plants as the tulip, crabapple or rose, perhaps a week at peak bloom is all you can hope for. The range may be demonstrated by familiar examples, such as the daylily, with blossoms that last for only a day or so, to the strawflower, which produces flowers with vivid bracts that effectively retain their color indefinitely when dried.

It is probably safe to say that most of the orchids popular with hobbyists produce flowers that are at their most beautiful stage for a week or perhaps two. Yet orchid flowers show considerable diversity in floral life as well. A couple of orchid genera quickly come to mind when one considers flowers of particularly brief duration. Even though their flowers are fleeting, both enjoy popularity. The *Cattleya* alliance genus *Sobralia* is a prime example. There are about 100 species described. The plants are mostly terrestrial and are native to tropical regions in Central and South America. Many *Sobralia* species produce flowers that are large, showy and colorful, but flowers last just a day, though each inflorescence produces a succession of them.

Stanhopea is another genus of evanescent orchids. What they lack in floral longevity, however, is more than compensated by their floral intrigue. There are more than 50 species that range from Mexico to Brazil. They are epiphytic and most will thrive in intermediate conditions. Open wire baskets, lined with sphagnum, suit them best, as many inflorescences are produced basally and project downward.

The flowers of stanhopeas must be seen to be believed. They are among the most amazing of all orchids and defy description. Most last but a day or two, and many are fragrant. Nearly any of the species makes a worthy horticultural subject and every orchid grower should try at least one. For me, the bold coloration and large flowers of *Stanhopea tigrina* are hard to beat.

When it comes to floral longevity, few orchids can outperform contemporary phalaenopsis hybrids. I have enjoyed some for more than three months. That is not to imply that each flower lasts that long; however, from the time the first flowers open until the last of an inflorescence fades can easily span most of a season. Indeed, the human eye, which seems to thrive on fresh images, can begin to tire of such long-lasting flowers before they are spent.

The *Dendrobium* branch of the orchid family also includes some with durable blossoms. Interestingly, some of the longest lasting are the *Dendrobium bigibbum* (*Dendrobium phalaenopsis*) types from Section *Phalaenanthe*. The parent species are found in New Guinea and Australia and their flowers resemble small phalaenopsis blooms. Flower color varies from purple to pink and white. Horticulturally, they require bright light, warm conditions and a dry winter rest. Keep

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Contact us at: orchids@eaos.org



Members and their family and friends enjoy the holiday dinner at the Hills in Rotonda.

them tightly potted or grow them on slabs. Most of their inflorescences are beautiful for easily a month or more.

Another group of dendrobiums with long-lasting flowers is Section *Latouria*. This clan includes about 50 species ranging from the Philippines to Samoa, the majority of which are found in New Guinea. Many have closely spaced spindle- or club-shaped pseudobulbs with the foliage and flowers produced near their ends. The flowers of some of the larger-flowered species within this group tend to be nodding and they often have petals that are twisted. In recent years, selective breeding has produced considerable improvement in both flower form and carriage. Many of the hybrids are tolerant of a variety of conditions so long as the light is filtered and the plants are kept somewhat moist. Flowers are said to last six to 10 weeks or more on many of them. The hybrid *Dendrobium Roy Tokunaga* (*atroviolaceum* × *johnsoniae*) is a good example.

But it is not just genetics that makes a flower long lasting or not. Nutritional and environmental conditions affect floral longevity as well. Excessively hot and dry conditions will usually shorten flower life. Somewhat cooler, humid environments will generally encourage blossoms to last a few days longer.

A plant that is nutritionally deprived will often produce short-lived flowers, if it flowers at all. I do not grow many vandas because I tend to lack the time and dedication needed to provide the daily watering and regular fertilization that makes them thrive. My *V. Pachara Delight* was a gift a few years ago and seems to be a game little plant as it regularly produced a spray of five or six dark violet flowers that lasted about 10 days, despite my neglect. Last spring, I resolved to take better care of the plant and upped my commitment to its moisture and nutritional needs. The change was dramatic. The plant began to develop sturdier roots and more of them. Its last flowering produced an inflorescence of nine blossoms that were beautiful for about three weeks.

Perhaps someday, through botanical gene therapy, we can have a *Stanhopea* flower that lasts as long as a *phalaenopsis*. Until then, look after the environmental and nutritional needs of your orchids as well as you can, so that the flowers they produce will last as long as possible.

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Volunteer Opportunity

EAOS is still looking for someone with a trailer hitch to haul our trailer to Sarasota. Setup is at 10 am on Jan.5. We would need about an hour to unload. The trailer can be parked on site during the show. Then it would need to be picked up on Jan. 7 at 5 pm and returned to Englewood.