

# news

Volume 16.4 - September 2004

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Welcome back to Fall and all the various speakers, shows and events that we all look forward to as routine once more replaces summer holidays. As I write this, it is the 'dog days' of summer....sunny, hot and muggy. It is a time when our plants are growing and welcoming weather that may be close to their native climates.

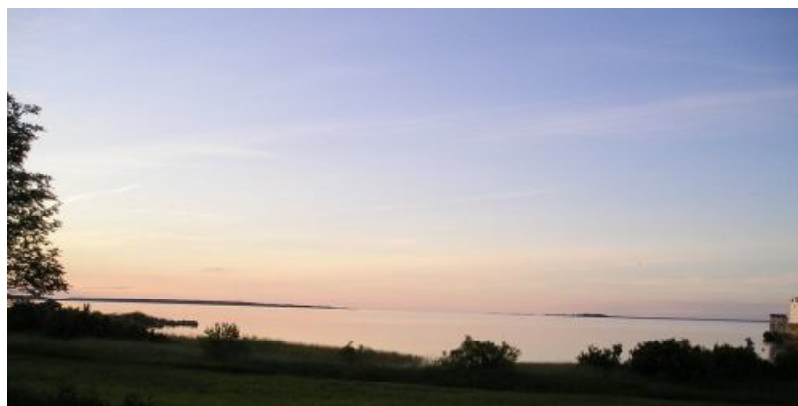
If your plants are outdoors, watch them for unwelcome visitors that will find their way into the pots and under the leaves. These are friends that you do not want to bring into your growing areas in a month's time. {A great solution for dealing with these unwanted visitors is Hydrogen Peroxide solution. It will kill the pests and destroy their eggs. If you have a heavy infestation several applications will be necessary. The full recipe is here in the newsletter, so do read on.}

To the presidents of the member societies, please discuss with your members this fall the new COC by-laws and let me know, through the individual you chose to assist the COC executive with by-law changes, your recommendations to make the COC Constitution and By-laws fit us well.

I'll look forward to hearing from you. In the meantime, enjoy this time, and prepare your fall and winter bloomers for their best bloom ever.

*Margaret E. Blewett*

*Midnight at  
Hiiumaa, Estonia*



# The Notice Board

## Slide Programs

**Cattleyas** - by Ken Girard.

**Oncidiums** - by Gordon Heaps.

**Fragrant Orchids** by Marilyn Light.

**Hardy Orchids and Their Culture** by Bill Bischoff

**Phragmipediums** by Ingrid Ostrander

**Lycastes** by Ingrid Ostrander

More information on the programs is available on the COC website.

**Note:** When reserving a program, please include **two** (2) cheques, one cheque for \$10.00 to cover the cost of shipping and insurance, and another cheque for \$25.00. The cheque for \$25.00 will be required as a deposit and will be returned as soon as the program is returned. Please include in your request the date of the meeting for which you want the slide program. Cheques are to be made payable to "The Canadian Orchid Congress".

The slide programs may be ordered from:

Janette Richardson  
38 Straub Crescent,  
Regina, Sask., S4T 6S6

Phone: 306-543-0560

Email: dale.richardson@sk.sympatico.ca



*Dactylorhiza  
ochroleuca*

## COC Group Insurance

A reminder that group insurance will be available to any society in good standing. This insurance will come into effect on September 1, 2004.

At the AGM it was voted on and passed by the delegates that this insurance would be tried for one year. The premiums to the societies would be no more than \$2.00 per member per year, any shortfall would be covered by the COC for the first year. If all societies take part in this insurance the fees to the societies would be much less. The coverage is:

- 1) \$2,000,000.00 Liability insurance
- 2) \$1,000,000.00 Directors and Officers errors and omissions liability.
- 3) \$1,000,000.00 diminishing coverage of any harm caused by the society.

There is also coverage available for books and society equipment. The cost for this would be to the society. The society would have to submit a value and then the insurer would then quote a cost.

Any society interested should contact:

Janette Richardson,  
38 Straub Crescent, Regina, Sask. S4T 6S6.

Telephone:(306)543-0560.

Email:dale.richardson@sasktel.net

## Orchid Show Dates

Is your orchid show listed on the back page? If not, email me the information - *Jerry Bolce*

## Canadian Orchid Vendors

The COC maintains a list of Canadian orchid vendors on its website as a service to vendors and those of us looking for yet another orchid deal. But I need some help. Can you please check the list for orchid vendors in your area and email me with the details for vendors that I dont have or let me know if a vendor has gone out of business. A reference to the vendors that attended your last show would be of use.

- *Jerry Bolce*

# International Orchid Workshop

Haapsalu, Estonia, June 27-July 2, 2004

[**button** refers to a color image that can be viewed on the website - Ed]

Those of us who work with orchid populations get together every few years to present our findings and to discuss future projects. During these meetings, we learn about the local customs, experience cultural activities, and also see the local flora and fauna. The experiences are as varied as they are rich and the people we meet as interesting as the many orchids we see growing locally. What is particularly worthwhile is the mixing of students and experienced observers.

Previously, workshops have been held in the Netherlands and in the Czech Republic. The 2004 event, hosted by the Institute of Zoology and Botany, Estonian Agricultural University and the Estonian Orchid Protection Club, was held in Estonia, a new member of the European Union which is located along the southern coast of the Baltic Sea.

Some facts about Estonia and conservation.

Estonia is a small country located between 57 and 59 degrees North which provides long summer days and long winter nights. Despite its northerly latitude, Estonia's location near the Baltic Sea and its proximity to the Atlantic Ocean, moderate the winter temperatures (-5C). Winters are not particularly snowy either with an estimated 10 cm snow cover forecast from late December through early March.

About 50% of Estonia is forested with both deciduous and coniferous trees. Scot's Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) is the most common tree.

About 10% of Estonia is a nature reserve, primarily along the coast and on the several large islands in the Baltic Sea.

About 40% of the forest is open to the public. Plank walkways have been established across bogs (mires).

Much of Estonia was flooded during and after the last Ice Age and is still rising at an annual rate of 2.5 mm. Much of this formerly flooded area is flat with shallow soil over limestone bedrock.

Over 1/5 of the country is covered by wetlands.

Glacier erratics, huge boulders carried from distant lands during the last Ice Age, are especially protected on the island of Hiiumaa where many are linked to legend and folklore. We saw 'the farm labourer's breadboard' Teomeeste leivalaud, at the roadside .

Estonian flora has been influenced by human activity. Woodland meadows have evolved after centuries of mowing and grazing between scattered deciduous trees.

The Estonian coastline forms an important part of the route chosen by migrating birds.

The meeting was held in Haapsalu <http://haapsalu.ee/> in a very comfortable hotel, Hotel Promenaadi, <http://haapsalu.ee/> located on a narrow peninsula. The sea was calm - there is virtually no tide - and because of the isolated location, it was very quiet. Only the black-headed gulls and other birds broke the silence. To the right of the dining area was a picturesque view of the old town capped with church towers.**button**

Investigators from 17 countries including many European nations as well as Australia, Canada, Reunion (France), the USA and Russia shared studies on germination, pollination biology and evolution, population dynamics, management, taxonomy and conservation. Additionally there were posters, and special presentations on wooded meadows and alvars, two of the types of orchid habitat that we would visit during the workshop. Alvars are places where the soil is thin over pavement limestone. These places can be open or wooded but are often wet after rain because of the poor drainage conditions. Rich plant communities composed of 70 or more species per square meter are found in the wooded meadow reserves. The days were packed with activity and the evenings filled with discussion of new ideas.

There were presentations on both terrestrial and epiphytic orchids. Several discussions focused on *Lepanthes* sp. and one on *Aspasia principissa*. Deceptive strategies to attract pollinators was discussed for *Calyso bulbosa*, *Serapias vomeracea*, *Dactylorhiza sambucina* and *Traunsteinera globosa*. One interesting presentation dealt with the unusual mycorrhizal symbionts recently discovered in the roots of some European orchids. Abstracts of all presentations can be found at <http://www.zbi.ee/Est2004>

The workshop ended with a chance to hear Estonian music and song as well as to participate in a line dance. Estonians have a tradition of choral singing.

Those who chose the optional post-conference trip were in for a treat. We travelled by ferry, a two-hour trip, from Haapsalu to Heltermaa, a port on the large island of Hiiuamaa <http://www.bka.hiiloodus.ee/eng.html> The trip was by a large ferry which had a huge capacity for buses, trucks and cars. **button**

The modern hotel located beside the port was perfect as was the weather. We visited landscape reserves especially rich in orchid species as well as a range of other flowering plants.

The long day was broken by a pleasant visit to a farm museum where we ate al fresco and shared a mug of delicious homemade beer. The Soera Farm Museum provides an insight into life in 19th century Hiiuamaa. The main house has a rush (*Phragmites*) roof. Out buildings include an ice house and smoke sauna. **button**

We were shown how the women kept home and hearth together while the men were at sea. Visit this site for more views of the museum. **button**

Among the many plants seen during the field trips were:

*Cypripedium calceolus* growing in a forest glade **button**

The rare and shocking pink-flowered *Cephalanthera rubra* can be found in lightly forested alvars, places where the soil is shallow and the drainage poor. We were fortunate to see a group of blooming plants as large numbers are seldom seen. **button** The *Cephalanthera* was growing with other orchids including *Dactylorhiza incarnata*. **button**

Common yet sometimes confusing *Dactylorhiza incarnata* in its many forms and sub-species was seen at almost every site visited. **button** Some flowers had a yellowish throat patch. **button** Others had a whitish background and still others had variable markings. **button**

*Dactylorhiza ochroleuca* was sometimes seen in wet areas. **button**

Limestone-loving *Epipactis atrorubens* was not yet in flower but was abundant in the Sarve landscape reserve where the limestone forms a shingle beach. Here, orchids were growing happily within a stone's throw of the seashore. The plants are very dark reddish green and can be seen in the lower left to center of the picture. **button**

I was delighted to find a group of *Platanthera chlorantha*, *Epipactis atrorubens*, *Ophrys insectifera* and *Listera ovata* grow-

ing and blooming happily within meters of the Baltic shore! It was the *Platantheras* which first attracted my eye. You can see the beach in the background! **button**

As I approached for a closer look, I first saw that the plants had fruited previously. **button**

Then I spied *Ophrys insectifera* just behind and almost hidden in the bushes. This delicate orchid depends upon management which keeps scrub growth under control. **button** These were certainly intriguing blooms. **button**

*Epipactis palustris* was locally common, even growing by the road edge in one location. This orchid grows clonally, forming large patches. **button**

We occasionally would see the very elegant *Gymnadenia conopsea*. **button**

There were some surprises (for me) such as the incredibly tiny, 6 cm tall, *Herminium monorchis* which I had expected to be much taller. **button**

In a spring-fed fen, we discovered *Liparis loeselii*. This orchid has been disappearing in Europe and deserves special protection. **button**

Most exciting (for me) was seeing the Bird's Nest Orchid, *Neottia nidus-avis*, which is an achlorophyllous mycoheterotroph. It was growing beneath a rocky outcrop on a steep forest slope and was surrounded by the leaves of *Hepatica nobilis*. **button**

The Military Orchid, *Orchis militaris*, was found occasionally. **button**

*Platanthera bifolia* was challenging to distinguish from *P. chlorantha*. One has to examine the flowers closely. **button**

Last but not least, we saw two plants of the Burnt Orchid, *Neotinea ustulata* but they were only in bud. Until recently, this orchid was known as *Orchis ustulata*. The name 'Burnt' refers to the dark inflorescence tip. **button**

And now we are home or back in the office or field, inspired by the work of others, tantalized by new discoveries and enriched by new friendships and ideas. Special thanks are due Drs. Tiiu Kull and Kadri Tali for organizing this event. These meetings are conservation in action. Making wise use of knowledge is vital to conservation of species and their habitats. If the feeling in this meeting is a good measure, our orchids and their future are in good

and capable hands.

The following picture was taken near midnight at 1/400 sec exposure which gives us a good idea of the amount of light still visible at this hour in mid-summer. Henry David Thoreau wrote a most fitting epilogue to this Estonian experience. "And then the sun goes down, and long the afterglow gives light. And then the damask curtains glow along the western window. And now the first star is lit, and I go home." **button**

*Copyright Marilyn H. S. Light Adapted from a presentation made to www.orchidsafari.org on July 14, 2004.*

## Orchid's Names – another Little Essay

To the beginning orchid grower, the caring for the plants is of greatest importance. After a while, most people realize that our beloved orchids are just plants. Most of us have dealt with regular plants before: from the stately firs and friendly apple trees to the lowly dandelion and crab-grass. Their names are familiar and are not considered to be tongue twisters.

On the other hand, most orchids do not come with popular (in our case: English) names – we only know them by their scientific names. These happen to be in classic Greek, sometimes Latin or other languages and that is where starts the tongue-twisting and the trouble with getting these names right.

Oh yes, we do call them "Lady-Slippers" and "Pansy Orchids" or "Dancing Ladies" and so on, but the majority of even our most popular orchids have only their binominal Latin names as starters; attached to these are other names in many modern languages and I will not go into these.

I just want to make it a little clearer why some of these unusual names exist. There are a number of books and articles which deal with this same subject. Here are just a few to whet your appetites so you can look for others and get the meaning of these funny words.

There are, of course, a good many orchid names that are names of persons, for instance:

Brassavola - after Antonio Musa Brassavola, an Italian nobleman and scientist

Brassia – after William Brass, a collector who worked for Sir Josef Banks

Cattleya - after William Cattley who flowered the first C.

labiata in England

Masdevallia – after Dr. Jose Masdevall, a Spanish physician

Miltonia – after the Earl Fitzwilliam, Viscount Milton

Other words try to be descriptive of the flower (or plant): The majority of these orchid names come from Greek words; as a matter of fact, the very word "Orchis" is the Greek word for testicle, interpreting the shape of the orchis root.

Arachnis comes from the word for spider: arachne.

Coelogyne comes from the two words: koilos (hollow) and gyne (female, indicating a deeply set stigma).

Coryanthes is the combination of korys (helmet) and anthos (flower).

Cymbidium refers to the kymbes (boat-like shape) of the lip.

Dendrobium comes from dendron (tree) and bios (life), indicating the fact that the plants live on trees.

Encyclia comes from enkyklein (to encircle), describing the way the side-lobes of the lip grow around the column.

Epidendrum has a similar meaning as Dendrobium; epi (upon) and dendron (tree).

Oncidium tells us that there is a noticeable swelling or wart (onkos) on the lip.

Paphiopedilum and Cypripedium are both genera of the Lady's or Venus' Slipper group; Paphos is a city on Crete and had a famous temple dedicated to Venus, and the whole island of Cyprus was also dedicated to this goddess; pedilum translates into 'slipper'.

Phalaenopsis is from phalaina (moth) and opsis (appearance), describing the fact that the first collector of this genus saw a group of these flowers at a distance and thought they were a group of moths hovering over some plant.

Psychopsis is from psyche (butterfly) and opsis (appearance) = looks like a butterfly.

Angraecum come from the Malaysian word angurek, meaning epiphytic plant

Bifrenaria comes from the Latin bi- (two) and frenum (strap), referring to the two strap-like structures that join the pollinia to the viscidium; this is what makes Bifrenaria different from Maxillaria.

Vanda is a borrowed Sanskrit name.

So now you have a start. Try to find more translation of these strange names and thus become more familiar with them – you may even be able to pronounce a few of these impressive tongue twisters.

Have fun!

*Ingrid Schmidt-Ostrander*

# North American Region - Orchid Specialist Group Meeting

Monday, May 17, 2004 1900-2100  
Activities Center Conference Room, Marie Selby Garden  
Sarasota, Florida

The inaugural meeting of the North American Regional Orchid Specialist Group (NAROSG) was held on May 17, 2004 during the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Orchid Conservation Conference held at the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, Sarasota, Florida. Eleven members and 13 observers participated in a lively discussion of conservation and group activities. Pati Vitt served as secretary for the meeting. Items added to the circulated agenda included the Orchid Specialist Group website [http://go.to/orchid\\_specialist\\_group](http://go.to/orchid_specialist_group) and the In-Situ Group.

Chair, Marilyn Light, provided an overview of NAROSG including the role, action planning and flagship taxa, commenting that long term studies have been reported for less than 50% of North American orchid taxa. There is also a communication gap between researchers and conservation managers. The NAROSG offers to compose letters supporting grant proposals. The OSG can also help with proposal review.

Philip Cribb, Chair of the Orchid Specialist Group, reported that the Orchid Conservation News is now available on-line with links to published literature. Literature pertaining to orchid conservation remains scattered and much is not getting into management plans. Pati Vitt suggested that we explore the possibility of establishing a searchable bibliography on-line and offered to look into an IMLS (Institute of Museum and Library Services) grant. <http://www.imls.gov/grants/> Marketing of the conservation message was discussed and the possibility of using the three selected flagship taxa for the North American Region. We should get the flagship profiles on-line where students and teachers would have access to the information. The possibility of using these species for fund-raising was also considered. Ron Coleman agreed to workup *Epipactis gigantea* using a model prepared by Ken Roberts for *Dendrophylax lindenii*. Marilyn Light has the information for *Cypripedium reginae*. The material will be submitted to the OSG webmaster.

A motion to thank the organizers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> IOCC for an excellent effort on behalf of orchid conservation was made and carried.

Discussion of the NAROSG and its membership was raised. While the Group is not an orchid society, close contact with appropriate native orchid groups such as the Native Orchid Conference Inc. is to be encouraged. David McAdoo, President of the Native Orchid Conference Inc, spoke about his group. Ken Cameron volunteered to act as liaison between them and NAROSG.

Red Listing is politically useful although somewhat cumbersome conservation tool that is independent of Federal listing. Training is available and could be arranged. Only 23 species are presently listed worldwide and none for North America. The Nature Conservancy (Nature Serve) has their own listing but for NAROSG purposes, species should be evaluated using IUCN criteria. An effort will be made to seek listing for North American taxa meeting the global selection criteria.

Philip Cribb expressed his thanks to Marilyn Light for chairing the meeting and she reciprocated. The next Orchid Specialist Group meeting will be held in conjunction with the World Orchid Conference in Dijon, France, March 2005.

The meeting was adjourned.

*Marilyn Light*



*Dactylorhiza incarnata*

# Hydrogen Peroxide Solutions for Orchids

Now that the cool weather is here we will be moving our prized orchids inside and along with them will come unwanted pests. I have found a hydrogen peroxide solution that works well in killing the pests and their eggs, although for a heavy infestation several applications may be necessary. First, I'll explain briefly what hydrogen peroxide is and why it kills bugs and their eggs on your orchids.

A water molecule is  $H_2O$  – two hydrogen atoms bonded to one oxygen atom. This molecule is in a very stable. A hydrogen peroxide molecule is  $H_2O_2$  – it has an extra oxygen atom (hence  $O_2$ ) that is very weakly attached. At the first opportunity this atom will jump free and react with (oxidize) any organic material that it contacts. In short hydrogen peroxide is a powerful oxidant which will react with anything organic to form carbon dioxide ( $CO_2$ ) and water. In our application, the organic matter that it oxidizes is the pests and eggs on the orchids.

Hydrogen peroxide is very expensive because it is difficult to manufacture (a 35% concentration is \$25 a litre). It is produced commercially by passing electricity through sulphuric acid, which leaves a weak solution of  $H_2O_2$  that is then distilled to increase the concentration.

$H_2O_2$  comes in several strengths:

- 3% solution sold in drugstores - on a cut it fizzes and oxidizes germs and organic blood cells;
- 20% solution used as a hair bleach product; and
- 35% food grade solution sold in some hydroponic stores. - full strength, from the bottle, will burn the skin

$H_2O_2$  in a concentration of 5 or 10% can be used several ways on your orchids or houseplants.

To create a 5% solution:

To 1 litre of water add:

30 ml concentrated 35%  $H_2O_2$

20 ml alcohol;

2 ml detergent (acts as a wetting agent)

- a. The 5% solution fizzes any insect eggs and destroys most insects upon contact yet is harmless to plants and skin. I have found it effective as a spray for an infected plant.
- b. The second great use is to add a 5% solution to your fertilizing mixture. Plant roots can easily handle this strength and it immediately attacks root bugs and bacteria

while releasing oxygen to the roots as it reverts back to water.

c. A 10%  $H_2O_2$  solution is a fantastic disinfectant for the greenhouse and will also end up as straight water.

In summary,  $H_2O_2$  can be used to eliminate pests and their eggs, disinfect a greenhouse or as a preventative measure. (submitted by Doug Hart-reprinted from prev. newsletter)

## Foundation for Orchid Research and Conservation

As a result of the hard work and great effort put in by a large number of people, the 16<sup>th</sup> World Orchid Conference which was held in Vancouver, BC in 1999, actually came out ahead and made a profit. The WOC organizing committee has met a number of times over the past couple of years to decide what to do with this money.

The committee recommended to the Vancouver Orchid Society (the Host Society for the WOC) who agreed to the proposal, that a separate foundation be established to manage the money. Thus, the Foundation for Orchid Research and Conservation has been formed.

The Foundation has been registered as a 'not for profit' organization with the BC government and has recently been granted charitable donation status by the Federal government, allowing us to issue tax receipts. The proceeds from the WOC are to be invested and the interest accrued will be used to fund orchid research and conservation projects.

To that intent, an agreement has been made with the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) whereby the Foundation will be offering initially, a yearly supplement to a person holding an NSERC postgraduate scholarship involved in orchid research of any type ([http://www.nserc.ca/sf\\_e.asp?nav=sfnv&lbi=orchid](http://www.nserc.ca/sf_e.asp?nav=sfnv&lbi=orchid)). NSERC will do the initial vetting of any proposals and pass on to the Foundation any proposals they think fulfill the aims of the Foundation.

The Foundation is in the process of getting up and running and will be holding a meeting at the end of May to elect the Officers of the Foundation and to establish other committees etc as required. More information on this meeting will be provided in the next newsletter.

*Mark Elliott, COC Education Chair*

# COMING EVENTS

2004

**Sept 25-26:** Central Ontario Orchid Society, NEW LOCATION:  
Cambridge Hespeler Arena, 640 Ellis Road, Cambridge  
<http://www.coos.ca/>

**Oct 2-3:** The Foothills Orchid Society (Calgary, Alberta) At Winston Heights Mountview Community Center, 520-27th Avenue NE, Calgary, Alberta. Contact Lynn Kasper at phone number: 403-208-2285, or e-mail: LynnK@cnrl.com or kasper.lynn@home.com  
"http://members.shaw.ca/foothillsorchidsociety/"

**Oct 23-24:** Eastern Canada Orchid Society at the Days Inn Hotel in Downtown Montreal "http://www.ecosorchids.ca/"

**Nov 13-14:** Niagara Region OS, CAW Hall 124 Bunting Rd, St. Catharines, Ont Contact: Tom Cunningham, Show Chairperson  
Email: tessiercunningham@cogeco.ca, Phone: 905-934-8289,

2005

**Feb 6-7:** The Southern Ontario Orchid Society, NEW LOCATION: at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre.  
"http://www.soos.ca/"

**Mar 11-20:** 18th World Orchid Conference in the town centre of Dijon, France "http://www.woc2005.org/"

**March 12-13:** London Orchid Society Orchid Show, The Ukrainian Club, Gore Road, London, ON "http://los.lon.imag.net/"

**March 18-20:** The Manitoba Orchid Society.  
"http://www.manitobaorchidsociety.ca/default.htm"

**April 7-10:** The Regina Orchid Society annual show and sale at the Core Ritchie Community Centre, 445 14th Avenue, Regina. Contact Charles Eisbrenner, email: reginaorchidsociety@sasktel.net

**April 15-17:** Central Vancouver Island Orchid Society at Country Club Center, Nanaimo, BC. Contact: Sue Christenson, email: CVIOS@shaw.ca  
"http://members.shaw.ca/CVIOS/CVIOS/"

**April 16-17:** Kingston Orchid Society at Portsmouth Olympic Harbour. For further information email: kos@cogeco.ca  
"http://home.cogeco.ca/~kos/index.htm"

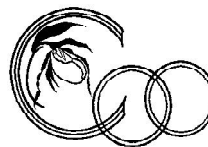
**Oct 1-2:** The Foothills Orchid Society, Calgary, Alberta, will be hosting this year's COC Annual Meeting in conjunction with its annual show. "http://members.shaw.ca/foothillsorchidsociety/"  
<http://members.shaw.ca/coc2005>

**Nov 12-13:** Niagara Region OS, CAW Hall 124 Bunting Rd, St. Catharines, Ont Contact: Tom Cunningham, Show Chairperson  
Email: tessiercunningham@cogeco.ca Phone: 905-934-8289

**COC Web Site - <http://www.CanadianOrchidCongress.ca/>**

**This newsletter may be found there.**

**Please send in your show information - date, location, contact, etc.**



news

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Editor: Jerry Bolce

The purpose of COC news is to inform members of the meetings, policies of the COC, to profile members, and to provide technical information regarding happenings, trends and techniques in orchid cultivation across the country and around the world.

We welcome your suggestions and contributions. Deadline for each issue is one month before the issue dates previously announced.

Recipients of this newsletter are strongly urged to pass a copy on to other members of their society

## Officers of the Canadian Orchid Congress

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