

New Mexico Orchid Guild Newsletter

November 2008

Volume 7 Issue 11 Paph druryi 'Truford'

Next Meeting:

- November 2nd 1:30 pm
- Scheduled Program: Speaker Fred Clark on *Catasetums*, *Cynoches* and *Mormodes*
- Location: **The Bureau of Land Management**
435 Montano NW
It's almost a mile west of Interstate 25 (take the Montgomery/Montano exit). Go past Bob Turner's Ford Country but not past the Sonic Drive-In. Turn at the Sonic, one block east of Edith, and you'll see a dark brick building on the north side of the street. The conference room is straight ahead once you enter.
- As always there is a potluck with a plethora of wonderful food.

NMOG offers its members the opportunity to learn about orchids each month!

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Fred Clarke
Sunset Valley Orchids

"New Hybrids with *Catasetum*, *Cynoches* and *Mormodes*"

Catasetum, *Cynoches* and *Mormodes* are three related genera from the Tribe Cymbidieae. Individually, each has been considered an orchid oddity, or "botanical", of interest mainly to the seriously addicted enthusiast. These plants have a brief deciduous period in winter, when the plants need a definite dry rest period bordering on neglect. These robust orchids are native to lowland tropical forests in Central and South America and are usually grown in warm or intermediate conditions.

Commercially, *Catasetum*, *Cynoches* (or 'Swan' orchids) and *Mormodes* (or 'Goblin' orchids) have occupied a small market niche on the edge of a sea of *Cymbidiums*, *Cattleyas*, *Phalaenopsis*, *Dendrobiums*, *Epidendrums*, and so on. Until recently, they have not attracted much attention from hybridizers, but in the past several years some spectacular hybrids have been produced, receiving great acclaim and an increasingly large collection of awards from the American Orchid Society.

This talk will feature a widescreen computer slide show on some of the new hybrids and breakthroughs in the hybridization of *Catasetum*, *Cynoches* and *Mormodes*. The presenter will be Fred Clarke of Sunset Valley Orchids in Vista.

Fred Clarke has been growing orchids for 30 years and has been hybridizing for 20 of those years. With over 23 years as a professional grower and manager in the horticultural industry, Fred applies these skills at his orchid nursery; Sunset Valley Orchids, located in San Diego, California.

He is a passionate orchid grower whose curiosity in orchids is broad and varied. Although developing *Cattleya* hybrids has been his sustaining interest, he is also actively creating new *Bulbophyllum* and *Paphiopedilum* hybrids plus some others to be named if they work out!

His pioneering work in *Catasetum* intergeneric hybrids led to the development of several notable hybrids, most recently the grex, *Fredclareara After Dark*, which produced "the **blackest** flower ever witnessed". This grex has received five FCC's and three AM's on the first flowers shown for judging!

Fred is an Accredited Judge in the Pacific South Judging Region. His plants have received hundreds of quality awards from the American Orchid Society.

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CATEASETUM, CYCNOCHES AND MORMODES

When an orchid grower begins to become familiar with the more common varieties of orchids, the temptation arises to venture off the beaten path into more exotic and adventurous types. These are groups of genera that are less often seen in the general trade and well worth searching out.

Catasetum is fairly distributed genus of the American tropics, ranging from Mexico to Peru. The plants themselves are among the most handsome of all orchids, with robust cigar-shaped pseudobulbs and broad, thin, soft, green leaves that fall during the dormant period. Many are unisexual, bearing separate male and female flowers that are highly distinct, one from another. These are the “true” catasetums. The best known and most widely grown of these is the *Catasetum pileatum*, the former national flower of Venezuela. While this group is often unisexual, “perfect” or hermaphroditic flowers can be seen as well. The difference between male and female flowers, coupled with their being borne on separate inflorescences and at different times or season, has led to a great deal of confusion in the taxonomy of this group. Add in the facts that the female flowers are often very similar between species and the male flowers different; it is easy to see why early taxonomists had trouble. Catasetums exhibit the seasonal growth typical of deciduous orchids, with rapid growth during the warm, moist months in their habitat and a decided rest with the maturation of the pseudobulbs. For this reason, it is important that the plants be grown in a fast-draining but water retentive medium, to allow the frequent watering and abundant fertilizer necessary to form their often large groups. Many form pendant inflorescences that hanging baskets are indicated which in turn allows the flower stems to emerge cleanly and easily as well as increasing air circulation and rapid drying that the plants enjoy.

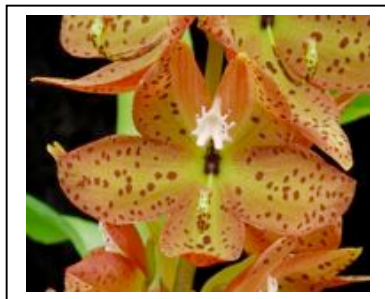
Long known as swan orchids, *Cycnoches* is a very easy to grow group of orchids with a very similar culture. *Cycnoches barthiorum*, from Columbia, was first described some time ago but was lost to cultivation. The species name honors one of the pioneers of Columbian orchids, Hans Barth, whose family is still in the orchids business in Columbia. The habitat was rediscovered in the mid-1990’s, leading to a proliferation of plants available for trade. The often quite large, up to 18 inches or more, pseudobulbs have attractive thin leaves that are deciduous. Flower stems are borne from near the apex of the pseudobulbs and may be erect, arching or pendulous. As with true catasetums, the flowers are unisexual and strikingly dimorphic (having 2 different forms), male and female flowers seemingly not belonging to the same species. *Cycnoches* blooms are always nonresupinate, or “upside down”, with the lip displayed uppermost. This results from the flower stems revolving through an entire 360-degree twist, unlike the 180-degree twist most orchids use to put the lip lowermost. The floral display is often quite long lasting, several weeks or more.

Mormodes, the goblin orchids, are among the most weirdly beautiful of all flowers. The intricate blooms, in Halloween colors with haunting, often medicinal, perfumes, have a dedicated following among orchid collectors. Easily grown in conditions that suit their relatives, the heavy substance blooms are borne from bare pseudobulbs in late winter into spring, before new growth commences. In nature, both *Mormodes* and *Catasetum* plants are often found in what would appear to be very marginal habitats including on old fence posts and telephone poles. Their rapid seasonal growth and deciduous nature helps them to survive difficult conditions. As with the *Catasetum*, the leaves of *Mormodes* are very susceptible to spider mites, which can mar and disfigure the otherwise attractive foliage.

As a genus of more limited consumer appeal, many plants in cultivation continue to be wild collected, since seed propagation, though more desirable, is often not practical for commercial nurseries. Since wild-collected plants are the norm, new species are continually appearing in collections. Please note that information in the former sentence is 3 years old



Catasetum fimbriatum



Cycnoches barthiorum



Mormodes frymewrei



ORCHID RECORDKEEPING - THE ORCHID JOURNAL

By Susan Taylor, Belllaonline.com

If you are like most orchid enthusiasts, one orchid is not enough. And as you succumb to the orchid bug, you will find that you have enough plants to need some kind of system to keep track of them. One option to consider is a paper orchid journal. There are several available, but the one I have used and recommend is Orchid Journal. I used this personally when I first started growing orchids and recommend it. Not only is it useful, but it comes in a purple three-ring binder with lavender pages—just the thing for orchid enthusiasts!!

Since orchids grow slowly, it's sometimes really hard to stay enthusiastic about the plants when it seems they are not doing anything. An orchid journal and a monthly check of your plants will help keep your interest as well as provide you a regular health checkup of your plants. Look at each plant for number of pseudobulbs, new growths, sheaths or spikes, and measure new growth. It's amazing how much an orchid can grow in a month! Some of my Dendrobiums will grow four inches in a month.

The pages in the Orchid Journal give you a place to put a picture of the plant—either one you take yourself or from the catalog, or from a picture found on the web. There is a spot for bloom information, from whom you purchased it and space to make notes. I note repotting, staking, problems, bugs, etc. here so I can follow up. This instills some discipline in checking up on problems that is critical to keep problems from recurring and/or passing problems on to others.

Another reason to keep track of your orchids is that with a number of plants, it's hard to remember when the plant flowered, whether it's supposed to flower more than once a year, and exactly what it looked like. The journal takes care of all these details for you and allows you to enjoy your collection more. Looking back at the notes can be very satisfying when you realize that last year at the same time the plant had only 2 blooms and this year with all your good care it's putting out two spikes with 4 blooms each. You will also be able to note how long that plant flowered for you so that you will be able to plan for it next time.

DEADLINES FOR UPCOMING EVENTS

1. Preorder orchids by Friday Oct 31st from Fred Clarke with a 10% discount for upcoming talk on Sunday November 2. The phone number for Sunset Valley Orchids is **760-639-6255**.

Fred's email address is: fred.clarke@worldnet.att.net

2. Dinner reception for Fred Clark on November 1st at Trombino's Italian Bistro, located at 5415 Academy NE starting at 6:30pm. Steve needs to know if you will be attending no later than Oct 30th either by email or phone.

343-0852

robinson@nmia.com

3. Holiday Luncheon on December 7th at the Savoy, located at 10601 Montgomery NE starting at 11:30am. Your completed form and money need to be in Joanne's hands by Friday November 21st.

Joanne Bodin

5519 Amigo Way NE

Albuquerque NM 87111

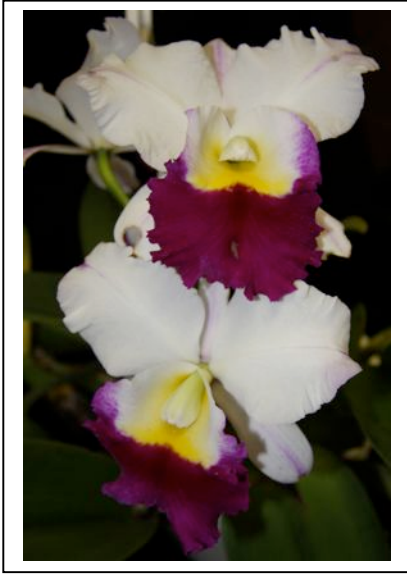
Cost is 27.00/person. Orchid plants are 15.00 each.

NEW WEB SITE

Vickie Haskins is hoping by the first of November, NMOG will have a new website. She needs content. She need photos. Please email anything you have. We can have beautiful orchid slide shows. Orchid links to other sites. Video or slide shows about our former shows. A special member area for posting current news and newsletters. We can have anything we can think about. Input is welcome. Suggestions about what you would like to have on the website are welcome even if you don't have the content. If you have a CD with photos that are more convenient than email, get it to Vickie. The new website is nmog.abqwebdev.com. Vickie's email address vickiehaskins@mac.com

AN INTERESTING FACT

Catasetum and Cycnoches can actually throw their pollina up to 10 feet from the plant in the hopes of catching the back of a bee that is rummaging around in the flower.



Blc. Memoria Anna Balmores 'convex'
Owner: Walter Prahl Div I
Photographer: Vicki Ventura

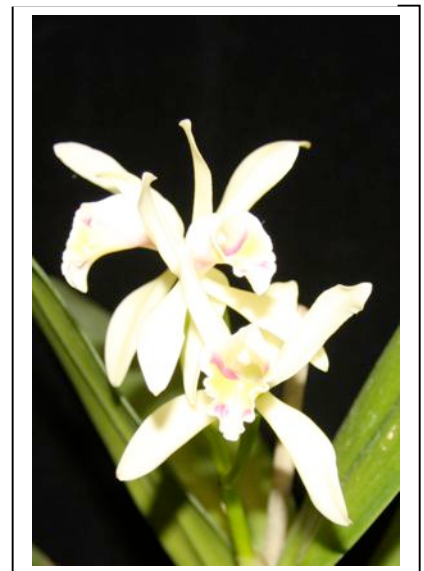
C. labiata
Owner: Walter Prahl Div I
Photographer: Vicki Ventura



Cattleya labiata arrived in England in early 1818 as packing material from higher interest orchids originating in the Organ Mountains of Brazil in a box to Wm Swainson, an avid collector. He then sent the box to Wm Cattleya who found the packing material of more interest than the original orchids. The flower stunned Swainson, who was able to get a packing plant to bloom. The site was not recorded so it took 20 years before more native plants were found, whereby collectors decimated the native habitat. It has been also given the epitat, *autumnalis* or autumn flower to distinguish it from its cousins who flower at different times. *C. labiata* was the first flower to be line-bred to improve the quality of its flowers and its productivity for cut flower uses. The flower segments are of a clear lavender-pink, margins are ruffled and its lip is lavender-pink with a deeper lavender overlay, and pale yellow "eyes". It is very fragrant and the texture is matte. Plants can adapt to brighter conditions if the light is increased gradually. It will need strong air movement at all times especially when the light is high. Summer temperatures range to the mid 80's during the day, and low 60's at night. They prefer high 80-90% humidity year round except during the dry season, which lasts about 4-5 months in the late spring and early summer. They can dry during this time but never let them stay dry for long periods.

Cattleya luteola x *Cattleya ciricolor* is a primary cross between two species. *C. luteola* is found in Brazil, Peru, Ecuador and Boliva growing in relatively shaded areas on rough bark trees along rivers in wet, lowland tropical forests. It is the smallest of the genus with fragrant flowers. What is interesting about this orchid is the flared and somewhat ruffled lip which is rolled into a tube at the base with the sidelobes folded upwards around the column. Sepals and petals are usually yellow but can be apple-green or greenish-yellow. The lip is bright yellow with crimson and white spots or streaks along the inside edges. I could not find anything about the *ciricolor*. The name might be wrong? Temperatures only vary slightly during the year. Days are in the mid to high 80's with nights in the mid 60's. It has been noted that plants found in Peru grow in brighter light than those found in Brazil. Humidity should be in the low to mid 80% dropping to 75% in the late spring. Plants need regular watering especially during the active growth, but should be allowed to dry between watering.

C. luteola x *C. ciricolor*
Owner: Vicki Ventura Div. III
Photographer: Vicki Ventura



The *Psychopsis papilio*, originally classified as an *Oncidium*, is found from the West Indies to Guiana, Brazil and Columbia. It will produce one, tall flower, sequentially over a period of months. Inbreeding has resulted in often flattened flowers that are significantly larger than the wild species. Along with *Pyp. kramerianum*, the limited breeding has been done with the intent to improve individual species and to propagate more uncommon forms such as albino yellows. Lateral sepals are yellow with a rust orange splotching along the borders. Grow this hybrid in dapple to shade conditions. It likes cool to hot temperatures or about 58 to 85 degrees at night.



Pyp. papilio
Owner: Sharon Hendrix Div I
Photographer: Vicki Ventura



Lc. Angel Heart
Owner: Maggie Aragon Div III
Photographer: Vicki Ventura

Laeliocattleya Angel Heart is a cross between *Lc. Puppy Love* and *C. Penny Kuroda*, registered in 1988. The species, *C. anceps* makes up 25% of its parentage with the remaining 75% comprised of 6 other species. Sepals and petals are a creamy, white with a splash of light purple on the margins of the petals. The lip is ruffled with a darker purple and pale yellow going down the throat. It has a sparkling texture. Grow this hybrid in indirect light, although it may be tolerant of dappled light conditions. It prefers cool to intermediate temperatures or 58-75 degrees at night. It may also tolerate hot nighttime conditions. While it likes 50-60% humidity, it must DRY out between watering.



B. ornatissimum
Owner: Pam McKenzie Div II
Photographer: Vicki Ventura

Bulbophyllum ornatissimum was once called *Mastigion ornatissimum* but now Kew accepts the former species name. This genus is made up of over 1000 species and are noted for their extraordinary and outlandish flowers. They can range from tiny plants with peasized pseudobulbs, to giants whose flowers resemble gaping mouths of baby birds. This particular orchid species is found in northeastern India in the Sikkim, Darjeeling region and the Meghlya. Plants grow on shrubs, near streams in the tropical regions at 1650-1950 feet. Each growth produces 3-5 flowers that are carried in a fanlike umbel at the apex of the inflorescence. Flowers are 4.5-7 inches long from the tip of the dorsal sepal to the tip of the lateral sepals. Sepals and petals are yellow with red streaks or veins. The lip will vary from purple to magenta-red. The dorsal sepal has hair shaped appendages on the margins. They are joined for most of their length, but are free and twisted at the tip. Its lip is small, bluntly tipped with upturned edges. Pam grows her orchid in an atrium with very high light. Strong air movement should be provided. She also has it in temperatures ranging from the low 60's to high 80's. she uses a humidifier. It is suggested to keep humidity in the low 80 in summer and spring and then drop to 75% in late autumn, early winter and then to 50% in early spring. She waters two times a week.



DECORATIVE ORCHID GIFTS

By Susan Taylor, Bellaonline.com

The best product I found in the decorative area was orchid switch plates at Miller Concepts. I worked with this vendor and they have put up a page with just orchids to make it easy for you. You will find is a whole page of different orchid switch plates which can be ordered in different sizes and types. The quality of the product is very good and the plates come with installation screws included.

Horchow has a lovely set of orchid dinnerware with pink Phalaenopsis on them. At this time (October 2008) they are on sale and would make a really nice gift for any orchid lover who loves to entertain.

Smith and Hawken has reintroduced a Victorian favorite, the cloche, which is an old-fashioned idea, but very decorative and can be used indoors with your orchids. It is a glass container, which can be used to create a mini-terrarium around your orchid plants so that they can be displayed indoors while continuing to provide humidity for the plant. The Orchid Cloche is a tall cloche, which can contain a 25-inch plant.

For a truly spectacular place setting, check out the David Linley orchid placemats and coasters made of rosewood with inlaid orchids of sycamore and padouk. These are masterpieces of woodworking and would make anyone proud to own them. This vendor is in the UK so if you wish to order for the United States, be sure to order early.

One favorite that I've used in years past, but it still looks as pretty and fresh as ever is the orchid candle from Love Your Wedding. They've expanded their selection to include yellow and pink as well as the original white candle. You will need to go down about half way on the Internet page to find the candles. One good feature is that the candles will burn down the center and leave the outside intact so that they can be reused with either new wax or with another candle inserted in the middle.

The Swarovski Crystal Orchid is a real gem which your orchid lover would truly enjoy. Please note that you will need to enter "orchid" in the search area to get to the orchid crystals. It sparkles, is always in flower and is truly eye-catching. They even have an orchid spray (also shown on this page) which is even more spectacular!

HOME FLASKING

By Sam Fifer, Lincoln Orchid Group

There is quite a bit of controversy concerning flasking by amateur growers. The ones opposed to it say that the amateur hasn't a full understanding on hybridizing, thus making inferior crosses. These crosses would then lower the overall quality of orchids in general. The world would be overrun with poor quality plants of questionable parentage.

The other side suggests that many of the very popular crosses were made by such growers, and sometimes purely by accident. Conservationists also argue that the ones that flask species, are actually helping to save certain orchids that are in danger of losing their natural habitat, or that already have. Whichever side is correct, flasking is an invaluable learning process in the culture of orchids.

Flasking Case: A flasking case can be as simple, or elaborate as you wish. One can be constructed out of an ordinary box, or plexiglass. The later would be more durable if you plan to do a lot of flasking. Even a fish tank, laid on it's side with some plastic draped over the front will work. There are ready-made glove boxes that can be bought from many firms that are nice, but sometimes expensive.

What I use is a fish tank. I have it laid on it's side, then taken a piece of plexiglass cut to fit the opening, that have arm holes cut in it. I then secure long rubber gloves with duct tape (that stuff is wonderful) to the holes. I also fashioned longer sleeves, so I could reach all the way to the back of the tank. When flasking, the plexiglass top is taped fully to the tank, making an airtight seal. This setup cost me about \$50, and has worked very well.

Flasking Tools: These are simple tools that are used in the process of replating, and removing the seedlings from the flask. Thin stainless steel rod, bent into a small hoop, and pounded flat will aid you in the tasks of replating, and deflasking. They can also be used if you need to go into the flask to remove small bits of contaminates. More on that later. Make at least 3-4 of each, so you can be sterilizing one set while using the other.

Besides the replating tools, you will need a small spray bottle for spraying the inside of the box with bleach solution. Two shallow containers for sterilizing, and rinsing tools, a vile for sterilizing and rinsing seed, a pipette, a scalpel, tweezers, toothbrush, and a beaker graduated in milliliters for measuring solutions.

Flasks: There are a number of containers that can be used for sowing, and re-plating. For sowing, I use baby food jars with either rubber stoppers, or Magenta B-Caps...non-vented for sowing seed. This is because to germinate, seeds don't need a gaseous exchange. The media keeps longer, and doesn't dry out. Therefore, you can make a number of mother flasks ahead of time that will be ready when you need to sow seed. I used to use the lids that came with the jars, but found that after 1-2 uses the lids did not work any more, so I went to the types listed above. For re-plating, again any vessel can be used. Glass is preferable, as it can be sterilized again, and again. Select a container that is big enough for the growth of seedlings.

Continued pg 7

While the sowing flasks don't have to be vented, the re-plate flasks should be. After the protocorms begin to grow, they need a gaseous exchange for photosynthesis to take place effectively. There are many ways to do this. A drilled rubber stopper with cotton stuffed in the hole is the most common. Or, just a simple hole punched in the lid with cotton stuffed in it. The rubber stopper is a better way to go, because mold spores and bacteria have further to travel before entering the flask. There are even specialized tops that can be purchased that have a membrane to let gases pass through. I have since discovered that juice jars, such as Snapple work very well for replating flasks. Simply punch a hole in the lid with a small nail and then cover both sides with 3M Nexcare™ Active™ circle bandages. These will withstand the heat & moisture of being sterilized in a pressure cooker, while allowing a gaseous exchange.

* I will continue this article in next month's issue.

ORCHID NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Turkey: Several rare orchid species found only in Turkey are facing extinction - because of the Turks' love of ice cream. The orchids are disappearing from the mountains. Ice cream made from salep - a flour produced from the tubers of dried, wild orchids growing in the mountains of south-eastern Turkey - is a great delicacy in the country. It is so popular that part of the city of Istanbul has become known as the "ice cream district" and regularly jams up with traffic; such is the demand to sample the dessert. But scientists have warned that the ice cream industry is threatening a major collapse in the number of orchids. For this reason it is forbidden to export - but they are still using it in Turkey for the ice cream. For one kilogram of dried Salep, around 1,000 orchids are needed," she said.

Local shepherds - traditional pickers of the orchids - have also offered evidence that the flower is in steep decline in the country. The shepherds sell the milk of their goats, and collect orchids. But the flowers are more and more difficult to find. - They are searching higher and higher into the mountains to find them.

The damage is so great that environmentalists are now calling for a total ban on the use of salep in ice cream. But such drastic action appears to have little support among the ice cream fanatics in Turkey. They have been eating ice cream for so long that they will continue by eating illegal ice cream. The locals' attitude is backed by the ice cream manufacturers, most of whom are based in the city of Marash - Turkey's ice cream capital. Factories can use three tons of salep, or twelve million flowers, every year. Ice cream has been made here since the time of the Ottoman farmers and it has always been special because the roots of wild orchids are used." Orchids were initially popular because the Ottomans believed they were an aphrodisiac. It gives the ice cream its unique strength and special taste.

Indeed, since the export ban on orchids came into force, salep ice cream has been available almost exclusively in Turkey. With the coming of cold winter days, Turkey's cake and pudding shops begin serving salep in place of ice cream. On the ferryboats which ply their way between the European and Asian shores of Istanbul with smoke trailing from their funnels and chased by flocks of seagulls, many of the passengers order steaming cups of this delicious warming beverage. It keeps the body warm in cold weather and increases resistance against the colds and coughs of winter. How long it will remain on the market even there remains to be seen.

18th Australian Orchid Counsel Conference And Show 2009

Victoria: The week long conference will be held in Victoria with lectures, an orchid show and 20 of Australia's best orchid nurseries, all coming together. To be a fully Early Bird Registrant, it costs you 180.00 for the Primary Registrant and 100. for the accompanying Partner Registrant.

This gets you into the show each day and two days of lectures with a Welcome Cocktail Party thrown in, The Early Bird Registration runs from September 1st 2008 to March 31st 2009, when the full price of 220. for the Primary Registrant and 130. for the accompanying partner until July 31st. Single days will cost 50. for the Primary and 25. for the Accompanying Partner if you only want to hear one day's lecture. Full Registrants will get full priorities.

Sightseeing tours will also be available for registrants who book closer to the Conference date. Costs will be minimal. Two of these trips are to the Angelsea area looking for terrestrial orchids in situ and the other to the Australian Orchid Nursery at Tyabb - going via Queenscliff and the ferry across the bay with another two local trips around Melbourne.

Judging begins on Wednesday, September 9th with a welcoming cocktails and vendor sales that evening. Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday the show will be open to the public. Lectures will be held on Thursday and Friday with speakers from the US and Australia. Also included will be a Floral Art competition and renowned stamp collection.

South Florida: A former president of the Fort Lauderdale Orchid Society was sentenced to 18 months probation Tuesday for illegally importing more than 1,400 orchid plants from the Philippines. Mac Rivenbark, 42, owner of Mac's Orchids, told authorities at Miami International Airport the flowers had been grown in a nursery when they were actually collected from the wild in violation of environmental laws. Rivenbark, who pleaded guilty in August, faced a recommended prison term of 10 to 16 months under federal guidelines. His attorney said the orchid lover had been sufficiently punished by resigning as president of the Orchid Society and giving up his import license.

Keith Mead Treasurer
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News Contributions:**E-MAIL:**

smith_nmog@earthlink.net

Board meeting
November 19th 2008,
6:30 pm at the home of
Joanne Bodin. All
members are welcome to
attend. If you want to
express an opinion, bring
up ideas, etc, you must be
on the agenda.
Contact Debby
Lieberman at
deblieberman@earthlink.net
or 286 0196 no later
than 11/17/08

We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://nmog.abqwebdev.com>

**Please note we have a new Post Office Box number and zip. It is:
PO BOX 26473, zip 87125-6473**

HOSPITALITY

We would like to give a big thanks to Shelly Fritz who is going to help Connie Smith with the hospitality job. Thank you Connie, for your dedication to making sure the NMOG meetings have water and paper goods for the potlucks.

SUNDAY'S POTLUCK

Now it the time to dust off your favorite recipe to show our speaker what great cooks we are in addition to great orchid growers. We want to send him home with a tummy full of goodies.

GENTLE REMINDER FOR SHOW AND TELL WINNERS

It is very important htat you either give me your orchid;s information either at the meeting or by email. It is really a big help. Thank you.

