

**American Orchid Society**  
**Annual Meeting of Members, Shreveport, Louisiana**

Saturday April 30, 2011 — 9:00 am  
Chris Rehmann, President — Presiding

**Call to order**

**Chris Rehmann**

**Proof of due notice of meeting:**

**Karen McBride**

Due notice of meeting was in the February 2011 of issue of Orchids

**Declaration of quorum**

**Karen McBride**

Secretary Karen McBride declared a quorum

**Annual report of President**

**Chris Rehmann**

The current state of the society can be viewed in many ways. It is my belief that the society is turning a corner in the midst of a serious economic downturn. Many non-profit organizations have not survived and many non-profit organizations who are pillars of the non-profit world are struggling. The American Orchid Society has a good future with the assistance of our volunteers. While we continue to lose members, our volunteer base is still strong and willing to bring the society to a stable footing. Our trustees and committee chairs have been generous with their ideas, time and money. Everyone has given in accordance with their abilities to ensure the future plans of the society can be realized.

The potential sale of the headquarters building was a difficult decision, but necessary. Some solace can be found when the sale is complete to the Slomin Foundation. The efforts of our members to build and the generous donations to make property visions possible could be used for a greater good because the Slomin Foundation would like to turn our facility into a family care center for autistic children. One of the things that attracted them to our facility is the botanic gardens with the greenhouses which they believe add to the calming effect on autistic children as they go through dentist visits, doctor visits, haircuts, and those types of ordinary things that children go through daily but don't have the added burden of autism.

The last half of 2010 – 2011 has been a period of transition. We are trying to build on some of the ideas that our past president Carlos Fighetti has started and we have begun initiatives to replace our website and judging management program. With the generous support of Trustee June Simpson we have been able to replace inadequate computer hardware and develop in less than two years our replacement programs. They are now ready for beta testing. This is quite an accomplishment because some programming work done by others has taken as long as ten years to arrive at the location we believe we are with the type of programs we will be rolling out. I'd like to thank both Ted Kellogg for his tireless work in making the technology work, Howard Bronstein for his insight in helping a young technical expert understand why judges like to see this - this way as opposed to that way and to Frank Slaughter for his inevitable help - translation of technical ideas to my head so that I could understand them and to support both Howard, Ted and to Mitch Vogler, our technical expert.

The second initiative has been our Membership initiatives. While there is no visible success yet, many of our new initiatives have been an attempt to bring people into membership. The efforts have been herculean with volunteers taking vacation time, money, and long hours to travel to shows throughout the country to "spread the word."

I had the experience of going to the Philadelphia Flower Show a while back – while this doesn't seem like much to people who have not had the opportunity to see it, this is a week-long show indoors and it attracts between 200,000 and 250,000 people. It is the largest indoor flower show in the United States. We did put together a 450 square foot exhibit with many generous people giving us plants, buying plants to make sure we had enough flowering plants in the exhibit. The local Southeastern Pennsylvania Orchid Society, the Delaware Orchid Society - all of those people gave us generous support, time, energy, Wardian cases, ideas and thoughts and we manned the show exhibit from 10:00 in the morning to 10:00 at night and we had quite a missionary effort to preach the value of orchids and, while we did not get the number of new members that I thought we would get, we have a lot of good ideas because next year the show will feature flowers of the islands. One of our local orchid companies, Waldor Orchids, it's out of Atlantic City, will put up the major exhibit. They will put 10,000 to 15,000 of orchids in place along with cooperation from the Hawaiian Professional Orchid Growers Association. So it should be quite an event. This year we had volunteers from Kentucky, from Florida, we had plants from California. It was just amazing to me to see the time and effort that people were willing to put together to make something like this happen. And then, ten days later, that same group of people were at Longwood Gardens for their orchid show doing the same thing and, although we didn't have to put an exhibit together, they were manning a membership booth and selling memberships for the American Orchid Society, answering questions, being part of lectures, giving our technical expertise to support the local societies. So I am really, really pleased with our membership chair, Barbara Noe. I will be presenting Barbara with a Presidential Commendation for her efforts on behalf of the society.

The last effort I'd like to emphasize is fiscal responsibility. As you are aware, or may not be aware, when our building was constructed in approximately 2000, we had 30,000 members. At that membership rate, we could afford a headquarters building that was a place for accomplishing our mission that we would be the world leader in the education, conservation, and research of orchids. With 12,000 members now, we just cannot afford to do that. So then the sale of the building on which we have a conditional contract. This means that the person buying the building has got to receive a change in zoning in order to utilize the property for the use that they would like. We currently have a zoning of low density residential. We have an offer of 1.75 million dollars for the property where they would knock the building down and we have a conditional purchase contract of 3.1 million dollars as long as the Slomin Company gets the zoning change necessary that allows them to put the autistic family center at that location. They have made the applications for the zoning change to Palm Beach County. Ms. Slomin, the head of the foundation, has done everything but measure Ron McHatton's desk chair. She has been there practically every day with architects, with doctors, with dentists who would occupy the building. She has put approximately \$40,000 to \$50,000 already into the application fee to Palm Beach County. The building is on property that is about ½ mile long off the main road, and is adjacent to the Morikami Park, which is a county park, and a residential section. My business is civil and environmental engineering, land surveying, and planning and information management. There is a term called spot zoning which means you cannot take a piece of property which is in a residential area and zone it commercial without any rational nexus as to why that commercial integrates with the surrounding land use. That is the topic that will be discussed in Palm Beach County as we're looking for a transitional use that allows them to use this as not institutional use but something that is within that same purview. We – the American Orchid Society – have a use agreement with Palm Beach County that was put together by our trustees at the time headquarters was built and they had no intentions of ever selling the building. They had full intention of that being our permanent location. So they didn't look beyond that point. So, if we sell the building, and it appears that we can do so, we will settle sometime before the end of the year. At that point we will take some of that 3.1 million dollars and we will replace the money that has been used from some of our restricted accounts. Some of that money has been used with the permission of the executors which is the case with the McQuerry estate. Some of that money was used without permission. After we replace all of that money, we will have about 1.2 million dollars to the good for the American Orchid Society. One of the primary goals that we have been trying to do in order to make sure that we get from where we are today to the settlement table is

fiscal responsibility. I think we have had successful efforts to control our expenses. With careful controls and dedication from our chief operating officer, cost reductions have been realized in equipment leases, copier rental agreements have been renegotiated, and monies have been returned for what we consider excess costs associated with that. We had a program called IMIS, an integrated management program that was managing all of our membership, our retail store, our finances and our website. Unfortunately it cost us \$30,000 a year for a license and cost us substantial money per hour to change anything in that program and \$32,000 to host the website. That is what we have been spending time and effort on and why Mrs. Simpson's effort to help us get beyond this is helpful to us. We will be hosting our own website, eliminating IMIS. We are not paying the annual fee and that will be a substantial savings and that has been brought about by our Information Management Committee and by Mitch Vogler and Ron McHatton. We also have had, through Ron's efforts, reduced the cost to produce *Orchids*. We have asked for prices from other publishers, which has given our current publisher an incentive to come up with cost savings. A simple thing that was done was to change the way we put the magazine together. There is a program called InDesign which we now use. One other thing we did as far as cost reductions are concerned is double up on duties. Ron has assumed the duties of the Chief Financial Officer as well as the CFO. Our Treasurer has spent hours and hours at headquarters to make sure that we have oversight on our finances. This has saved us about \$75,000. Our staff also has taken on additional duties without additional pay and has done it effectively. We can't ask them to do this for a long period of time. Yesterday the trustees decided that we are going to seek a strategic partner with a botanic garden. We have investigated a number of them throughout the country. And we are going to submit a proposal to Fairchild Gardens, Longwood Gardens and the Huntington to see if they would house the American Orchid Society onsite and that we could then hopefully seek shared services.

I think together we are able to stabilize the Society, turn it around and move it forward. I think we can resume the impact that we have on the world of orchids.

## **Annual report of Treasurer**

**Peter Furniss**

The biggest financial news from the AOS has been the decision to sell the property in Delray Beach. Although the time to divest property could certainly have come in a more opportune economic climate, we were fortunate enough to find a buyer who offered a price we could accept. The old adage that the devil is in the details is having a purchase agreement that is signed and we are about to have the fourth revision. We feel that the buyer is fully dedicated and that the obstacles to be uncovered would be the same for anyone. Ron McHatton and the reduced staff have done a remarkable job of operating the AOS in a least cost condition. Even though we have seen a steady decline in membership, the loss for the first nine months of this fiscal year has been substantially less than forecast. Our investments **were** at Sun Trust and **are now** at Schwab under new guidance and we have seen assets climb from 1.6 million plus to over 1.85 million – just short of 16% as of yesterday afternoon.

## **Annual reports of Standing Committees:**

**Report of the Research Committee**      **Nancy Mountford for Dr. Carol Zoltowski**

See attached report

**Report of the Conservation Committee**      **David Horak**

No report submitted

**Report of the Library/Archives Committee**      **Dr. John Ingram**

No report submitted

**Report of the Publications Committee**      **Don Ghiz for Greg Allikas**

No report submitted

**Report of the Information Committee**      **Ted Kellogg**

No report submitted

<b>Report of the Membership Committee</b> No report submitted	<b>Barbara Noe</b>
<b>Report of the Judging Committee</b> No report submitted	<b>Dr. Harry Gallis</b>
<b>Report of the Web Committee</b> See attached report	<b>Sandra Svoboda</b>
<b>Report of the Governance Committee</b> No report submitted	<b>Taylor Slaughter</b>

**Presentation of certificates to retiring Officers, Trustees and Committee Chairs**

**Announcement of President Commendation awards for Michael Bohle and Barbara Noe for Philadelphia Show**

**Election of Officers and Trustees**

**Call for related business to come before members** **Chris Rehmann**

**Report of Nominating Committee** **Mario Ferrusi**

Mario Ferrusi presented the list of nominees for each position:

Officers:

President - Chris Rehmann  
 Vice President - Norman Fang  
 Vice President - Sandra Svoboda  
 Secretary – Karen McBride  
 Treasurer - Pete Furniss  
 Assistant Treasurer – Don Ghiz

Trustees:

Jeff Bradley, Russell Burrage Clark, Jean Hollebone, and Barbara Noe

**Report of proxies** **Karen McBride**

Secretary McBride reported that 984 proxies were received:  
 962 voted for the slate presented  
 20 withheld their vote  
 2 were deemed invalid since sent in unsigned

**Additional nominations** **Karen McBride**

Secretary McBride reported that there were no additional nominations.

**Vote** **Mario Ferrusi**

**Upon a motion duly made and seconded  
 The Members VOTED to approve and elect the slate  
 Presented by the Nominating Committee**

**Introduction of new Officers and Trustees**

**Mario Ferrusi**

**Remarks/Call for additional business**

**Chris Rehmann**

There was no additional business.

**Adjournment**

**Upon a motion duly made and seconded  
The Members VOTED to adjourn the meeting  
At 11:10AM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Karen McBride  
Secretary

## Committee Chair Reports

Annual Summary AOS Research Committee 2010-2011  
Prepared and submitted by Carol Zoltowski, VMD, Chair

The AOS Research Committee met at the Members Meeting in October 2010 in Virginia Beach, Va. During that meeting the members of the committee announced the shifting of the focus of the scientific work that it would recommend for funding. Its primary interest would be for projects that would more practically benefit the AOS membership. The following areas of interest for funding are as follows: integrated pest management; sustainable potting media and containers especially those media qualities that support orchid horticulture; detection and prevention of viruses including studies that determine the accuracy and reliability of current virus test kits; and an investigation of the types of fertilizers that work for orchids especially the question of organic versus inorganic types. During this meeting the Committee recommended that funding be provided for the following research proposal: “Assessment of Orchid Endemism in Northwest Vietnam with special Attention to *Paphiopedilun canhii*” submitted by Leonid Averyanov. Additionally the 2010 Furniss Foundation recommendation is Melissa Faust Bocayuva Cunha working at the Vicosia Federal University in Brazil.

On April 28, 2011 the Research Committee met in Shreveport, La. to evaluate 6 research proposals. Two research proposals received favorable reviews. It was noted that none of the proposals were specifically in line with the redirected areas of concentration as noted in November 2010. The proposal submitted by German Carnevali Fernandez-Concha, “Systematic and evolution of *Encyclia* Hook. S.S. (Orchidaceae: Laeliinae) with emphasis in Megamexico” was recommended for funding. The second choice for funding was submitted by Stephanie Lyon and Dr. Thomas J. Givnish, “Phylogeny, species delimitation, and patterns of mycorrhizal association in the corysanthes clade (genus *Corybas*, Orchidaceae)”.

**MEMBERS' MEETING**  
**APRIL 30, 2011**  
**SHREVEPORT, LA**  
**EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT TO THE MEMBERSHIP**

**STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE AOS EDUCATION COMMITTEE:**

To implement the mission of the AOS by enhancing the educational opportunities for our membership and members of local orchid societies.

**NEW PROJECTS:**

- ✓ Develop Orchid apps for Android and iPhone.  
Carol Klonowski has interviewed orchid people in the SF Bay Area and four ideas were consistently mentioned:
  - ✓ Plant lookup to show parentage.
  - ✓ AQ Plus on the go.
  - ✓ An app that lets you see orchids that have been photographed in situ and posted on the Internet
  - ✓ An app that allows you to enter descriptive information (leaf shape, pseudobulb size, flower color, etc) and have a list of orchid species appear which might be the one you are trying to identify.
- ✓ Develop a Children's web pages as part of the AOS website
  - ✓ We need volunteers to help develop this concept.
- ✓ Exploring methods of offering an electronic version of past articles from the ORCHIDS archives.
- ✓ Create programs with script recorded that would be available on the website in the Members' Only section.
- ✓ Offer webinars to the membership.

**ONGOING PROJECTS:**

- ✓ Update Orchids A to Z to reflect the latest taxonomic changes
- ✓ Develop NOVICE materials for people with their first orchid – seven new culture sheets have been developed.
- ✓ Updating slide sets available to Affiliated Societies and converting them to PowerPoint
- ✓ Website – is being moved to a new server and once it is in place we will continue to increase and improve the educational content.
- ✓ We continue outreach efforts with the monthly AOS members' newsletter from Ron McHatton and the beginners' newsletter which goes to both AOS members and non-members produced by Greg Allikas.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Sandra Tillisch-Svoboda, Committee Chair

