



Presidents Message

The last official meeting of the season is upon us. It has been a busy and productive year. Lots of changes and we have been very fortunate to increase our membership and make new friends along the way. Our first plant exhibition a success is behind us and we look forward to another meeting season upcoming. Thanks to everyone who participated in the plant exhibit. It really gave us a start and ideas on how to plan for next year. As the newsletter editor I would also like to take a moment to thank all who submitted articles, suggestions and corrections this year. It makes the job so much easier to (cont)



April Meeting - A field trip to Paul Lee's greenhouses

Photo's and collage courtesy of John Beaulieu

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Manage. I would also like to make a special thank you in that regard to John Beaulieu and his continued support with the newsletter. Like clockwork every month John emails beautiful pictures and articles.

With the warm weather setting in with a late but fulfilling vengeance I hope everyone can make it to the last meeting of the season. If you cannot make it, check out the meeting reminder at the end of the newsletter. We are trying something fun and different this year. We have bumped our annual picnic to August. The idea is to have it rotate between members and give a refreshing late summer get together. So this year our annual year end pot luck picnic will be with Paul Kroll in East Aurora, NY. Don't fret at the distance, Paul lives just minutes beyond the border in a beautiful country setting. We will have lots of great stories of the summer to share and be able to catch up on the happenings of the July convention in Denver. Directions to Paul's will be given by email the month before the picnic as well as in the following newsletter and I am sure there will be lots of opportunities to share rides amongst members.

We look forward to seeing everyone next meeting and/or in August,

Bevin Anderson

OGS Executive*

President – Bevin Anderson
 1st Vice President – Paul Lee
 2nd Vice President – Paul Kroll
 Treasurer – Howard Kummer
 Recording Secretary – Judy Zinni
 Corresponding Secretary – Judy Zinni
 Membership Secretary – Monte Watler
 Archivist – Dawn Kummer
 Director – Ray Morrison
 Director – Brett Flewelling
 Plant Sale Chair – *VACANCY*
 Newsletter Editor – Bevin Anderson
 Webmaster – Bevin Anderson

* positions are still available for members (current or joining) that want to get actively involved including Webmaster and Newsletter Editor.

Visit our website at: www.ontariogs.org

For questions about meetings, the website or additions for our monthly newsletter email us at indoorgrowing@ontariogs.org or feel free to contact any of the executive members.

Congratulations!



Teeny Bopper - Best in Show - Best Miniature - Best African Violet Trailer.
 Shown by **Murna Kosowan**



Optimara Little Moonstone - Second Best in Show - Best Semiminiature - Best Semiminiature Optimara.
 Shown by **Murna Kosowan**

This from the Calgary (Stampede City), SCAVS newsletter. Murna Kosowan a long time great grower and one of OGS founding members. Congratulations from all of us Murna!

Last Month's Minutes – Sunday, Apr. 20, 2008



Twelve members were present. Vice-President, Paul Lee, welcomed the group to his home and greenhouse in Fergus where the meeting took place this month. A short business meeting, a greenhouse tour, a summary of growing procedures, and then refreshments were enjoyed by the group.

Show and Tell: Judy Zinni showed a plant that was grown from Gesneriad Society seed listed as *Monophyllea horsefeldii* but was obviously not that plant. No one in the group knew what the plant was.

Judy reminded the group of our sales table at the Lakeshore African Violet Society Show at the end of April at Sherway Gardens Mall in Toronto. Members were urged to donate plants for the sale as this is our major fund-raiser for the year. The group was also reminded of the upcoming May 10 exhibition at Meadowville Nursery and were asked to bring in plants for the public to see.

Paul Lee gave the group a tour of his greenhouses, where bedding plants *Osteospermum*, *Fuchsia*, *Dianthus*, *Bacopa*, *Pelargonium*, *Petunias* and *Stipa tenuissima*, to name a few, were happily growing. He also showed his collection of *Streptocarpus*, *Chirita flavimaculata* and various other gesneriads. Paul also grows stems of *Lilium* for sale to the cut-flower trade and he graciously provided some stems for members to take home.

Paul demonstrated his seeding technique using a vacuum-assisted seed dispersal tray. He also discussed his use of nutrients in the growing of his stock (liquid carbon, fish emulsion, seaweed and calcium nitrate). Most interesting is his use of blackstrap molasses as a foliar spray.

All members enjoyed the refreshments of our gracious hosts, Paul and Evelyn, on their deck surrounded by a lovely garden springing forth with new growth.

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Zinni
Secretary
Ontario Gesneriad Society of Guelph



2008 LAVS Spring Show, Sherway Gardens

"Violets: The Jewels from Africa" April 26-27, 2008

The 2008 Lakeshore African Violet Society show was a great success and lots of fun to attend. Huge thanks to everyone's efforts whether you brought plants/supplies, helped with our sales table, visited the show, or helped with the planning leading up to event. Our plants looked great and we had a lot more plants pulled together from our members than we ever thought we could this year. A special thanks to Shirley Jones for all of the Chirita that were dropped off with Monte for the sales table, they really redefined large well grown plants for a sales table. Things went very well; and we are ever appreciative to the members of the LAVS for sharing their event with us.

The show was a big one with lots of wonderful show plants, designs and educational displays. If you were an African Violet lover, you were in utopia. If not what you still saw was a breathtaking display of various Saintpaulia and Gesneriads that anyone would be envious to grow. I seemed to have forgotten to take many pictures of the plants but below are a few photos of the weekend not if you weren't able to make it. ☺

Bevin



(Above from L to R) Paul Kroll, Judy Zinni, Bevin Anderson with Alex (Sherway social busy body two years running) and John Beaulieu.

What's Blooming? By John Beaulieu

I do have something other than Sinningias blooming this month. One is not a Gesneriad. I must have picked up a cutting of a begonia at a meeting of our local Huronia Houseplant Hobbyists a few months ago, and then forgot about it. I recently noticed a flash of orange on one of my jungle-like shelves, and found this begonia in bloom. Orange is not a typical Gesneriad colour, so this makes a great companion plant. Now I need to find a name.

More Streptocarpus seedlings have been flowering. These are from the seed distributed at one of the early OGS meetings last year. Although the seed involved a few variegated parents, there have been very few variegated seedlings. The blooms are nothing really new in colour or form, but they are still very nice.

Most of my Achimenes are only now waking up from their winter dormancy. The pots are stored (unwatered) with the dormant Sinningias. One plant decided to sprout a little early and it is now flowering. This is one of the oldest Achimenes hybrids, 'Ambroise Verschaffelt'.

This is one of several Achimenes rhizomes that I received in the mail last year from Lauray of Salisbury in Connecticut. The Lauray greenhouses are run by Judy Becker, a long time member of The Gesneriad Society (previously AGGS). Brenda and I were able to stop in while on our way to assist at a monarch butterfly workshop in Hartford, in 2006. Judy had so many great hanging baskets of Achimenes, that I had to order a few varieties to be shipped the following spring.

There don't seem to be many varieties available at sales tables and shows here in Ontario. Judy will ship to Canada, and all arrived just fine. There is a printed catalog available or you can visit on line at www.lauray.com

For those who are not members of The Gesneriad Society, the current issue of Gesneriads, the association's journal, is a special Achimenes issue with articles about Achimenes, both species and hybrids, by many authorities, including Judy Becker. I even have a photo in there of her Achimenes baskets hanging in her greenhouses. Everyone should consider joining our parent organization, as the Gesneriads journal is a great information resource.



Road Trip to Wrightman Alpines

by Judy Zinni



On a chilly, grey and rainy mid-March day, Monte Watler and I headed out on a road trip to a wonderful nursery, Wrightman Alpines that is located west of London, Ontario. The nursery doesn't officially open for the season until May, but I had called ahead to make arrangements for the visit. The purpose of our visit was to secure a number of alpine gesneriads that Harvey and Irene Wrightman offer for sale. I stocked the van with water, nursery trays and a cardboard trunk liner and we were off. The weather report was threatening freezing rain and ice pellets in the morning, but luckily we only experienced a very brief bout of it. Wonderful companionship and good conversation made the drive go quickly.

Monte and I arrived at the nursery in the early afternoon. Due to the retreating snow cover, we were able to take a look at some of the display rockeries close to the house. There in the front rockery was the holy grail of alpine gesneriads, *Jankaia heldreichii*.

To quote the Wrightman Alpine catalogue, it is "one of the most beautiful plants to be grown". I can attest that the characteristic hairy silver leaves are beautiful to behold. The plants we saw were still small but have been in place for a couple of years, planted in drilled holes made in natural tufa rock. Harvey insists that growing in tufa greatly simplifies culture of the plant. He also advised that they grow quite slowly, and to be careful not to allow moss that may grow on the rocks to out-compete them, but was quick to note that they should not be babied.

We saw many other gesneriads in the garden and in the hoop houses: *Ramonda myconi*, *R. myconi alba*, *R. myconi (pink)*, *R. nathaliae alba*, *R. serbica*, *Haberlea rhodopensis*, *H. sp. Case* (which Harvey noted is from the collection of Fred Case and may be a larger flowered selection of *H. ferdinandi-coburgii*), and the intergenerics *xJankaemonda vandedemii* and *xRamberlea 'Inchgarth'*. Most of these are for sale through the nursery.

At one point, Harvey showed me a square seed pan with *Haberlea rhodopensis* leaves that he was propagating. He pulled up several leaves before he found one that had roots starting. This leaf also had a flower stalk, in bud, attached. He promptly removed the flower stalk – to my horror. Harvey assured me that this was absolutely necessary in order for the plant to concentrate on producing plantlets.



I had pre-ordered a number of items and these were ready and waiting for us when we arrived. Of course, Monte and I had to have a good look around and Harvey and Irene were very accommodating and eager to share their knowledge of the plants. Needless to say, Monte and I both left with additional goodies for our gardens. We found a beautiful *Arenaria tetraquetra* ssp. *granatensis* that has white flowers and forms a luscious matting over rocks (looks good even through the winter), an eccentric-looking cristate *Sedum 'Tortuosum'* that the Wrightmans acquired in Czechoslovakia, a teeny-tiny *Sempervivum rubrum*, and a hardy *Agave toumeyana* ssp. *bella* - just to name a few.

After the journey home, we tired road trippers ended the adventure with a refreshing afternoon tea at Monte's house. As my Mother loves to say - a good time was had by all!

Monte and I would highly recommend a trip to this wonderful nursery. The nursery opens in May and there are beautiful display gardens which I am sure are at their best in spring. They have a great web-site, www.wrightmanalpines.com, which is certainly worth a look.



June meeting reminder!

Our next meeting will be on Sunday June 15th at 2pm. Our meeting location is in back room of **Meadowville Garden Centre - 265 Edinburgh N - Guelph, ON**. We do not have a topic for this month's meeting but please bring your Show and Tell plants and usual enthusiasm. ☺ We can use a portion of the meeting to brainstorm meeting, topic, and speaker ideas for next year's schedule.

Remember to bring any extra little plantlets you may want to share.

We look forward to seeing you there!!!

(There will be one more newsletter mid-summer (post convention) explaining further details and the location of our annual summer pot luck picnic in East Aurora with Paul Kroll.)