



Dear TOS Members,

Dec 2023 – a month of many happenings! With this letter I begin developing a new look for your monthly President's letter. I shall be moving away from a letter of continuous prose to a format with quick-to-find sections of the TOS news and events. It is also my intention to morph it into something more than just 'my voice', so I am inviting all Members to send me relevant personal orchid happenings - stories and/or photos - for my consideration to include each month.

### **Dec 11, 2023 - TOS End-of-Year Holiday Potluck/Auction at JCRA**

What an excellent end-of-year Holiday meeting we shared on Dec 11. Food was wonderful, the auction was wonderful, and the camaraderie was wonderful! And, what an outstanding job our very own auctioneer Ralph did describing the orchid lots. After expenses, TOS was able to add \$1,062 to its coffers, which will be used towards funding future TOS events. I thank all Members who prepared the medley of delicious dishes, those who just turned out for the event, and those who brought guests to enjoy our event. I know of at least one new Member who joined – WELCOME to that Member! My special thanks to those Members who donated some great plants that went to auction. It was those plants, together with an unfettered attitude of 'that orchid is mine' amongst bidders, that made all the difference to the final tally. Even the unlabeled orphan orchids, some looking very forlorn, fetched good prices at the very end, and these orphans may well delight their new owners (myself included) with spectacular surprises in time. Stay tuned on that front because not all beauty comes with an identity!

Prior to the auction, the updated Bylaws were approved by a Members' majority vote and are posted on the TOS website under the **About TOS** tab.

### **Jan 8, 2024 - First Monthly TOS Meeting at JCRA**

At our Jan 8 monthly meeting, TOS will be hosting Jennie Fagen who will be speaking on controlling and testing for orchid viruses. Test kits for cymbidium mosaic virus (CMV) and odontoglossum ring spot virus (ORSV) will be on sale for \$6.50/kit. Members may also bring a fresh leaf sample in a sealed plastic bag for testing on the night for a fee of \$6.50.

Also at this meeting, TOS will be holding a special lottery whereby we shall be giving away, via a free



raffle, a small collection of orchids in loving memory of Ms. Shannon Evans. Shannon, the daughter of Larry and Linda Evans, sadly passed away on Nov 28. She lived in Sanford, adored orchids, and her father, Larry, contacted us asking if we could help him find good homes for his beloved daughter's collection. Also donated by Shannon's father are two 72-inch-tall knock-down indoor orchid stands with adjustable racks: a cream 4-tier one 48-inch-long x 18-inch-wide and a black 5-tier one 42 - inch-long x 1- inch-wide. The cream-colored one comes with an EnviroGro T5 lighting unit. These stands are in very good condition, they assemble

easily into very sturdy plant stands, and they will be sold to the highest bidders. Anyone wishing to start or expand an indoor orchid collection will definitely want to consider these stands.

Starting with this first meeting of the year, TOS will begin trialing an **Ask the Expert** corner. During the 30 min meeting setup time from 7.00-7.30pm, Members are invited to seek advice on matters such as dividing orchids, repotting, pest/disease control, etc. Experts will be wearing an **Ask the Expert** badge, so take the opportunity to get to know a TOS expert for some good advice on growing orchids.

## Jan 29, 2024 - Special TOS Meeting at JCRA

On Mon Jan 29 at 7.30pm, Ralph Belk, Chairperson for Shows, will be holding a special meeting to explain and encourage Members on how to get involved with Away Shows. These tend to be reciprocal events that we do with our sister orchid societies of NC and surrounding states. They participate as visiting societies to put in displays at our annual show and we participate as a visiting society to install TOS displays at their annual shows. It is a fun and rewarding experience to help install a TOS display, especially if you have an artistic flair. Even helping to take down a TOS display is a wonderful opportunity for learning more about all the magnificent orchids being grown out there, and for meeting fellow orchid lovers and orchid experts from out of state. And, TOS will pay your mileage to boot if you drive!

## Members' Feature

TOS Members Robin and Josh Gurlitz shared this photo of a cut bloom of *Rhyncholaeliocattleya* (Synonym: *Brassocattleya*) Mount Hood 'Mary' AM/AOS. The flowers are several inches across and the plant is so big that Robin and Josh Gurlitz decided to bring home just the bloom from the greenhouse to enjoy over the holiday! You should visit the OrchidRoots website – a great website – to check out the ancestry of *Rlc*. Mount Hood where you will see that it has nine classic cattleya species in its background.

<https://www.orchidroots.com/detail/information/?pid=100071529&role=>



Last month you may recall, I mentioned the *Fredclarkeara* grex After Dark is one of Fred Clarke's most

famous intergeneric Catasetinae crosses. Here, TOS Member and AOS judge, Harry Gallis, MD, stands beside a fine specimen of *Fdk*. After Dark 'Sunset Valley Orchids' FCC/AOS currently flowering in his collection.



Have a great New Year celebration and many good wishes for 2024!  
Phil Brindle, TOS President