



Orchid Society of Western Pennsylvania

June 2018

www.oswp.org

Upcoming Events

Looking Ahead

June 10, 2018

Kristen Uthus
Honey, I Shrunk the
Orchids

July, 2018

Picnic

September 16, 2018

Alan Koch

Mini Catts

OSWP meetings are held at the Phipps Garden Center on Shady Avenue and are open to members, their guests and the general public.

Program Calendar is also available at www.oswp.org

OSWP Officers Lori McDermott

President: Gary Van Gelder

First Vice President: Demetria Marsh

Second Vice President: Circe Curley

Directors: Josh Hagen, Rosa Graudins, Dee O'Hara, April Arroyo, Lance Chevront

Secretary : Lori McDermott

Treasurer: Janet Greenberg

Librarian: Rosa Graudins.

What's Blooming Now

Cypripedium parviflorum var. *pubescens* Greater Yellow Lady's Slipper

This is the most common wild orchid in the U.S. and is found in almost every state. There are 3 accepted varieties of Yellow Lady's Slipper, 2 of which are found in Minnesota: Greater Yellow Lady's Slipper (var. *pubescens*) and Small Yellow Lady's Slipper (var. *makasin*). The flower pouch of Small is only up to about 1 inch long, the petals are usually darker in color and more twisted than the Greater variety, but the Greater variety can be variable in these things depending on environmental conditions. All 3 sub-species (including var. *parviflorum*) go by multiple variations on their scientific names. At one time these North American orchids were considered the same as the European species (*Cypripedium calceolus*) but not any longer.



<https://www.minnesotawildflowers.info/flower/greater-yellow-ladys-slipper>

Photo by Jim Yamber

President's Letter June 2018

Hello Friends,

Looking forward, it seemed like it was going to be forever when I took my turn as President of our society two years back, and there would be plenty of time to accomplish many aspirations. However, looking back time flew and it seems like yesterday.

One of my greatest desires was to have in place a few younger members who became highly involved. This seems to have happened. I see a strong core to build the future of our society.

No strong society functions well relying on one person. Many others have helped me in ways they may not even realize. I thank all the board members and those who carry out key roles in the society for their help. I also thank the membership for making my two years as president such an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

I was unable to attend the May meeting. I hope someone stepped forward to agree to being nominated for first vice president.

I wish the incoming president and officers all the best, and hope they can continue to steer our society into an even more sustainable position.

Gary VanGelder

Election Nominees of OSWP no June 10

The 2018-19 Nominations Committee is pleased to announce that we have a full roster of willing nominees for the open officer and director positions. We have one board member, April Arroyo, who has one year to go on her two-year position. Also, our Treasurer has agreed to recommit for the next two years. The Treasurer is the only position that is permitted to serve consecutive two-year terms. Please note that we are able to accept additional nominations from our OSWP members so long as the nominated member agrees to their nomination. Be sure to attend our regular 2:15 p.m. meeting on June 10 to cast your vote. Nominations will close at that time. If you wish to nominate someone, please contact Val Robey at vrobey71@gmail.com anytime between now and the close of nominations on June 10.

President – Demetria Marsh

1st Co-VP (Program Co-chairs) – Lori McDermott/Tim Choltco

2nd VP (Mini Class Coordinator) – Sheila Nathanson

Secretary – Lance Cheuvront

Treasurer – Janet Greenberg

Directors – Don Ammon, Mike Lysy, Kim McClelland, John Whiting and April Arroyo (2nd year of two-year term).

Respectfully submitted,

Nominating Committee: Mike Lysy, Norma Raiff and Val Robey

Orchid Gems: Katie Schuller By: Norma Raiff June 2018.

So how do we do it? Work in partnership with Phipps conservatory that is! As most of you know, OSWP members and Phipps staff have worked hard to ensure that Phipps' Orchid Room provides a refreshing and excellent visitor experience. The ongoing collaborations between OSWP's Demetria Marsh and Nancy Kline (featured in last month's Gems) and key Phipps' members, such as recently retired Georgia Wahl and now Katie Schuller (featured in today's column) contribute to this outcome. Together we groom plants, repot, take inventory, assist at Phipps' sales and recommend new plant acquisitions.

Katie Schuller is a linchpin to our collaboration's continuing success. She's our go-to person; our most immediately accessible staff member when it comes hands-on volunteering. Katie came to Phipps in May 2016 after being hired to work in the Palm Court and South Conservatory – you may know it as the place where the train display is featured. This was also the beginning of her friendship with Georgia Wahl who would later informally sponsor Katie for her current job.

Although Katie's official title is Display Horticulturist, most of us think of her as the Phipps' "orchid grower." Katie, who is an OSWP member, also produces Phipps' spectacular exhibit at our Spring Show.

How long have you been growing orchids? Katie has only been growing orchids for the past few years. However, she has always loved gardening, a passion that she attributes to the fact her parents were active plant growers. And she started her own horticultural journey early, fondly recalling having a Fisher-Price set of gardening tools as a youngster.

However, prior to her current job, much of Katie's orchid interest was more in the area of orchid photography because, as she says, "Orchids are exquisite." She has always loved visiting Phipps, especially the Orchid Room, which she describes as an adventure: "There's always something hidden. There are surprises everywhere."

Current collection and growing environment: Although Katie's home collection is modest and growing - she is up to 10 orchids in her private collection - of course, there's thousands more she's responsible for in the Big House.

Let's put it this way: Phipps orchid collection numbers 2,000 to 3,000 plants. It's varied and exotic. There are many species and hybrids of different genera, there are miniatures as well as "regular" orchids. And there is the Barbara Tisherman Slipper Orchid Collection to nurture. The collection features many rare and beautiful plants and historical species and important crosses. It is also an invaluable resource for education, visitor displays, and scientific research.

Learning to master the knowledge and to become pragmatically informed about the various cultural needs of the many types of orchids can be daunting. In Katie's own words: *"I'm totally a novice, but I'm learning fast. I know a whole lot more now than a year ago."*

Katie says she could not have done it without OSWP volunteers. *"I have a lot of helpers with the orchid society; everything I've accomplished so far has been with the help of OSWP."*

"The ladies and gentlemen who come and help are amazing...I couldn't get all I have done without their help. They're tremendous." In addition, she would like to offer a special shout out to Tim Choltco and Sheila Nathanson as well as to co-leaders Demetria Marsh and Nancy Klein.

Funniest/weirdest mistake or experience: Katie recounts that when she first took over the collection, one of her reactions was that many plants were dead. She consulted with Demetria who recommended that the "dead" orchids be dumped. Katie, however, persisted and guess what? "It was a miracle; about 90% came back and flowered. Perhaps it was beginner's luck, but I am experimenting and trying new things."

You might also be interested to know this about her: A current Penn Hills resident, Katie is originally from Pittsburgh but has previously lived in California and Australia. She enjoys many hobbies including gardening, making jewelry, and sewing. And if this was not enough, Katie also plays the piano, mainly classical music and some jazz.

Katie is also an extremely committed community volunteer, working primarily at the Penn Hills Community Development Commission. She volunteers with the CDC's Beautification and Sustainability Committee and has oversight of one Community Roadside Garden, but works on all of them. She also serves on the Board of the Penn Hills Shade Tree Commission, which helps the municipality and people to select and grow trees suitable for their home sites. And it doesn't end there. Katie is also in the process of creating a web site for the Shade Tree Commission and volunteers as a tree tender through Tree Pittsburgh (formerly Friends of the Pittsburgh Urban Forest).

Final words: Katie would like OSWP members to visit Phipps more often, to get involved with Pfun at Phipps, and to provide comments. *"I like to talk to people and hear what they think. I'm looking for feedback and suggestions and the Orchid Society is a good public forum for me to talk to people and to get new ideas – not just about improving the orchid collection, but also suggestions on how to display it."* So if you have ideas and thoughts, seek Katie out, because "This is a big job for one person!"



Field Trip to Cranberry Glades

Hi Everyone! Just a quick reminder that our next field trip to the Cranberry Glades in West Virginia is right around the corner!! This is a great opportunity to see many showy species of orchids in bloom, just a stone's throw from the car. We are trying to time our visit with the native orchid presentation at the Visitors Center, which we anticipate will be the **last weekend in June**. Please consider joining us, this is the easiest & most scenic of all our road trips! Please contact me if you are interested so we can keep you in the loop regarding car pool arrangements. Hope to see you next month! Amy Cignetti ahcignetti@hotmail.com (412) 760-3719 call or text



Putting the Fun in PFUN

By Lance Chevront

I am sitting on a rickety plastic stool staring out over an ocean of breathtakingly pink Phalaenopsis orchids fresh out of boxes from Hawaii. We have been here for three hours now and there is still a mammoth pile of boxes to open, and hundreds of orchids in a crayon box full of colors waiting to be unwrapped, sorted and staged for the upcoming Phipps Orchid and Tropical Bonsai show. None of us are tired, no, we are kids on a very exciting Christmas morning and with each unveiling there is a chance that we will see something we might never have seen before, but even if we don't, it is a morning surrounded by beauty. It never gets old, at least not for me. As an OSWP member, I volunteer at Phipps as often as I am able to and in the over two years since I have been doing it, each visit is educational, relaxing and a tremendous amount of fun. "Today we are going to be tying Vanda orchids to bamboo poles." ~ Tim Choltco That was my first day, my inaugural foray into the realm of PFUN volunteering. I arrived, made my way through the maze of walkways and back to the production greenhouses. I was tremendously nervous. I was new. I was anxious to learn, but I was still terrified to touch anyone else's plants for fear of harming them, breaking them, or just making stupid mistakes in front of these incredibly knowledgeable people.

I introduced myself to Georgia, who was the head orchid grower at Phipps back then. Within a couple of minutes I was paired up with Tim and we were wrapping fishing line around clumps of sphagnum moss, which in turn held the strong, greenish grey roots of the Vandas to the huge poles that were to be used in a display for the show.

What if I did this wrong? I was trying to be so very careful and then I mentioned to Tim how nervous I was and he laughed. "We are all doing this for the first time, making it up as we go along, you'll be fine." And you know what? I was.

More than fine, I felt energized! I snapped dozens of pictures with my cellphone of the amazing plants that were in bloom behind the scenes, asked approximately five thousand questions to Georgia, Tim, Nancy and everyone else that came close enough to pester. I went home that night and shared with Kim all that I had seen and done and what I had learned. I must have seemed like a young child after their first really good day at school.

I couldn't wait to go again.

Then came the unboxing of orchids for the show. Hundreds of paper wrapped orchids in bud or bloom, snug in heavy boxes waiting to be opened and brought out into the light.

I learned about Oncidiums that day. I still really love them!

But we unboxed, we laughed, we rested, we ate and then we unboxed and laughed some more. That is one of those things about orchid people and garden people in general, they like to eat, and they really love to laugh!

The last couple of months has been all about repotting the Phipps collection. We gather at 9:30 in the morning, gather our tools, our extra pots, and our torches. Yep, I said torches! Have to keep those cutters clean!

Katie, who is current head orchid grower at Phipps and one of the most awesome people I know then brings us our patients and for the next couple of hours, we coax plants out of tight pots, clean out degraded potting medium and trim their roots before packing them into fresh, healthy bark mix or moss, whatever the plant requires.

Phalaenopsis? Done them. Pleurothallids? Yep.

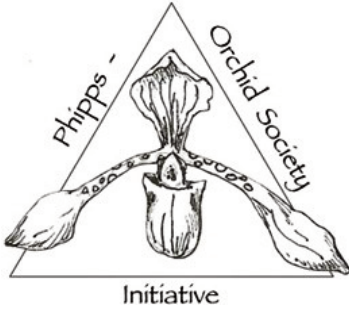
Cattleyas and Dendrobiums? Yep and Yep.

And let me tell you, nothing teaches you the resilience and hardiness of a supposedly difficult plant as well as when Katie says to you with obvious glee in her voice, "If you need to divide that Cymbidium, I'll get you a saw."

She was serious and we sawed Cymbidiums in half and it was an awesome experience!

We usually work from 9:30 until 11 or 11:30 and then we take a break for coffee, tea and snacks, then back to it until 12:30 or so when Katie cuts us loose, though most of us leave reluctantly as we are having fun and at the end of the day, doing something valuable, satisfying and worthwhile.

And that is the thing. When we are helping care for the Phipps collection, we are becoming a part of that collection. As we volunteer, as we help and learn, that in turn makes us better able to help each other as members and to help guide others that want to get into this amazing and beautiful hobby of ours.



P-OSI

A joint initiative between Phipps Conservatory and the Orchid Society of Western Pennsylvania to create and cultivate an orchid collection of note for enjoyment, education and research.

June 2018

Jennifer Davit, the curator at Phipps for the past few years, is moving to a new location to be near family. Jennifer has done a wonderful job helping build the Phipps Orchid Collection and improve orchid culture. Jennifer will be missed. We wish her and her family all the best.

May Market has come and gone, so it's time to settle down to inventory and study the Phipps Orchid Collection. We are meeting with the Phipps leaders to see how we can be the most help and what we all can do to improve. This summer we will see how we can be of help to Phipps for their orchid collection.

If you'd like to be a part of this phenomenal team effort, contact us! We'd love to have you for Pfun and P-OSI! It's a wonderful learning experience for all of us, a great way to give back to the community and to help make Pittsburgh someplace even more special.

Nancy Kline
nancyk412@gmail.com
412-367-1556

Demetria Marsh
demetria117@gmail.com
412-848-4349

Pfun at Phipps in June

We have two potting dates for June, Tuesday the 12th and Thursday the 28th. Looking for 3 volunteers to work at 9:30 until about 12:30 or so. Lunch at the Cafe is always an option.

Many thanks to those of you who stepped-up to help at May Market this year.

Please remember to let me know when you have worked and the number of hours. These figures are reported to Phipps' volunteer coordinator and they help both OSWP and Phipps.

If you have begun working with Katie in the greenhouses, you can contact her with your availability.

Katie would love to hear from you if you have the time, she may have an opportunity for you:

kschuller@phipps.conservatory.org

If you have any questions, email me at nancyk412@gmail.com or call 412-367-1556.

Thanks for your help.

Nancy Kline



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICE

Reminder: The new fiscal year is approaching-07/01/18-06/30/19, and annual dues should be paid by July 1st.

NOTE: Members who joined from March 2018 thru June 2018 are considered paid thru June 30, 2019.

Important Notice:

Effective immediately, because of rising costs, dues for MAILED NEWSLETTERS are increased from \$10 to \$15 additional dues.

New annual dues rates for mailed newsletters:

Individuals \$35

Household \$40.

Dues for emailed newsletters remains the same at \$20 for Individual and \$25 for household.

Checks are payable to OSWP and mailed to Janet Greenberg, 150 Ammons Dr., McMurray, PA 15317 or via OSWP website, PayPal link.

Sunday, June 10th meeting Kristen Uthus: Honey, I Shrunk the Orchids!

LOCATION: PHIPPS GARDEN CENTER IN SHADYSIDE

MEETING START TIME: 2:15PM

Dr. Kristen Uthus studied both plant and animal ecology and evolution at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and the Ohio State University (OSU). She then taught biology and ecology at several colleges including VCU, OSU, University of Michigan, and Eastern Michigan University. The daughter of a plant fanatic, Kristen has been growing orchids for over 20 years, and in 2014 she fulfilled her dream of making orchids a full-time commitment by purchasing NWO.

Although she enjoys growing many varieties of orchids and other plants, miniatures remain her passion—the weirder the better. New World Orchids specializes in Japanese species including *Neofinetia falcata*, *Dendrobium moniliforme*, and *Sederia japonica* as well as Asian *Cymbidium* species, but her miniature selection has been expanding to include many other small species including *Pleurothallids*, *Bulbophyllums*, and *Angraecums*. Although not ever entirely up to date, you can check out some of NWO's offerings at www.newworldorchids.com.

Kristen lives in Manchester, MI, about an hour west of Detroit. She is supported in her orchid pursuits by her husband, Dr. Kevin Wehrly, her two sons, Henry and Gus, and a veritable menagerie of lovable animals.

HONEY, I SHRUNK THE ORCHIDS!

Eventually everyone runs out of room for more orchids—unless they're really small. While their size intimidates some people, miniatures are just as tough as their larger relatives. What makes them so appealing is their variety of form in addition to flower; they are just plain cute! The fact that they take up so little space means that you can have a lot of different kinds of orchids in a limited area. Bigger definitely is not better!

Kristen will be selling orchids, so members may not sell plants at the meeting.

DINNER INVITATION: Join Kristen, Dave Miller and several of us at THE PORCH RESTAURANT in Oakland/Schenley Park after the meeting. (around 5PM)

Let Demetria know by June 6th, Wednesday, if you would like to be part of the group, so the reservation can be made. Separate checks are AOK.

See you on June 10th!

Demetria Marsh, Program Chair

412-848-4349 demetria117@gmail.com

Mini-Classes

June Mini-Class

1:30p.m. – 2:00p.m. Phipps Garden Center Classroom

35 Years of Growing Orchids: Adding Just ONE More

Presented by: Tim Choltco

The presentation will be a short story of Tim's descent into orchid madness. Tim began as a youngling in 1983 and the rest is history. Over the years he has grown *Cattleya*, *Dendrobium*, *Pa-phiopedilum*, *Phalaenopsis*, *Phragmipedium*, and *Vandaceous* orchids. He currently has a large mixed collection with a large percentage of *Bulbophyllum* and *Habenaria*.

The presentation will be mostly an antidotal walk down memory lane with a slide presentation on the evolution of his basement grow room. Tim's grow room will be open to the public for the 2018 O.S.W.P. PICNIC HELD AT HIS HOME AND HOME of Harbinger Orchids. Look for more information on the July 15 picnic in this newsletter.

CORRECTION:

Updated phone number for Timothy Choltco: 814-574-2551.

New orchid related email is harbingerorchids@yahoo.com

2018– O.S.W.P Summer Pic-A-Nic 2018 – July 15

Bring Yogi, Boo-boo, your pic-a-nic baskets, and maybe that pesky ranger. It's time for the annual O.S.W.P. summer picnic. This event is B.Y.O.B (self-explanatory) and B.Y.O.C. (Bring Your Own Chair). This year will once again feature longtime fan favorites Mortimer and

Morticia, in their summer best, still together after their short breakup in 2016.

Bring an appetizer, salad, dessert, etc. Brats, hotdogs, and cold drinks will be provided by the O.S.W.P. Shade and parking are also free. Please R.S.V.P before 2018 – July 13. PLEASE... PLEASE... PLEASE... I need an accurate count of hotdogs / Brats to buy.

A short garden tour will start the festivities at (approximately) 2:00 pm. I will show you highlights and lowlights of the property, as well as the constantly evolving basement orchid grow room. Hopefully the disgraceful front corner bed will be dealt with by this time. If not... lowlight. I said that last year as well. It was a lowlight then. This time someone please remind me to actually show you where the orchids are planted in the garden. I totally forgot until the very end of the tour last year. It is the orchid society after all you would think I would want to show off the few orchids in my yard. LOL. The Pic-a-nic proper will begin at (approximately) 2:30 pm.

Last year was a bit of a nightmare with the road construction in front of my property. This year... can we hope for no construction??? Nothing seems to be planned so, let's go with that.

Directions: From route 28. Take exit 14 (Tarentum / New Kensington). When exiting, the exit splits. Please veer left, this will take you straight down the hill, paralleling Rte. 28. If you veer right you will end up in Tarentum, fall of the edge of the flat Earth, never to be seen or heard from again. At the stop sign, turn left. This is Bull Creek Road. Follow B.C. for about ½ mile. On the left is the now feral Woodlawn Gold Course. On the right is Toured Mine. You will come to a very sharp right curve. Turn on your right turn signal. As you make the turn, on the left, you will see the green Iron Bridge, over... you guessed it... Bull Creek. On the right are 3 houses relatively close together. The middle house has a hedge and 2 large Yew trees in the yard. My driveway is directly after the hedge. Parking is in the back of the property, behind the garage, against the large Norway spruce. Mortimer and Morticia will be there to direct you for parking.

PLEASE... PLEASE... PLEASE... R.S.V.P by 2018 – July 13.

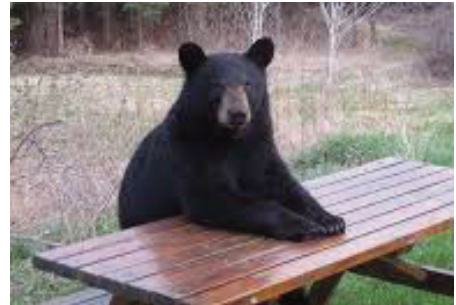
If I do not answer the phone (likely) please leave a message of how many will be joining us and what you will be bringing.

Timothy C. Cholco

1866 Bull Creek Road

Tarentum, PA 15084-3018

harbingerorchids@yahoo.com 814-574-2551



I'll have two Pic-A-Nic baskets Please.



Orchid Society of Western Pennsylvania Membership Information

The Orchid Society of Western Pennsylvania (OSWP) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to serving orchid enthusiasts. Our purpose is to stimulate interest in the exchange of information about the culture, conservation, and exhibition of orchids. Membership is open to everyone, whether they grow orchids or just want to learn more.

Visit us at www.oswp.org

Name _____

Name of spouse/other family member _____

Your Email _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Telephone (____) _____

Annual Dues calculation: (check all that apply)

Individual Membership \$20

Household Membership \$25

Additional fee for paper newsletter: \$15

Total dues \$ _____

Check payable to OSWP, or via PayPal at OSWP.org

Mail your completed form and check to:

Janet Greenberg, 150 Ammons Dr., McMurray, PA 15317



First Class Mail

James Yamber
380 Western Ave.
Oakdale, Pa. 15071

quail1@verizon.net

The Orchid Society of Western Pennsylvania Inc. is a non-profit corporation organized to advance the propagation, horticulture and preservation of orchid species and hybrids through research, education and scientific endeavors

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Upcoming 2018 speakers:

FUTURE PROGRAMS

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June 10, 2018
Kristen Uthus
Honey, I Shrunk the
Orchids

July, 2018 Picnic
September 16, 2018 Alan Koch
Demetria Marsh, Program Chair
demetmarsh@verizon.net

Mini Catts

412-848-4349



WANTED

THE AMERICAN ORCHID SOCIETY JUDGING PROGRAM IS SEEKING HIGHLY MOTIVATED ORCHID ENTHUSIASTS TO JOIN THE JUDGING RANKS. TEAMWORK, WILLINGNESS TO LEARN AND ENTHUSIASM ARE PARAMOUNT QUALIFICATIONS. THERE ARE NO AGE OR GEOGRAPHIC RESTRICTIONS.

FOR DETAILS CONTACT DAVE MILLER AT 330-307-7189 OR DCMJPASML@AOL.COM