



# Orchid Society of Western Pennsylvania

Feb. 2021

[www.oswp.org](http://www.oswp.org)

## Upcoming Events

February 21, 2021  
Nile Dusdieker  
The Dunes and the Mist  
the Sanctuary and the Ledges:  
Orchids of Southern Brazil

## Looking Ahead

**Meetings will continue on Zoom for now**  
March :21 Mary Gerritsen - Orchids of New Guinea  
April 18 Fred Clarke - How to be an 80th Percentile Grower  
May 16 TBA

### " UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES "

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](http://www.oswp.org)

HOWEVER, we are on Zoom for meetings , and those interested non members could use the 'contact us ' section of the website to get a Zoom invitation

#### OSWP Officers

Co-President: Sheila Nathanson and Mike Lyse

Co-First Vice President: Kathleen Arria and David Springer

Second Vice President: Timothy Choltco

Directors: Brooke Decker, Peg Kalupanov, Jinghua Ou, Aaron Vitron, Tamara Wurst.

Secretary : Lance Cheuvront

Treasurer: Janet Greenberg

### What's Blooming Now

The species grows at elevations from 2600 to 3300 ft elevation in the state of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro which is in the southern part of Brazil. It has a pendant inflorescence with up to 10 of the 1/2" long lasting flowers.

**Culture:** grows best mounted so that the pendant spikes can hang free, **temperature:** intermediate to warm, **water** with dilute fertilizer year-round and grow it in bright but indirect lighting with good air movement so the roots can dry out quickly. The plant is tiny and around 2" tall. The flowers overlap on the 6" pendant inflorescences which are produced in the winter and spring here in the Pittsburgh Pa area. It is a small plant but when grown into a specimen plant it can be spectacular.

### Chytroglossa aurata



Photo by Jim Yamber

## Co-President's Letter February 2021

Here we are, well into winter, 2021. The time continues to fly, despite being somewhat housebound, due to the continuing pandemic. The very good news is: I actually know people who have been vaccinated, which means we are on the way to getting our normal lives back. I'm ready!

The increasing attendance at the monthly Zoom meeting is so gratifying. The format may lack communal cookies and coffee, but our speakers have been terrific, and our Show and Tell and mini classes have been a wonderful way for us to all contribute to our meetings. Many thanks to Brooke Decker for being our Zoom host, and Jim Yamber, who makes sure we all get our invitations and timely reminders.

It has been brought to our attention that scammers are once again contacting members, claiming to be another society member, and asking for money in the form of gift cards. If you get this type of "phishing" email, ignore it, send it to spam, or report phishing. No member of the Orchid Society will ever contact you to ask for money in the form of gift cards, etc. It is a scam.

I'm looking forward to our next meeting on Sunday, February 21. As usual, the Zoom Room will open around 1, with a mini class on "Growing Phalaenopsis" at 1:30. I don't have the name of our main speaker, but I believe the subject will be "Orchids of Southern Brazil". Send your beautiful photos to Jim Yamber, [quail1@verizon.net](mailto:quail1@verizon.net) for Show and Tell, also to Jinghua Ou [jinghua.ou@gmail.com](mailto:jinghua.ou@gmail.com) for the website, and to Lance Cheuvront [wolfmurdoch@gmail.com](mailto:wolfmurdoch@gmail.com) for social media.

Let's have a warm, heartfelt and richly deserved round of applause for our very own Demetria Marsh, who had an article about the Barbara Tisherman Slipper Orchid Collection published in a major orchid publication. The article appears in the Jan, Feb and March issue (Volume 85-1) of Orchid Digest. There are beautiful photos of Phipps main glasshouse on an impossibly lovely Pittsburgh day, as well as a photo of Barbara Tisherman, for whom the collection is named. If you've ever sat in one of our meetings and mused "What does POSI stand for?", this article explains that and other acronyms used to name the relationship between OSWP and Phipps.

**Bravo- well done!**

Stay well, stay calm and carry on, and think orchids.

Sheila N. and Mike L.

### Pfun at Phipps Still Watching and Waiting

Phipps Policies for Volunteer Admissions

For Phipps OSWP volunteers from Deb Knorr, Volunteer Coordinator:

The volunteer name tag gets you in for free whether you are volunteering at that time or just visiting. If you are visiting with a guest, you would use the nametag for yourself and a comp pass for the guest. The Admissions Desk has a list of active volunteers. I don't think each Orchid Society volunteer name is listed in Volgistics. You would fall under the umbrella of "Orchid Society volunteers"

I was unsure about this after reading the email that I posted earlier today so I checked on the procedure. Hope most if not all of you have a name tag. If not, we can work on that when we return. Stay safe!

Deb Knorr also indicated that, with your name tag, you receive the 20% discount at the gift shop. However, the cafe discount is only available on the day you volunteer.

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## Orchid Gems 1

### Clifton Dietz – Orchid Gems Unstoppable Passion

By Pamela Jean Horter-Moore

One thing a person quickly learns about Clifton Dietz is that he never stops. Whether it's dentistry, glass, orchiding, or participation in his church, his creative energy is always present.

Like his grandfather and his father, Clif has made dentistry his career. A graduate of the University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine, he has a practice in Beaver, where he specializes in general, family, and cosmetic dentistry. His affiliations with professional organizations provide him with opportunities to contribute to the procedural and technical advances made in his field.

A community leader, Clif is active in the Park Presbyterian Church in Beaver, where he has served as a deacon and elder.

His particular passion has been the glass industry of southwestern Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Ohio, where he has made many contributions to the museums and societies dedicated to the history of this industry that has been a very important part of the culture of this region since the nineteenth century.

He has served on the board of the Fry Glass Society, and is a spokesperson on the history of the H. C. Fry Glass Company of Rochester, which produced fine glassware and innovative heat-resistant glass at the turn of the twentieth century. A member of the Glass Society of Pittsburgh, he is active at the Heinz History Center in Pittsburgh's Strip District, and at the West Virginia Museum of Glass. He has been buying and selling glassware for 25 years, and has contributed many pieces for historic preservation.

His passion for glass came upon him naturally. As a boy, he grew up in a large home in Brighton Township that had been owned by the Meier family. William Meier was the founder of the Meier Glass Company, another manufacturer whose fine glassware continues to attract the interest of historians and collectors.

If his childhood home and its history incited his passion for fine glassware, it was likewise instrumental in developing his love of gardening. At the center of the home was an atrium that included a greenhouse and a two-story fountain, inspiring young Clif to grow and sell his plants at the Tusca Drive-In Flea Market every Sunday. He then used the proceeds to fund his passion for Fry Glass.

A gardener since his youth, Clif has always had an interest in orchids, but the interest became a passion in March when he was diagnosed with cancer of the vocal cords at just about the same time that he was forced to close his dentistry due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Fatigued by the radiation treatments for his cancer and sidelined by the pandemic, Clif turned his attention to YouTube and the instructive videos of MissOrchidGirl, where he learned the fundamentals of repotting, maintaining a clean environment, and avoiding the spread of disease. "I have spent a great deal of time learning how to care for my orchids, so I am not intimidated by them," he remarks. Clif was a member of OSWP briefly some years ago, but now he has returned as a much more educated and self-confident grower.

"One of the things that impresses me about OSWP is the candidness of its members," says Clif. "People are frank in admitting their mistakes and failures, and this forthrightness is very beneficial to novice members who might otherwise be discouraged."

Clif has lived in a condo at Seven Oaks off Tuscarawas Road in Brighton Township for twenty years. More recently, he added a large kitchen to his unit, which includes a two-story window overlooking the golf course and lake. The natural light was a perfect inducement to pursue his old interest in gar-





continued from page 3

dening, and in orchid-growing in particular.

He has around 14 plants that are thriving, and growing in the natural light of his large kitchen window. He has Phalaenopsis, Cattleyas, and Brassias, and plans to slowly branch out in time. He is most interested in what will work well in his current environment, and has no plans to use artificial light.

He appreciates that not all Society members have greenhouses, and that some members use the space at hand to grow orchids. “I have room to expand, but I have no interest in orchids that won’t do well in the environment I have,” he remarks. “Orchids require a commitment, and I want to make sure that I have the time to give each of them the attention it deserves.” He is particularly drawn to green orchids, and to orchids with large, shapely, and colorful blooms.

In time, he expects to cull the collection of the Home Depot orchids that people usually acquire when they first become passionate about the hobby.

Clif is delighted with the “Show-and-Tell” photographs that Jim Yamber has been distributing through email to Society members. He himself has shared images – most recently, of an orchid with a spike growing out of a root that is now getting ready to bloom. “When it blooms, I’ll share that image with the members. I love to meet people, and I can’t wait for us to get together again.

“I’ll try something new, but I want to take the time to do it right. I want to be sure my orchids will grow successfully instead of experimenting and having many failures with orchids that aren’t right for my environment.

“My advice to orchid novices is to invest time in learning orchid care so that your losses are few.”



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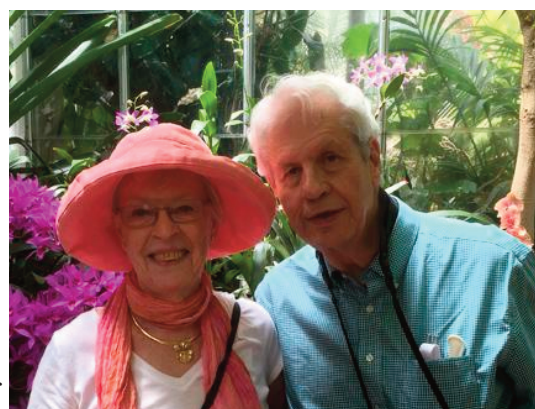
## **Orchid Gems 2**

Orchid Gems: Frank and Taylor Slaughter

By: Norma Raiff

Long-time AOS judges Frank and Taylor Slaughter joined the OSWP in 1973, dating back to a time that they resided in Pittsburgh. Frank was on the faculty of the University of Pittsburgh and Taylor, among her many other interests, was an art docent at The Frick and Carnegie for a period totaling about 30 years.

Today’s column introduces Frank and Taylor by focusing on their roles as AOS judges, where they feel the OSWP is going, and how both they and the AOS are coping with the Covid-19 pandemic.



continued on page 5

Now living in Taylor's hometown of Philadelphia, both are still active with us. For many long-term members, Taylor's role in chairing our show's AOS judging sessions and their joint involvement as ribbon judging leaders were pivotal to our continuing education about orchid quality.

**How did you become interested in orchids?** "Oh Lord, I got dragged screaming and kicking into it. Frank and I went on a trip with his parents who were interested in showing our kids Florida. So we took a car trip and his mom suggested that we stop and buy an orchid. Frank was enthusiastic and wanted to buy some, but I said 'over my dead body.' Well Frank bought two orchids that turned out to be inappropriate choices for our northern climate and limited growing conditions. One of his mom's friends, however, gave us a couple of plants and one of them, a Bc. Richard Mueller, bloomed and I was hooked! The original purchases eventually died, but we joined the OSWP and 'my over my dead body moment' didn't last long."

**When did you get involved in AOS judging?** "We joined the judging program in 1981 and became accredited judges in spring of 1987. We started to learn in a small group of OSWP members that we called the Awards Study Group. It was composed of Demetria and Bud (Demetria's late husband), Barbara Tisherman, the Crawfords, Jim Yamber and several others. We would study together and each one of us would select a slide and prepare a talk on it. It was a powerful learning experience."

**From your perspective, how has COVID affected your orchid-related experiences?** "There are many things that this pandemic has taught us about how we do things and what might be changed."

"Last Spring's OSWP show was the last before all AOS judging was shut down because of the pandemic. A few societies have experimented with outdoor judging."

"Under today's lockdown, judging has changed dramatically. The Judging Centers are meeting virtually and the AOS is focusing its energy on on-line webinars and planning for the future. There are many webinars on culture, habitats, and judging topics. We recommend that you check out the AOS website (aos.org). Both new and experienced growers might especially enjoy the monthly "Greenhouse Chat" webinars presented by Ron McHatton, AOS Chief Science Officer. These popular programs include both a planned topic and responses to viewer questions."

"As for AOS judging, no one so far has figured out how to do virtual judging. However, we judges still get together on Zoom and continue to learn. And once we get back to live judging, any AOS member or orchid grower is welcome to attend our Judging Center sessions on the first Saturday of every month at the National Arboretum in Washington DC. Bring your plants to be judged!"

In the meantime, you are invited to attend AOS's first online Orchid Speakers Day, All About Orchid Culture (February 6th, \$30 online registration fee plus a chance to win raffles on the "Orchid Wheel of Chance".)

While Taylor is busy being the chair of the AOS Judging Committee (which runs the national judging program), Frank continues to work on his orchid judging support program, Orchid Explorer, which prototypes ideas on judging support. Frank hopes his program will eventually be incorporated into the AOS judging and information program OrchidPro that is included in your AOS membership.

**Final words?** "Keep on growing orchids. Keep talking about it to people anyway that you can...and become an AOS member. You'll get a lot out of it!"

## **Mini-class 2021 – February 21 1:15pm prior to the O.S.W.P. business meeting.**

Phalaenopsis Culture – Carolyn Bolton

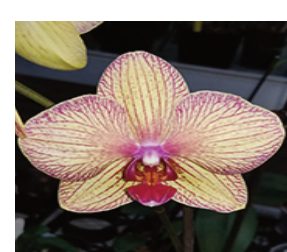
Please join myself and the O.S.W.P. for the mini-class for the February 2021 meeting. The speaker, Carolyn Bolton, will cover the culture of Phalaenopsis aka Moth Orchids.

Phalaenopsis are usually the first orchids introduced to most. Though they are now found in most big box stores and larger grocery stores the tags with the plants usually give terrible advice concerning watering and general culture. As a result the majority of these plants end up in the compost pile after 6-12 months.

The genus as presently understood contains about 75 species and well over 25,000 hybrids. Some of the more recent hybrids are 23, 24, and 25 generations away from their species ancestors. Long time growers like me remember when only white, pink, and white with a red lip, spotted, and striped varieties were available in the 1980's. Since then yellows, reds, and harlequin (spotted) have become new standards. Presently greens, other art shade colors, and other novelty type hybrids are becoming more popular. And don't forget some of those star shaped novelty hybrids have amazing fragrances.

Carolyn Bolton who I've known for all 38 years on my OSWP tenure will discuss the culture of these wonderful plants. Carolyn is well known for her masterful culture of Dendrochilum, Masdevallia and many other orchids. Please join Carolyn, myself, and the rest of the OSWP for this presentation prior to the regular O.S.W.P. meeting.

Timothy Choltco 2nd Vice President and all around decent sentient being.



### **DUES INFO:**

Although it is the beginning of a new calendar year, it is NOT our OSWP fiscal year, which is 07/01/20-06/30/21.

All new members, who joined from March 2020 thru June 2020, were given those extra four months, and are considered paid thru 06/30/21.

All memberships are paid up thru 06/30/21.

Therefore, **NO DUES PAYMENT SHOULD BE MADE NOW**, by anyone, except those just joining OSWP. Dues payments may be made, beginning May or June and will cover the new fiscal year, 07/01/21-06/30/22. Per the bylaws, members have 3 months, from July 1st, to submit dues payment, to continue their membership.

### **Febraury speaker Nile Dusdieker**

Our speaker for our February meeting will be Nile Dusdieker. He is talking on, 'The Dunes and the Mist; The Sanctuary and the Ledges; Orchids of Southern Brazil' describes one of their recent trips to four different habitats for native Brazilian orchids. They were fortunate to see literally hundreds of orchids in bloom.

Nile Dusdieker is a retired Gastroenterologist living in North Liberty, Iowa. He and his wife grow over 900 orchids in a greenhouse atop their third garage with most of the orchids going outside to a pergola in the summer. Nile is an accredited AOS Judge and has given presentations, posters, and webinars in the US, and internationally at the World Orchid Congress and Australian Orchid Council National Conventions. He has published several articles in Orchids Magazine.

Nile and his wife, Lois, are known locally as the 'Orchid Snoops' because everywhere they go they like to look for and learn more about orchids. Nile enjoys visiting orchid societies and sharing his passion for orchid growing.



## Judges Viewpoint by Dave Miller, Great Lakes Judging Center

### **Picking the Right Orchid**

I am sure this discussion is one that a lot of you have been waiting to hear. Selecting the right orchid is not always an easy thing to do even if you are accomplished grower or buyer.

Most everyone is enamored with a beautiful flower and usually you have to barge your way to the front counter in order to get the best flower. The thing about flowers is they appeal to different people differently. If you see one you like, you should buy it because you are the one who will anxiously await the coming of the next blooming. I have plants in my collection because of quirky color combinations or because I simply like orange flowers! It does not matter if others like them or not.

**Which Plant?** What's not to like about this UFO orchid flower? Looks pretty alien doesn't it? Or how about the stunning combination on this Miltassia with hollow spots on a stunning purple background?



Orchids like these may be talking to YOU directly. Buy them then find out how to grow them; it is part of the challenge of our hobby. Other than these show-stoppers and others like them, buying orchids is a more selective process. Hopefully, the plant you decide to acquire will present you with many years of flowers. For that to happen, you will need to look beyond the pretty flower.

With very few exceptions, I buy my plants based on the quality of the plant. Are the leaves strong? Does the plant wobble in the pot? Does it have more than one growth? Are the leaves clean without blemishes? Which plant on the table is larger and has more growths than the other ones like it? If there are pseudobulbs present, are they nice and plump? Lots of questions and let's dig into them. Strongly supported, firm leaves are usually an indicator of a quality plant that has a strong root system and has been getting the amount of light the plant likes. This kind of strength will reward in the future with better production. The same goes for wobbly plants. You should be looking at plants which are firmly rooted in the pot. Good roots are the heart of every good orchid. I will sometimes buy a smaller plant because the root system is so much stronger than the other choices. Sacrifice the present for the future.

Well, easier said than done. Sometimes you just need to buy the pretty flower for immediate satisfaction. GO FOR IT without remorse.



In the beginning when I was building my collection (do we ever stop building), I would buy lots of little plants so I would expand my orchid diversity. What I have found is that we end up with a bunch of immature orchids that take years to give us a little show. These days I am trying to buy fewer plants but more mature, hence more expensive, plants but the upside to that is actually more immediate performance. More mature plants give you better performance and more flower production. Follow this tip and you will find yourself on the show table before you know it. On the left is a small



Fredclarkara bought in 2014 and on the right is the same plant after five years and after several divisions. Which would you put on the show table? Sometimes it is best served to spend more and buy the larger plant.

One more thing about this topic. As you gain experience and success with growing orchids you will develop your culture skills and then consider populating your collection with more immature plants, seedlings, and even flasks but don't forget they are much more demanding to grow than mature plants and divisions.

**Evaluating Flowers** On to the part you wanted to know anyhow. With a couple pointers you will be able to seek out the really good flowers. A little botany first. Orchid flowers are zygomorphic. Duh, maybe too much botany. What zygomorphic means is they are bilaterally symmetrical. Another duh. It means the left half of the flower folds over perfectly over the right half. Okay, there it is.

When you are looking at orchid flowers, left and right half need to match. There are a few exceptions to the rule but that topic is way too complex for us now. On the right is a pretty Bletilla orchid flower and you can clearly see it follows this guideline of left half, right half. The more perfect the match, the better the flower.



Look for nice flat flowers where the edges are not rolled over or look like the dog sat on them. Again, some orchids don't display in such an orderly fashion but again this is simply a general rule. Do not be afraid to ask for help.



Another guideline is color consistency. Find the flower that has color and patterns when the flower tissue is solidly colored throughout the flower. Not a solid color flower but the color is the same density (saturation) where it is supposed to be that color. This Gilded Tower shows all the aspects for color and pattern. The solid colors are rich. The patterns are clearly separated by a crisp margin from each other.

Also, see how the dorsal sepal and petals are balanced and somewhat erect. Good form which is why I still have this plant in my collection. Well, two things, good form and it is still alive after many years. Hah.

Finally, let's visit the Gilded Tower again but look at the plant. Many orchids we buy are known for their multifloral inflorescences (flower spikes). Look at all the flowers on those spikes. We want to see uniform spacing between the flowers, prefer enough distance between them to see each flower, and the flowers match each other in color AND form. Some of that comes from culture but at the sales table we must use what we see and hope we can maintain that good culture. Don't be afraid to ask the seller about culture. Most orchid sellers love to help you learn to grow your plants. If not, put your other society members to work. In the end, my motto is "If you walk past an orchid on the sales table and it turned your head, then immediately turn around and buy it".

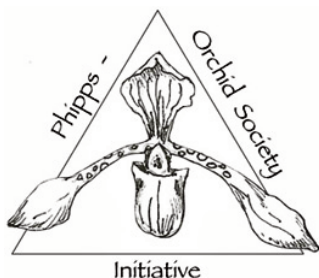


Contact Dave at dcmjpasmil@aol.com or call or text to 330-307-7189.

### Current Committees Chairs,

AOS	Nancy Kline	Orchid Gems	Norma Raiff, Pam Horter-Moore,
Culture Corner	Nancy Kline		Cristina Eyler
Facebook	Lance Cheuvront	Pfun	Nancy Kline
Garden Club/Library Liaison	Karen Gibson	P-OSI	Demetria Marsh
Hospitality	Carolyn Bolton	Raffle	Natalie Turicik
Library	Rosa Graudins	Show	Sheila Nathanson, Tammy Wurst,
Membership	Kathy Collins		Norma Raiff and Janet Greenberg
Mini-class	Tim Cholte	Speaker	Kathleen Arria and David Springer
Newsletter	Jim Yamber	Website	Jinghua Ou





## 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.

February 2021

I wish Katie Schuller, Phipps Orchid Manager, farewell, as she begins a new phase of her life with work in the private sector.

Katie has been invaluable in caring for the Phipps Orchid Collection, organizing and working hard to grow Phipps Orchid Collection even better and more efficiently.

For Phipps she has worked tirelessly, caring for the orchids, setting up the Phipps Orchid Show and for doing a Phipps exhibit for our own OSWP show, as well as helping setting up other shows at Phipps as well.

With the OSWP, she has encouraged our volunteers as a group as well as one-on-one work sessions, and organized all the orchid materials, working to improve the orchid collection as much as possible. Katie was invaluable in helping with the orchid inventory work and keeping it updated. She attended our monthly meetings when possible as well as the Paph Forum in Washington, DC. Katie was very generous with her time and knowledge with our society, as well as organizing orchid sales for our members and other Phipps volunteers, and giving tours of the growing houses for our February meetings, when we were able to have them at Botany Hall.

Katie's knowledge, hard work and organizational skills are topped only by her wonderful spirit. She has always worked with us graciously.

We will miss Katie Schuller greatly and wish her much success and happiness.

Don't miss Katie's most recent work effort: A Splash of Brilliance, this year's Orchid and Bonsai Show at Phipps 1/23 – 2/28.

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### **New Members Corner**     Kathy Collins Membership Chair

We would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest member(s) to OSWP:

**Debi and Charles Drummond- joined 1/10/21**

**Nancy Cooper-Bergman, joined 12/26/20**

**Janette Gomez, joined 11/25/20**



First Class Mail

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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 2021 speaker**

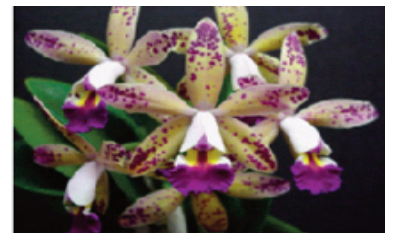
FUTURE PROGRAMS

February 21, 2021

**Nile Dusdieker**

The Dunes and the Mist  
the Sanctuary and the Ledges:  
Orchids of Southern Brazil

More to come for the future programs for 2021



**WANTED**

**The American Orchid  
Society Judging Program  
is seeking highly  
motivated orchid  
enthusiasts to join the  
judging ranks.**

*Work with other such people and  
help maintain our awards  
programs and educational efforts.*

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