

Next Meeting:
August 2
Speaker:
Alan Koch

Miniature Cattleyas for the Home Grower

Alan Koch owns and operates Gold Country Orchids where he specializes in miniature and compact Cattleya's. Alan started growing orchids in 1969 with 3 Cymbidiums given to him by an aunt. While in college he became interested in other orchids and discovered many would grow outdoors in Southern California. He has moved five times as his orchid obsession has led to the need for more growing space. With the last move, he purchased 10 acres of land in Lincoln, California for his 250,000 orchids. He is recognized as an expert in the Brazilian Cattleya alliance and a trend setter in miniature Cattleya breeding. Alan has been published in the Orchid Digest, the American Orchid Society magazine, as well as many International Publications. He has also been published in several proceedings of the World Orchid Conference. He is an internationally known speaker.



MEETING AGENDA

- 2:30 – Orchids 101
- 3:15 – Meeting Begins
- 4:15 – Break
- 4:30 – Announcements
- 5:00 – Adjourn

Discount Information

Get a 20% discount on all preorders and free freight. To take advantage of this you need to do the following:

- Under discount enter the following code, GCOD (case sensitive)
- Under shipping enter "ship to a society"
- Under comments enter the name of your society or event we are to bring your plants.

A limited availability list which also qualifies for the 20% discount and free freight was sent with this newsletter. You can email in your order or call it in. This can be paid for on our paypal account via our email address at gcorchids@aol.com, with your credit card if you phone in your order or at the meeting with cash or check. At the present time we are re-building our website and it may be easier to email or phone in your order. goldcountryorchids.com
916-645-8600

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Candy from the Redland Show

Welcome GNTOS members to August; boy is it HOT! More about that later.

Last month's meeting was our semiannual auction and we missed a lot of you, and you missed a lot of fun, food, and some competitive bidding. Charles Hess our auctioneer was awesome, even opening with a joke in honor of our auctioneer for many years, Jerry Branden-

President's Message

burg. Charles kept up with the lively bidding, even pumping the bidders to go higher! Great job Charles, and thanks to all of you that came and participated.

The heat is on and my greenhouse now seems to need continuous maintenance. I have had to replace the pump on my swamp cooler, clean many mister nozzles, and repair several breaks in the tubing on the misters. It seems I repair at least a break a week. (I will be replacing the old tubing soon)

Seeing evidence of a lot of water on one area of the greenhouse prompted me to run the misters through a cycle to figure out the problem areas. Paying attention to the high/low thermometer and the high temperature reading on the thermometer told me the swamp cooler wasn't doing its job.

No matter whether you grow in a greenhouse, inside your house with grow lights or outside under the trees, take queues from your equipment and plants to make sure everything is working or is being watered as it should be. If not, you could have some French Fried plants!

Rhonda and I made it to the Redland International Orchid Show in Homestead, Florida in May. So many vendors and plants, it was a bit overwhelming but so worth the trip. I was like a kid in a candy store! There were 41 vendors of orchids and supplies! Here are a couple of pictures. But be advised if you go ... take at least 1 empty suit case! I guarantee you will be bringing back a lot!

Cheers,
Mike



Rhonda with bag of goodies at Redland

Orchids 101

Kathi McKenzie
& Lorna Kissling

This month: "Q&A"

ORCHIDS 101 classes are tailored to the beginning orchid grower. It will be an informal discussion so come and share your tips and tricks so we may all benefit from everyone's ideas.



We meet in the greenhouse at 2:30 for 30 minutes so we can get all questions answered in time for the meeting at 3:00.

Photo by Forest Shipp.

Dallas Judging Center

Nancy Cropp

AOS DALLAS JUDGING CENTER JULY 11, 2015

Four plants entered for consideration, no awards given.

Training sessions for the last six months of this year will be on Dendrobiums.

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The Dallas Judging Center meets on the second Saturday of every month.

The next meeting is
September, 12 at the:
Garland Senior Activity Center
600 West Avenue A,
Garland, TX 75040

11am
Everyone is welcome.

Calendar

by Rhonda Whitson

August	<i>Alan Koch</i>	Mini Catts
Sept	<i>Linda Horton</i>	Show Prep
October	<i>Emily Quinn</i>	Sex and the Single Orchid, or How to Get Pollinated

This calendar is accurate at the time the newsletter is published. However changes often happen. If you wish to hear a specific presentation please verify that the speaker is still scheduled.



Fall Orchid Show

Lorna Kissling

We are still in need of clerks for the September show. This is the perfect job for those of you who have just started with orchids. You can watch and learn as the judges consider the winning orchids. We usually like to have around 10 or so. Clerks assist the judges as they look over the flowers and exhibits during the ribbon judging. They can also be present for the AOS judging, when the best flowers are pulled for special consideration for AOS awards. Judging will take place the evening of Friday, the 25th. All clerks and judges will have dinner provided for them, then the judging will take place. Please contact me at lornajk80@gmail.com if you would like to participate. We have a great set of judges here in Dallas and they enjoy sharing their knowledge!

Also, someone had expressed an interest in helping with the clerks, but I don't have your name! Please let me know who you are by email.

Thanks!

Lorna Kissling
lornajk80@gmail.com

Here's what's happening with our show!

Friday thru Sunday, Sept. 25-27

Southfork Hotel
1600 N. Central Expy
Plano TX 75054

Setup for the show begins Friday at around 9am. Vendors/exhibitors will be coming starting around 10 – this gives us a hour to prepare for them. Judging will also be Friday beginning at 7pm.

Sign up to Clerk

The judges will need clerks to help them with judging that night (and clerks will get a free meal with the judges!). You do not need to be an orchid expert to clerk. Anyone can help.

The show is open to the public on Saturday 9am to 5pm, and Sunday 10am to 4pm. Vendors and others are being invited to talk about orchids –talks could include topics on trips taken to view orchids in other countries and demos on repotting/ mounting orchids. There will be 4 to 6 talks scheduled over Saturday and Sunday. If you are interested in giving a talk or demo, contact Lorna Kissling at lornajk80@gmail.com or 214-484-8930.

Orchid Conservation Update

Charles Hess



Costa Rica A Little Bit of Paradise

I have been carrying around memories from my first trip to Costa Rica with its magnificent forests, wildlife and orchids, and it was a special treat to return this past month after 15 years. The drive from the capital San Jose to the Pacific coast was much improved with a new highway in place. Once we reached the coast and turned toward Manuel Antonio National Park, near where we would

be staying, we were able to see up close just what was left of the tropical forest along this coastal road. On my previous trip I was not very much in tune with the issues tropical forests have been facing over the last several decades, and therefore I didn't notice anything particularly disturbing. This trip I was different. Most notable were the miles of perfectly aligned palm oil trees where tropical forests once thrived.

It is not unusual for commercial interests to cut a swath through tropical forests as logging has been an issue for decades. Forests survive this abuse to a large degree. But what is so dramatic is that the African palm oil agriculture requires clear cutting so that none of the original forests remain. Not only does this totally destroy the native habitats, but the burning releases CO₂ back into the atmosphere. The agricultural threat to the coastal areas of Costa Rica's Quepos area were so severe that a number of Costa Ricans organized in 1972 and bought 3 square miles of land already destined to be lost to chain saws and bull dozers in order to preserve at least a small area of the natural forest. This became Manuel Antonio National Park, named after one of the key organizers of this effort. Although small compared to other well-known nature preserves, this park is one of the most

heavily visited areas in Costa Rica, and rightfully so, with so much of nature easily visible over a number of hiking trails.

Our small hotel backed up to much of this tropical forest, and from our balcony I could see many orchids, mostly *Catasetums*. It was a thrill to see them, and to realize how successfully these species manage to thrive even in this relatively commercial area of hotels and businesses. I couldn't help but think of the many species that must have been destroyed in making way for a palm oil plantation just a few miles up the road.

On our return to San Jose after a relaxing week, we met up with a young British couple backpacking around the world. As we again passed the miles of palm oil trees they commented on how far they flew inside of Borneo just to get past the African palm oil trees to the nature preserve they were to stay in. This reminded me of the effort of the Rainforest Trust in Borneo to preserve what is left of their valuable forests treasures, very much like the people of Costa Rica did with their Manuel Antonio Park.

It seem everywhere I turn, I hear about palm oil and its impact on our planet. The web site "Say No to Palm oil" (saynotopalmoil.com) explains it well: *The industry is linked to major issues such as deforestation, habitat degradation, climate change, animal cruelty and indigenous rights abuses in the countries where it is produced, as the land and forests must be cleared for the*

Palm Oil Harvesting





Palm oil plantation in Costa Rica



development of the oil palm plantations. According to the World Wildlife Fund, an area the equivalent size of 300 football fields of rainforest is cleared each hour to make way for palm oil production. This large-scale deforestation is pushing many species to extinction, and findings show that if nothing changes species like the orangutan could become extinct in the wild within the next 5-10 years, and Sumatran tigers less than 3 years.

In total, 50 million tons of palm oil is produced annually, supplying over 30% of the world's vegetable oil production. This single vegetable oil is found in approximately 40-50% of household products in countries such as United States, Canada, Australia and England. Palm oil can be present in a wide variety of products, including: baked goods, confectionery, shampoo, cosmetics, cleaning agents, washing detergents and toothpaste.

Palm oil has enjoyed an increase in popularity, partly because it contains no trans-fats. This past week, the FDA announced that it will ban all trans-fats from American food within the next three years. While this move by the FDA will improve the health of many Americans, it also means that the demand for Palm Oil will grow even higher.

Some countries are fighting back. The French Ecology Minister has called for a boycott of the hazelnut spread Nutella that contains a large amount of palm oil. Also, there are organizations that are asking companies

to refrain from expanding into what are called "Paradise" lands, namely those that contain endangered species. Companies should instead use "degraded" land, that which has already been cleared but has been abandoned.

The effectiveness of these programs comes only as a result of pressure from the public insisting that sustainable practices be implemented. Public pressure comes from each and every one of us being aware of the problem and educating ourselves on products we should avoid. You can be a positive force here. When you shop for food and grooming products, simply check the labels for any of the following ingredients:

Palm Kernel, Palm Kernel Oil, Palm Fruit Oil, Palmate, Palmitate, Palmolein, Glyceryl, Stearate, Stearic Acid, Elaeis Guineensis, Palmitic Acid, Palm Stearine, Palmitoyl Oxostearamide, Palmitoyl Tetrapeptide-3, Sodium Laureth Sulfate, Sodium Lauryl Sulfate, Sodium Kernelate, Sodium Palm Kernelate, Sodium Lauryl Lactylate/Sulphate, Hydrated Palm Glycerides, Etyl Palmitate, Octyl Palmitate, Palmityl Alcohol.

The benefit in avoiding these products is two-fold. First, you are doing your part in reducing pressure on our valuable tropical forests and promoting conservation. Second, you can improve your health and eat a good diet without products containing palm oil. That is truly a win-win proposition, don't you agree?

Orchid Growing Tips

by Courtney Hackney

A monthly growers advice column by Courtney Hackney. Hackneau@comcast.net

This column is written in humid coastal North Carolina and Florida, and the advice given should be adjusted to the readers climate.

Growing Phalaenopsis in Lava Rocks ... Two Years Later

During the past 3 or 4 weeks I have had some time to spend in the greenhouse and time to review my orchid growing culture. It is often difficult to accurately assess whether cultural changes have really improved the growth of your orchids because too often all we remember is the problem plant or the night slugs ate your prize buds just before they opened. One approach that I find useful is to examine my use of pesticides, fungicides, and fertilizers from year to year in light of my culture. The application of these products often reflects large-scale problems.

What I discovered is that I had drastically reduced my use of pesticides and fungicides. That does not mean that there have been no pests; juvenile crickets have occasionally chewed on new buds. There has also been an occasional rot here and there, but nothing widespread. The greatest surprise was how little soluble fertilizer I had used. The next question is whether my orchids have grown better or worse between years. The mantra among the best orchid growers is if orchids are provided with proper light, air circulation, good water, and nutrition there will be few pest and disease problems.

With the exception of a small collection of vanda-ceous orchids, new pseudobulbs on cattleyas are larger this year, with more flowers and roots. Phalaenopsis not only survived in the 100 degree heat this summer, but they also produced several new leaves simultaneously.

There has been the occasional orchid that “bit the dust”, but, generally, this has been a great growing year. WHY?

If you want to become a good grower you must keep records so you can determine what worked and what has not worked. Most significant for me has been the fact that very cold conditions, below 50 F, in late spring did not result in widespread rots in phalaenopsis. Similarly, in day after day of searing summer’s heat, there have been very few bacterial or fungal rots. In the 25 years I have grown phals, this has never happened before.

Several years ago, a number of growers in the International Phalaenopsis Alliance had the elemental content of their phal leaves tested. What surprised me was the amazing variability among growers and the surprising concentration of some micronutrients. The take-home lesson for many phal growers was that these orchids could grow under high nutrient conditions without any significant cultural problems. What was not said was that many commercial growers whose orchids were tested used almost constant antifungal and antibacterial treatments to prevent rots.

My suspicion was that many growers did not provide a balanced nutrition which left their orchids susceptible to rots once the protection of constant fungicides was removed. It was extremely frustrating to purchase magnificent phals that would develop just about every rot known within a couple of weeks in my greenhouse. Meanwhile, phals right next to these new phals grew just fine. If I repotted the new phal and kept it alive long enough to grow new leaves it would often thrive under the same conditions that previously led to rots. Even so, I still thought I had more rot problems than average.

Thus, my cultural goal for many years has been to find the perfect nutrition for optimal growth and disease

resistance using the water available to me. Unless you use RO water or rain water, water varies greatly with respect to both the quantity of dissolved elements and the proportion of one to another. The dissolved minerals often affect the growth of orchids and may even limit whether your fertilizer is available to your orchids. Within any area, growers have figured out what fertilizer works best given the water available. Even the most accomplished grower must change their culture if they move to a different water supply. Those that grow orchids well with few problems have found the perfect mix of water and nutrition.

Several years ago I decided that the key to finding the right balance of nutrients was to eliminate changes in nutrient availability and pH brought on by decomposing media. So, as I began to repot my orchids each was placed in lava rock. Lava rock, while inert, retains a surprisingly large amount of water and will even accumulate a little salt, but the medium does not change as it degrades or accumulates nutrients. Flushing pots thoroughly once a month produces the same environment for roots no matter how long the orchid is in the pot. The lack of an organic matrix to hold nutrients eliminated possible salt buildup, but required regular nutrition since very little is retained by the lava rock. The use of 13-13-13 Nutricote has worked well to provide the constant feeding required in lava rock, despite the tendency for the grey pellets to fall to the bottom of the pot. Apparently, enough of the pellets are retained in the rock to allow great growth.

Once a week, if I have time, a very weak fertilizer solution of Jacks 12-2-15 RO is applied (1/16 teaspoon/gal). This fertilizer is specially formulated for rainwater and contains high levels of calcium and magnesium required for proper plant growth. This solution is sprayed on plant

leaves after plants have been watered. The nutrient level is very low but supplies the extra calcium & magnesium I think orchids need. This weak solution has a pH of 6.5, which is similar to the pH of rainwater here on the coast.

Soluble high nitrogen fertilizers must be used with caution as they can produce very low pH levels in RO or rainwater; levels low enough to kill orchid roots. For instance, delivery of 100 ppm of N, a feeding rate used by many commercial growers, (1/2 teaspoon/gal) will produce a pH of 3.93 that will damage roots. The manufacturer recommends using a buffer to raise the pH, but this is more than most hobbyists can manage. Thus, I rely on Nutricote to deliver the key nutrients of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium.

As noted earlier, the only orchids that have not responded to this change in culture have been vandas in open baskets. I interpret this as evidence that my weak solution of high nitrogen fertilizer does not deliver enough of this key nutrient. Despite attempts to place Nutricote in bags above the vandas, they are clearly not growing as well as they have in the past; no doubt due to a nutrient limitation. Vandas in lava rock have grown extremely well, again indicating that nutrient limitations are a problem for my vandas growing in baskets.



Orchids that Grow Well In Dallas Part 3 of 3

The Plants most seen in Dallas and why
(WARM GROWERS)

PHALAENOPSIS (PHALS)

Three basic classifications

Standard – the large ones with big round flowers

Miniature - often look like very small versions of standards

Novelty – tend to be compact growers with diverse bold colors, often with a small number (1-2) of star-shaped flowers

All have basically the same cultural requirements

Temperature – if you are comfortable so are they!
(65°-90°)

Standard phals start wilting much below 60° or much above 90°

Light – just enough to cast a well defined shadow!
Definitely not bright light.

Remember – it is easier to add shade than add light.

Humidity – naturally prefer 60%-80% ... but manageable drier.

Growing Media – Volume growers use sphagnum.
Smaller growers usually bark mix or bark.

Watering – roots stay damp (not wet in water)

Seasonal bloomers (mostly spring) triggerable by hours/intensity of light received and slight temperature variation (5-10 degrees in winter)

PHALAENOPSIS IN DALLAS

Greenhouse growing - easy in Dallas.

- keep in 50%+ shade (shade cloth works)
- greenhouse temperatures between 65° and 90° (at most)
- humidity provided by swamp cooler / water wall / media
- *very strong changes in length and intensity of light = easy to bloom here*

Indoor growing

- **Temperature** in your home is almost certainly great for growing; most people also allow it to drop 5-10 degrees in winter which also promotes blooming.
- **Light** is the key variable to grow and bloom and often not under your control
On or near windows but protect from direct sun – *gets seasonal variance*
Under frosted skylights – *gets seasonal light variance*
Can supplement with fluorescent lights
If only using artificial lighting, must control time to induce bloom.
- **Humidity** from media is usually enough
Growing in bathrooms is common if there is light
- **Water** is under your control; watch roots, do not overwater or let dry.

Phals can be grown almost everywhere indoors which is one reason they are the most commonly sold plant. Dallas has good seasonal light variation for blooming

Daniel Callahan, local Greater North Texas Orchid Society member and an American Orchid Society (AOS) student judge at the Dallas Judging Center, gave a talk at our May meeting on Orchids For Dallas: "What Generally Does Well and Where to Get Them". His talk covered many key lessons learned including common failures and successes in growing orchids.

Here is a three part summary of his presentation.

CATTLEYS (CATTS)

Three basic classifications by size

Standards – classic corsage orchids

Compacts – generally standards crossed with miniature to small species

Miniatures – very small species and their crosses

Standard Cattleyas Cultural Requirements:

Temperatures: officially warm growers but tolerant: 50°-95°

Blooming combines light and temperature triggers...

May require 15 – 20° differences from night to day to bloom!

Light: bright light for orchids

Watering: they have pseudobulbs for storage, allow to dry between watering

Compact Cattleyas Cultural Requirements:

Mostly similar to above, perhaps less temperature tolerant.

Some compact cattleyas are much less dependent on day-night temperature differences to bloom.

Miniature Cattleyas Cultural Requirements:

mostly species, no generalizations.

CATTLEYS IN DALLAS

Greenhouse growing – easy in Dallas; perhaps easiest ...

- keep in 75% shade (shade cloth works, under oaks works too)
- greenhouse temperatures between 50° and 95°
- humidity provided by swamp cooler / water wall / media
- very strong changes in light and temperature = easy to bloom here

Indoor growing

Water is under your control; watch roots, do not overwater

- **Temperature** may not swing sufficiently between day and night for blooming.
 - Can bring out in early spring after freeze risk is past
 - Some compact cattleyas are much less dependent on temperature
- Sufficient **light** may be difficult to provide without grow lamps
 - Can not leave in direct sun and full shade is typically not enough
- **Humidity** from media is usually enough

Catts are one of the easiest to grow in greenhouses. Dallas has good seasonal light and temperature variation for blooming. It's harder to grow standard Catts completely indoors.

PAPHIOPEDILUM (PAPHS)

Two loose classifications:

- Warm growing – often mottled leaves; also include multiflorals
- Intermediate growing

Warm growers are treated similar to Phals but a little less water and more light!

Normally grown in a bark mix or bark.

Why aren't these more common?

- Can not be cloned yet
- Expensive
- Uncertain result

Slowest growers of all we've seen (up to 7 years to bloom).

In general, the serious Phal growers tend to grow Paphs as well.

DENDROBIUMS

Various different species and hybrids with different cultural requirements
Fortunately, many grow much like Cattleyas but without as strong a temperature need.
Look for these; ask around ... ask someone with Orchid Wiz!

- Some are deciduous. Reduce water if/when leaves drop.
- They like small pots relative to their plant size.

'Phalaenopsis' type Dendrobiums – named for flower appearance, warm growers ... thrive next to my Cattleyas.

Growing Tip: dendrobiums like to be root bound = small pots.
Oddly, so do ReedStem Epidendrums...

ONCIDIUMS

Way too many species and hybrids.
Most like bright light (like Catts) but lower temperatures especially to bloom.

Most of what you may see might not be easy to bloom in Dallas inside or out, particularly the larger flowered types

Two good hybrids are very popular and both can be found in different colors:

- Sharry Baby (chocolate fragrance) and Sharry Baby's children: Heaven Scent, Sharry's Woc
- Twinkle (mini)

VANDAS

Light: brightest light, still not direct sun
Temperatures: warm growers, do not like changes

Watering: most are grown in air and watered daily or misted more often

Least commonly grown and least well grown in Dallas of all of these.

Require daily watering which is best met with automated misters.

High light requirement difficult to meet indoors

Someone could grow these like a pro in Dallas using:

- an indoor 'wet' room or basement
- automated misters
- sufficient artificial lights
- maintain temperature constant day-night
- alter light/temperatures seasonally to induce blooming

Society History

The history of the GNTOS goes way back. In the mid-40s there were only three orchid growers in town: Eli Sanger of Sanger Brothers, which was Dallas' biggest department store at that time; Roy Munger, known for Munger Place and Munger Street, and Percy Larkin.

Margie Corn, a garden columnist, was the source of any orchid information they could find and she gave their names to a woman running Hardy's Seed Company, Mrs. Moses. They gathered at her house one day in 1946 and it was Mr. & Mrs. Polhemus, Mr. & Mrs. Roy Carter, Homer Baldwin, Percy Larkin and a young man from Waxahachie named Costalanus. They decided they would apply for AOS membership and started receiving the Bulletin and meeting monthly. More and more people started to show up and they elected Percy Larkin, Jr. their first president in 1947. This was the North Texas Orchid Society.

They held their first show in 1950 at the Marsh Kaiser Fraiser automobile agency on Ross Avenue. Jack Morris was president of the society and Homer Baldwin sent out invitations to everyone who grew orchids in Dallas. Invitations also went to the big orchid firms who would send representatives from around the country to the show. They had everyone sign a book that came to that show.

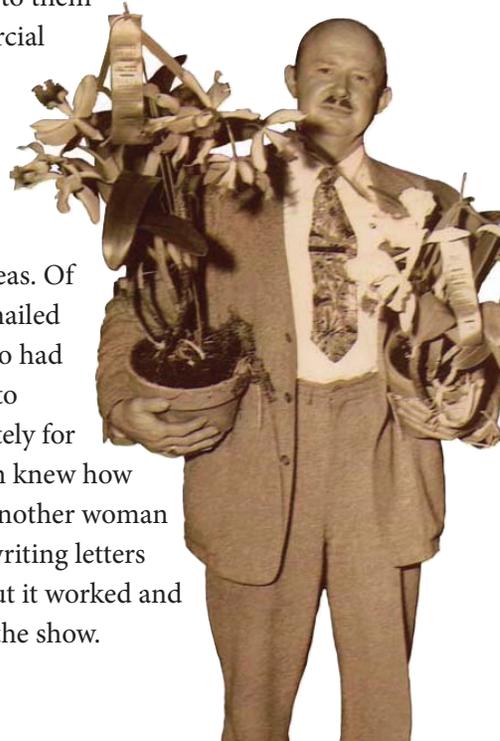
There was an incident over a plant raffle that year that upset several members of the North Texas Orchid Society, so several members chose to leave and form another society calling themselves the

Dallas Orchid Society. Percy Larkin was one of the members who left to form the Dallas Orchid Society. This society was never sanctioned by the AOS.

The following year with much encouragement from Homer Baldwin, most of the members from the Dallas Orchid Society came back to join the original society.

Later, they decided to become affiliated with the American Orchid Society so they wrote a Constitution and Bylaws for the society. On March 19, 1954, they were issued a charter by the AOS as the Greater North Texas Orchid Society.

They put on a show in the Dallas Garden Center but there weren't enough plants in the area so the bulk of the show was made up of boxes of blooms sent to them for free from commercial growers. They'd get five, six, or seven boxes of flowers from different growers from all over the country – even overseas. Of course, Homer had mailed cards to everyone who had an ad in the Bulletin to achieve this. Fortunately for Homer, Lena Baldwin knew how to type and she and another woman spent half the night writing letters on two typewriters but it worked and they had orchids for the show.



GNTOS membership dues are paid yearly by January 31, in order for you to be listed in the published Yearbook.

- \$30.00 – New or Renewing Member (individual)
- \$15.00 – Additional Member (each additional person in same household)

Membership Dues

Please mail completed form with payment to:

Kathy Halverson
1922 Baylor Drive
Richardson, TX 75081

Make check payable to GNTOS.

New Member Renewing Member

Name (#1): _____

Name (#2): _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail (#1): _____

E-mail (#2): _____