



# North Eastern New York Orchid Society

contact@nenyos.org

www.nenyos.org

**February 2015**

## Challenges of Growing Northeast

By Sandy Buxton II

All of us are faced with problems to overcome as growers who are trying to keep an orchid collection growing and thriving through our Northeast winters. Sometimes, the weather works to our advantage as Stan Lee has shown us with Phals enjoying a little "chill" time in his poolhouse which then gives beautiful spikes.

Others wrestle with gelled fuel feeding the heaters trying to keep greenhouses and growing areas warm.

But it is really irritating when a non-weather related power outage continues far longer than predicted during a substantial cold snap.

Sandy Buxton I and II got to experience that last week when a 2:30 p.m. car accident took out a pole and cut power to a large section of Washington County. At this point we don't have backup heat, and when I arrived home from a night meeting after 9:00 p.m., I found the thermostat in my house registering 49 degrees. The outside temp was 0.

After a chilly night, the power finally returned about 3:30 a.m. At 5:30, the outside temp was -18 degrees. Inside had finally got back up to 60-65 degrees. The neighbors spent the day thawing out their pipes so we are grateful to have escaped as well as we did.

I know it took me 24 more hours before I felt I was warm....So far the orchids seem to have survived and I take inspiration

from Mark Conley's when his actually froze and some made it.

As growers, you try to plan for contingencies and have everything work out, but you just can't always make it work. So look around your place and think about how you would handle a problem.

## Smart Phone Apps

At lunch last week, I found out one of my colleagues has a cool app that turns his phone into a light meter. While it may not be the most technically advanced or accurate, a review from several photography blogs showed their experiments documented that several phone apps are actually reasonable equipment to use. (It helps if you use a gray card to calibrate.)

The app he uses is "GPS Status", it has more goodies that you can play with but the light meter is very easy to read.

Other apps that orchid growers might find beneficial include: Orchid Notebook which helps to track collections.

There are also two AOS culture apps for Ipad produced by Xfactor Multimedia; Volume 1 and Vol-



Growers use light meters such as this to measure the intensity of the sun near their orchids. Now cell phones can perform the same function.

ume 2.

For more info and to see an article from AOS on this, check out: <https://www.aos.org/Default.aspx?id=709>

## February 2015

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## Upcoming Meetings

**January 17, 2015 - lunch-eon at Wolfert's Roost**

**February 7—Drew Monthie, "Growing Orchids Hydroponically"**

**March 7—Ryan Georgia of Native Exotics. They have a micro-propagation lab for native orchids and carnivorous species.**

**April 4—John Salventi with Tom Purvience formerly of Parkside Orchids will premiere an AOS topic "Orchid nutrition".**

**May 2—Alan Koch, Gold Country Orchids at Sanford Library in Colonie**

**June 7—Piping Rock Open House—co-hosted with NENYOS, in Galway, NY**

### MAKING IT WORK FOR NENYOS OFFICERS FOR 2014

Donna Wardlaw	Co-President
Janet Vinyard	Co-President & Treasurer
Deb Lambeth	Secretary
Ed Belemjian	Director
Sandy Buxton	Director
Mark Conley	Director
Steve Condon	Website
Stan Lee	Past President
Sandy Buxton	AOS Rep
Gillen O'Brien	Name Tags
Joan Gardner	Refreshments
Bob Odess & Ed Belemjian	Raffle Greeter

NENYOS Contact:

Contact@nenyos.org

Sandy Buxton Newsletter Ed.  
buxtonsandy@gmail.com

## Upcoming Events in the Northeast

**Feb 5 – 8, 2015 Deep Cut Orchid Society "18th Annual Orchid Show"** Dearborn Market, 2170 Route 35, Holmdel, NJ. Contact: Helen E. Kroh, 732-828-7727 or [krohsnest@optonline.net](mailto:krohsnest@optonline.net)

**Feb 13 – 15, 2015 New Hampshire Orchid Society Show** at Radisson Hotel, 11 Tara Blvd., Nashua, NH. Contact: Jean Hallstone 603-880-0404 or [jhallstone@yahoo.com](mailto:jhallstone@yahoo.com)

**Feb. 14, 2015 National Capital Orchid Society "35th Annual Paphiopedilum Forum"**, US National Arboretum, 3501 New York Ave NE, Washington DC. Contact William Goldner, 410-286-2664; [woodstream3@verizon.net](mailto:woodstream3@verizon.net)

**Feb. 21-22, 2015 Amherst Orchid Society Show**—Smith Vocational & Ag High School, 80 Locust St, Northampton, MA; Contact Marc Gray, 802-348-7926; [bulbophyl-lum@myfairpoint.net](mailto:bulbophyl-lum@myfairpoint.net)

**Feb 28 – Mar 8, 2015 Pennsylvania Horticultural Society "Philadelphia Flower Show"** at Pennsylvania Convention Center, 100 N. 20th St., 5th Floor, Philadelphia, PA. Contact: Betty Greene 215-988-8826 or [bgreene@pennhort.org](mailto:bgreene@pennhort.org)

GROS—Greater Rochester Orchid Soc.

CTOS—Connecticut OS

STOS—Southern Tier OS

MHOS—Mid-Hudson OS C heck [www.aos.org/events](http://www.aos.org/events) before traveling to see if there may be a local orchid event at your destination. Everything published in *Orchids* magazine is also on the web page



**Calanthe rosea purchased at the November Auction. Spike has been growing since then and has finally started to bloom. Plant is still in deciduous state with bulbous pseudobulbs sitting in the pot below!**

SBuxton

## Beginner Series Class—

And here's the list of upcoming beginner talks:

### Beginner Talks 2014-2015

Feb	Preparing your orchids for display
Mar	An orchid genus we haven't talked about

Beginner Grower lectures are generally held before regular meetings at about 1:30 p.m. Arriving for a meeting early allows participants to check out the Show Table, have a snack and look at the Sale Table!! As well as find a chair with a good view and ask questions of the other members.

Much of our learning happens by gaining information from our peers!

## Catasetum Update—Gift Plant 2013

Don't forget that we are coming to the slow down period for these deciduous orchids. November is when you should slow down fertilizing and watering aggressively.

Then by mid-December to January, cease watering. Leaves should come off.

Do not start watering in February until new growth is 3-4 inches high.

Next month we will discuss repotting the plants before new growth starts.

**The January 2015 AOS Corner-**

From the desk of Laura Newton,  
Membership and Affiliated Societies  
Chair

Happy New Year!

I find the webinars to be one of the  
best benefits to AOS membership!

Our webinars for the next two  
months:

**January 22, 2015, 8:30 PM EST**

Ron McHatton will present The Or-  
chids of Madagascar: The Land that  
Time Forgot.

Madagascar is a world hot-spot for  
orchids. Orchids are the largest fami-  
ly of flowering plants on the island,  
almost 1000 species make up some  
10% of Madagascar's flora; 90% of  
them are endemic.. They occur in al-  
most every habitat, from coastal and  
montane forests to cold mountain  
tops and dry spiny forest. Join Ron  
McHatton, Director of Education, and  
learn about this amazing land and its  
orchids, including Darwin's orchid,  
*Angraecum sesquipedale*.

**February 25, 2015, 8:30 PM EST**

Harry Gallis, Accredited AOS Judge  
and Board of Trustees Vice President  
will present Demystifying AOS Judg-  
ing: What are those Judges Looking  
For?

Dr. Harry Gallis has been growing  
orchids since 1980, and currently has  
about 380 plants. The largest groups  
are cattleyas, phalaenopsis, and den-  
drobiums, the latter being his current  
passion. His plants have received 41  
AOS awards and, says Harry, "I very  
much enjoy growing plants for shows

and awards." He entered the AOS  
judging program in 1991, and is an  
Accredited Judge and Past Chair of  
the Carolinas Judging Center in  
Greensboro, NC. In 1999, he was  
asked to take on the position of na-  
tional training coordinator for AOS  
judges. He served as Chair of the  
Judging Committee for two years.  
Harry knows lots about judging; get-  
ting plants awarded, and will help us  
all understand what the judges want  
and how we might get one of those  
awards.

If you are already an AOS member,  
sign up for the webinars today on our  
website [www.aos.org](http://www.aos.org). If you are not  
yet a member, now is the time to be-  
come one and start enjoying all the  
many benefits of membership!

In the January 2015 issue of Orchids,  
there are plenty of wonderful articles  
chock-full of great information. Here  
are some of my favorites:

- Broughtonia by Thomas  
Mirenda explores the beauty of this  
Jamaican genus, with their bright col-  
ors and full form.
- Growing Phalaenopsis by Sue  
Bottom, is an in-depth look at what  
can go wrong and how to fix things.  
It will answer a lot of the questions  
that I get asked about this genus.
- A New Form of Cattleya  
dowiana and the Taxonomy of its  
Color Variation, is a fascinating look  
at this highly-treasured species. I per-  
sonally am entranced by the rosita  
form.
- Great Ideas "Telephone wire  
loops to support Phalaenopsis spikes"  
teaches us an easy and inexpensive  
way to help our Phalaenopsis look  
their best.

**VENDORS WHO HELPED  
WITH THE 2014  
AUCTION & Activities**

**Bill Doran, Co** Flower wholesalers  
45 Industrial Park Rd, Albany, NY  
12206 (518)-465-5285  
[www.billdoran.com](http://www.billdoran.com)

**Carmela Orchids**  
Hakalau, HI  
[www.carmelaorchids.net](http://www.carmelaorchids.net)

**Island Sun Orchids –**  
Karen Kimmerle; PO Box 909,  
Keaau, HI

**Lehua Orchids**  
Mountain View, HI  
808-968-8898  
[www.lehuaorchids.com](http://www.lehuaorchids.com)

**Piping Rock Orchids**  
2270 Cook Rd  
Galway, NY 12074  
518-882-9002  
[www.pipingrockorchids.com](http://www.pipingrockorchids.com)

**Sunset Valley Orchids**  
**Fred Clarke**, 1255 Navel Place  
Vista, CA 92081 (760) 639-6255  
**[www.sunsetvalleyorchids.com](http://www.sunsetvalleyorchids.com)**

**Tohru Takekoshi**, former NE-  
NYOS, Member, Scotia, NY

**The Orchid Works**  
[Rayna@theorchidworks.com](mailto:Rayna@theorchidworks.com)  
P.O. 278 Hakalau, HI 96710  
wholesale and retail lists online

**Walter Scheeren**  
44-3265 Kalopa Mauka Rd  
Honokaa, HI 96727  
808-775-1185  
[WFScheeren@juno.com](mailto:WFScheeren@juno.com)

**Upcoming meeting**

FEBRUARY 7, 2015.  
DREW MONTHIE

**GROWING ORCHIDS  
HYDROPONICALLY**

February is a tricky month weather-wise, but we hope you will be enticed out into the cold to join us for a hands-on and participatory session dealing with orchids grown hydroponically.

Drew Monthie grows many of his plants in clay pellets very successfully as evidenced by the orchids he shares with us at the Show Table.

NENYOS will provide a 3.5" X 3.75" pot, the clay pellets and a small plant for you to pot up under his expert guidance following his presentation. He gets his pots from the orchidhouse.org and if you are so inclined to repot others in your collection, they are willing to grant us a bit of a discount (to be determined.)

Their website is full of information and very good photos, so if you'd like a preview into this growing system, take a look prior to the meeting.

We need an idea of what and how much to order so please let Janet Vinyard know by phone 673-3212 or email [rolandvinyard@gmail.com](mailto:rolandvinyard@gmail.com). ASAP.(preferably as soon as you get this newsletter.)

**Don't forget to bring a dishpan to facilitate handling the potting activity with minimized mess.**

**2014 - Tips from Maine Orchid Society Members:**

David Sparks told the group that his mounted plants get watered every day or at least a mist every day. That is how they grow in nature. Orchid roots like to get air, so growing them on mounts gives them the air they like. Orchids can often be grown on a mount for years and years-you don't have to keep repotting them so much. You don't have the medium breaking down on you because there is none, and the roots don't get confined by a pot that has become too small.

Mike Wagner said that some orchids need a dry rest in the late fall. He brings his orchids in just before the first frost and then does not water them until about December. If you water them too soon, they will produce a bunch of keikis (In horticulture, a keiki (/ˈkeɪki:/ KAY-kee) is a plant produced asexually by an orchid plant, especially Dendrobium, Epidendrum (sensulato), and Phalaenopsis orchids. The baby plant is an exact clone of the mother plant, sometimes flowering while still attached to the mother. The word keiki is Hawaiian for "baby" or "child", literally "the little one" instead of flower spikes.)

**Tips for Transporting Orchids in the Cold:** Put plastic over them and keep them covered. Many people use a styrofoam cooler or a Rubbermaid type-tote to keep the cold air off of them. Cheap, thin plastic drop cloths work well too. Use sticks to prop the plastic up so as not to break the blooms. Be sure you don't leave your orchids in the car even if they are wrapped up. If you must leave them in the car, do so only for a very short few minutes and leave the motor running and heater on.

Tom Carter reported that he has had the Epicattleya Don Herman

'gold rush,' for about four years. He had it in a clear pot which was nice, but after a year or two algae started to form. It was noted that this does the same as when the medium breaks down and is not healthy for your orchid. Dave Sparks gave a tip that you should get a two inch net pot and place it upside down in the bottom of the orchid's pot. This creates an air space and makes the medium real shallow all around, allowing in more air. An air cone pot works the same way. Usually, with a solid pot of medium, the roots in the center of the medium will get rotted and die and only the roots around the edges remain. This technique eliminates that problem.

**Tags:** Vicki Fisk reported that she coats the tags with clear nail polish and it seems to help them to last.

Bob Cleveland advises that as you repot, you should always make out a new tag because they get crispy with time.

**Comments from Alan Koch,** Gold Country Orchids: Orchid plants can bloom themselves to death, unfortunately. If a plant has been blooming for a really long time, you may need to cut the spike and give it a rest.

Be willing to throw plants out if they are just not making it. Sometimes you just have to do it.

**Light Matters:** If you give the plant too much light, it will need to use its energy to cool itself and it won't have that energy available for flowering. How a plant grows in the wild tells you how to grow it at home.

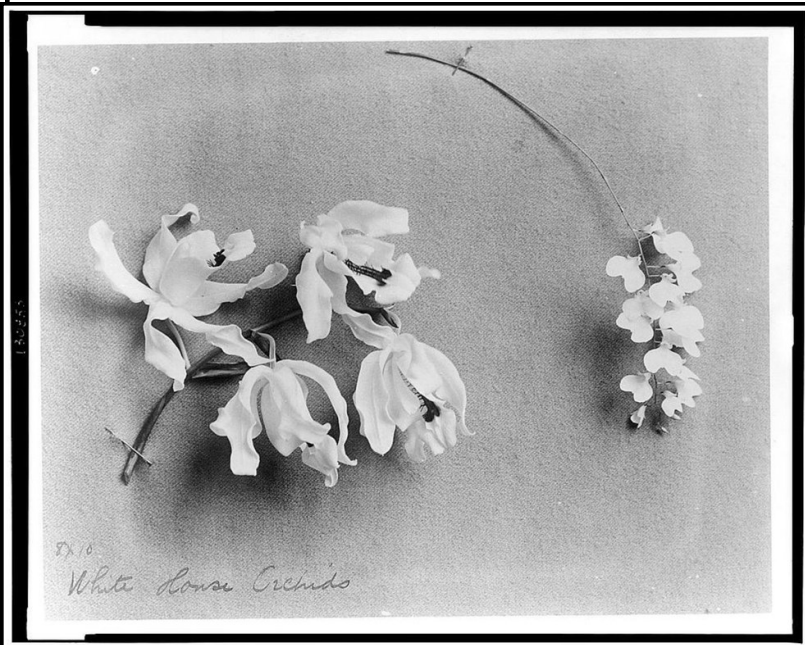
**Notes on Types of Orchids:** Calcium is the trigger to flower Oncidiums. Most Bulbophyllums benefit from lower light and constant moisture. Paphs. love to be repotted and don't like sour mix.

Source: Maine Orchid Society has put together a 15 page "Tips on Growing Orchids" which you can access here: <http://maineorchidsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/MEOS-growing-tips.pdf>



# Old Time Farm Crime: The Cutthroat World of Victorian Orchid Hunters

By Andrew Amelinckx  
Modern Farmer on August 1, 2014



Wilhelm Micholitz was half-starved, his clothing continually damp from the incessant Sumatran rains and he ached from the exertion it took to gather the precious specimens that clung on solitary cliffs and high up on the ancient trees of the deep forest. Add to that the fact that his boss was sometimes slow to send funds and it was no wonder his letters to Frederick Sander, "The Orchid King" back in England were often full of grumbling complaints.

"How long I shall stay up there I cannot tell, I came down here today and I can tell you, only dire necessity has driven me to it, I had nothing to eat, to come down and then to climb again 3,000 feet ... is not like taking a walk on London Road on a Sunday afternoon," Micholitz groused to Sanders in a letter sent from Padang in January 1891.

When In 1818 the naturalist William John Swainson sent back the first orchid specimen seen in London, orchid madness was born. Soon

rich collectors were sending hunters far and wide into the wild to try and collect new and rare examples, reaching its heights in the Victorian era (mid-1830s to early 1900s). These hunters were a wild bunch who took their work to extremes with many dying in the pursuit.

Besides the treacherous terrain, tropical diseases, angry indigenous populations and vicious animals, they had to worry about their fellow orchid hunters.

Another of Sander's hunters, William Arnold, once pulled a gun on a rival and the two nearly came to a shootout shipboard heading to Venezuela. Arnold was later instructed by his employer to follow the man – who worked for Sander's nemesis, Dr. John Lowe – collect the same type of flowers he did and urinate on the other man's specimens to destroy them.

Even the less irascible hunters followed their rivals and tried in subtle ways to derail their efforts. In July 1876, Friederich Carl Lehmann followed Edward Klaboch around Ecuador in order to collect plants from the same locations and then attempted to poach Klaboch's local assistant.

"Lehmann is being a nuisance, he follows me everywhere," complained Klaboch, yet another of Sander's men, in a letter to his boss. "[Lehmann] went to see [a local man who collects orchids for me] and told him that he would pay one dollar more than we per 100 plants, and he wanted him to collect for him."

Lehmann got his comeuppance. Klaboch's man refused to help him and ratted out Lehmann to Klaboch. Klaboch promptly confronted Lehmann, who denied the exchange, saying the local man was a liar with the result that no one in the village would give Lehmann the time of day. Klaboch also gloated that he had collected more orchids than Lehmann. Schadenfreude seems to have been a common feeling among these mostly solitary men.

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The life of an orchid hunter was far from romantic. Besides the various geographic and meteorological pitfalls, there was the basic problem of getting the plants from where they were found to the base camp. From there they would have to be dried and packed and then carted overland to the coast by hand, horse, elephant or Llama (depending, obviously, on where the orchids were discovered). A long sea journey to England came next. Finally, with a little luck, the plants would have survived the hardships and produce flowers to awe the rich willing to shell out cash, mainly at auctions held to buy and sell the exotic wonders.

"Ten thousand plants may be collected on some remote Andean peak or Papuan jungle with infinite care, and consigned to Europe, the freight alone amounting to thousands of dollars, yet on arrival there may not be a single orchid left alive," wrote the reporter William George Fitz-Gerald.

Sander, one of the largest employer of these bad boys of horticulture, was an avid orchid aficionado who at the height of his career employed 23 orchid

had 50 glasshouses for orchids.

Orchids were big business, with truly exotic plants fetching thousands of dollars each and trading from collector to collector pushing prices ever higher. Sander told of one such exchange. He and a Liverpool lawyer were walking through one of the greenhouses when a particular orchid plant that hadn't yet flowered caught the attorney's eye. He purchased the plant from Sander for \$12. Five years later he sold it back to Sander for \$1,000, or the equivalent of \$24,390 in today's dollars.

Sander was born in Hanover, Germany in 1847 and at age 20 began working for a London seed company. He soon fell in with the intrepid Czech plant collector and adventurer Benedikt Roezl and went into business. Roezl was a one-handed dynamo who traveled, mainly on foot, across the Americas collecting orchids and other plants. On one trip alone, traveling from Panama to Venezuela, he sent back eight tons of orchids to London.

Roezl turned to orchid hunting after a farm machine he invented to extract plant fiber took his hand during a demonstration in Mexico where he was living. He began hunting orchids after the accident, as he found

farming difficult due to his impairment. Fitted with an iron hook, his prosthesis was apparently popular with local Indians, who would bring him plants. His obsession ran in the family. Klaboch, the hunter who was followed hither and thither by a rival in Ecuador, was Roezl's nephew.

These orchid hunters desire for discovering and collecting, and the



hunters scattered across the world and had a sprawling orchid farm in St. Albans, near London.

There, in 60 greenhouses specially adapted for the specific conditions needed to grow each orchid variety. The company handled between one and two million plants there in the 1880s and 90s. Sander also had space for testing and cultivating hybrids. As the business continued to grow, Sander built an orchid nursery in New Jersey and another in Belgium, which

insatiable demand for the flowers in Europe and America, was devastating to the native orchid populations as well as the trees on which the epiphytic flowers grew. There are still areas in Central and South America in which the plants never recovered. Today, many countries have laws in place to stop the wholesale stripping of orchids and other plants from their native habitats.

(Article continued on Page 7)

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The hunters themselves became a dying breed, literally. Sander, during an interview in 1906, tossed off more than half-a-dozen names of his hunters who had been killed tracking down his flowering treasures. Arnold was killed while on a collecting expedition along the Orinoco River and Klaboch died in Mexico. Micholitz, while surviving the life of an orchid hunter, died in near poverty in Germany.

"All these [men] have met more or less tragic deaths through wild beasts, savages, fever, drowning, fall or other accidents," Sander told Fitz-Gerald.

Leon Humboldt, a French orchid hunter, remarked that after a dinner with six other hunters in Madagascar, four were dead within four years. Two years later, Humboldt was the only survivor.

Orchid mania eventually went the way of these hunters, mainly thanks to the discovery of how to grow the plants from seed, a problem that was on its way to being perfected by the 1920s. These exotic blooms have now become a standard flower shop product and the intrepid hunters who once risked their lives to find them and the inflated prices the wealthy Victorians were willing to pay for the blooms have been resigned to history.

<http://modernfarmer.com/2014/08/old-time-farm-crime-wild-wooly-cutthroat-world-victorian-orchid-hunters/>

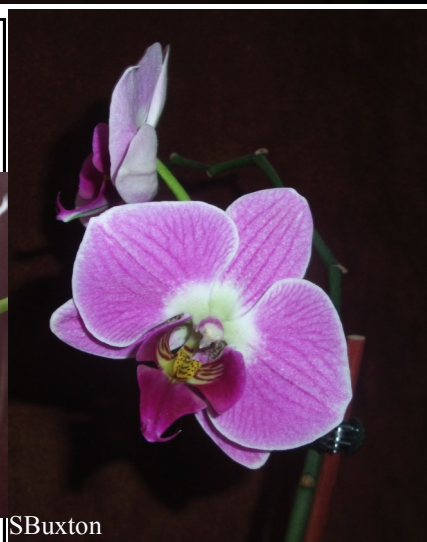


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Just a few pictures of orchids from 2014.



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TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP—PASS THIS ALONG  
NENYOS MEMBERSHIP RUNS FROM JANUARY THROUGH DECEMBER-PLEASE MAKE THINGS EASY  
FOR JANET AND GET THOSE CHECKS IN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE! JANUARY 31ST  
IS THE CUT OFF DATE FOR PAYMENT AND TO MAKE THE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

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Individual Membership \$15    Family Membership \$20

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# North Eastern New York Orchid Society

NENYOS c/o S. Lee, 130 Johnson Road, Scotia, NY 12302 [www.nenyos.org](http://www.nenyos.org)

## NEXT MEETING

**Feb. 7, 2015**

**2:15 Drew Monthie—  
Raising Orchids  
Hydroponically**

**1:30 Beginner talk**

**2:00 p.m. Show Table,  
After presentation—Questions  
and Raffle**

The meeting is at the William K. Sanford Library, 629 Albany Shaker Road, Colonie (Loudonville, 12211)

(Times are approximate.)

## January Raffle Winners

Don't forget—Raffle winners are asked to bring a goodie to the next meeting to help celebrate their good fortune! In this case, February 7th!



**Comments from Tom Mirenda** in AOS January 2015 **Winter Doldrums** ...Sometimes [increasing day length] will cause some beginnings of new growth. Don't overreact by overwatering and repotting just yet. It is possible to hurt plants by drenching with water and fer-

tilizer right now. Most orchids, particularly dendrobiums, lyncastes and cattleyas, require drier conditions while days are short. ..So water with caution.

### Get Moving

Dry conditions tend to prevail when heaters are on in the greenhouse or radiators are blasting under your windowsills. Keep in mind that the majority of the tropical orchids we grow thrive in humid, circulating air like they would experience in their montane, treetop perches. Dry heat will cause many orchid ills such as root tip burn, and leaf and pseudobulb dessication. In addition, when excessively dry air is present, your potting mix can get so parched (without regular watering) that it can become nearly impossible to rewet come the growing season. This can also do some serious damage to plants. A happy medium must be striven for. Supplying humid air and blowing it gently through your growing area with fans will create an environment much better suited to orchid culture.