SOULFUL SUMMER

May and June are busy growing times at the greenhouse, and in our yards, too. We all eagerly awaited the emergence of bulbs, perennials and spring blooms. Now, as summer days lengthen, we enjoy a variety of color and long days. It is hard to believe we have crossed that magical time of longest daylight hours when the weather is so amenable to many outdoor activities. Our patience is rewarded as our gardens grow and bring cheer to our eyes and hearts.

At the Rinard Orchid Greenhouse, summer days can be quiet and thought-provoking, or very much the opposite. We find that good weather brings in visitors whereas rainy or very hot weather keeps guests elsewhere. The flowering continues, however, as the orchids mark the marching of the seasons, as our outdoor plants tell the same story. Our summer highlights include Stanhopeas, Anguloas, both of which are pollinated by green orchid bees, and many unusual species. They are always a joy to see.

Our Tropical Garden Tea, hosted by Sue and Leonard Atherton, was held in May, and was a big success, with 18 guests enjoying a delightful afternoon with tea, interesting tea fun-facts, and orchid tours.

Two recent estate gifts have us quite busy processing, inventorying and cataloging. In May, we received a (mostly) ladyslipper collection from John Elwood, 90, of Portland, Indiana. He was employed with Meadow Gold Dairy for 35 years and delivered in the Jay County area. He enjoyed

UPCOMING EVENTS
Mark your Calendars!

July 9: Mid Summer Night’s Dream Open House - Saturday, 7 – 8:30 p.m. Find faeries and trolls, learn garden lore, and join Muncie Ballet Studio dancers in the gardens. Wear your faerie or sprite costume!

August 19: BSU Welcome Week – Tropical Discovery, Saturday, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. General tours for new Ball State students and friends

September 9 – Orchid Care, Saturday, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. Learn how to care for your orchid, repot it, what to do to encourage re-blooming and more. Limited to 15. Contact the curator to sign up.
growing orchids in his retirement. John was active in the local orchid societies (Central Indiana Orchid Society and Three Rivers Orchid Society) and grew primarily ladyslipper orchids. John was a hobby orchid grower, with a small greenhouse adjacent to his home. He enjoyed the challenge of finding and growing different ladyslipper orchids and was always on the lookout for the next beautiful slipper.

In June, we received a (mostly) Cattleya collection from Paul R. Vondersaar, 89, of Avon, Indiana. Paul was quite active in the orchid world and orchids were his pride and joy for over 40 years. At one time, he grew orchids commercially. His collection grew to more than 10,000 plants and he sold the blossoms to local wholesale florists. He later downsized to a smaller private collection. Paul exhibited and won awards for his flowers at area orchid shows. He was a member of the Indiana Orchid Society and the president of the Hoosier Orchid Society.

Paul was taught by Goldie Wheeler herself, so it seems fitting that his orchid collection now resides within the Wheeler-Thanhauser Orchid Collection.

With the blessings of both Elwood and Vondersaar families, plants which are already in the collection are available for adoption, for others to enjoy.

The Friends of the Rinard Orchid Greenhouse have been active behind the scenes, working on by-laws and committees, with the goal to have each of our three big special events run by a committee. The big three are: Annual Plant sale/Fundraiser (April), Mid-Summer-Night’s Dream (July) and Holiday in Bloom (December). If you are interested in helping with any of these events, please contact Beth Hahn, our volunteer coordinator (bethhahn8@gmail.com)

And last but not least, don’t forget to join us for our Mid-Summer Night’s Dream event this Saturday. It is one of our family-friendly evening programs, and guests are invited to dress up as their favorite faerie or sprite, enjoy craft-making, scavenger hunts and orchid tours.

Enjoy your summer!

Contact Curator, Cheryl LeBlanc: cleblanc@bsu.edu or (765) 285-8839
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