

Judges Profile - written 2-26-2015



My wife, Joyce, still finds it hard to believe how I got started in orchids. I have a strong aversion to shopping malls. I rather go to the dentist than to a shopping mall. On my once a year visit for fifteen minutes to a shopping mall, we went to the Tel 12 mall. Imagine her surprise when I spent an hour at the mall. It was MOS Palm Sunday Orchid show and I bought my first orchid, Lc Irene Finney 'Chicago'. It had two large light lavender flowers. Later that year on our honeymoon to Hawaii, I bought six or seven more orchids. Among my purchases was Bc Cornerstone, but more on this plant later.

Over time, I started attending the Michigan Orchid Society monthly meetings, subscribed to the AOS magazine, visited local nurseries, volunteered to clerk the Palm Sunday Show and bought many plants. After several years, I had over 75 plants under lights or on window sills. I was firmly hooked, so for my 40th birthday present, Joyce bought me a 8 X 18 foot greenhouse attached to our garage. After many tribulations, the plumber started the house on fire, pipes froze and broke, the inspector rejected the heating system, I was in the greenhouse by the fall of 1994. Now I could really buy orchid plants, at least I thought so. Within three years, I had over three hundred plants and the greenhouse was full.

I now have over 400 plants covering most of the genera in the orchid kingdom. My favorites are paphs and dendrobiums, but Joyce loves cattleyas and vandas, so we have many of them as well.

On a personal note, I have been married to Joyce for 29 years, we live in Troy, Michigan with our latest Airedale – Emma. She was a rescue dog from Starting Over Airedale Rescue. She is a wonderful dog, even as my neighbor told me, she does like to bark and has to have bone in her month at all times. We both retired from GM several years ago. The only problem with retirement is that we are older. Dealing with broken legs, hips and new knees is not fun, but it is better than working. My other interest is golf. That is why I enjoy the Traverse City show so much. Play lots of golf, great scenery and see some nice looking orchids.

In 1998, I entered the judging program for the AOS and completed my studies in 2004. The reason I became a judge was to give something back to orchid community and further my education on orchids. Even after 17 years, I'm still learning something about orchids every day. Being a judge has allowed me to meet many great people and travel extensively to see orchids in different regions. I have been to the Hawaii orchid show, the world orchid congress in Miami and Vancouver and many other places.

Last, I mentioned Bc Cornerstone. This was one of the first plants I ever bought and the first to receive an AOS award. It was thanks to Joyce that I received this award. I was running late to judging, but she insisted that I take the time to bring this plant to judging. I did not think it was good enough. Imagine my surprise, when it won an AM, now the plant is called Bc Cornerstone "Joyce's Beauty". Thirteen years after I started growing, I had my first AOS award. It pays to be patient.

