

NOTES FOR OBSERVERS

GREAT LAKES AOS JUDGING CENTER - ANN ARBOR, MI

GUEST OBSERVERS

Individuals attending a judging session of the Great Lakes AOS Judging Center may request permission to observe the judging process. Guest observers should ask the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson of the center to assign them to a judging team. Guest observers should refrain from commenting on or asking questions about orchids under consideration for AOS awards unless asked by the judging team captain. If a guest observer has any interest in the plant under consideration (i.e., owns the plant or a division or mericlone of the plant, sells the plant, or made the cross), they should excuse themselves from the process.

OBSERVERS

Individuals who wish to become student judges should review the qualifications for candidates and submit a written application to the Chairperson of Judging. A list of qualifications for student judge candidates and the format of written applications are contained in the *American Orchid Society, Handbook on Judging and Exhibition, 11th Edition*, section 4.2.1.2 and 4.2.1.3, respectively. Applications should be sent to:

Greg Filter, Chairperson
Great Lakes Judging Center
7302 - 2 ½ Mile Road
East Leroy, MI 49051

Following submission of a letter of application to the Chairperson of the Center, an Observer must formally participate at 3 judging sessions including the 11:00 a.m. Center-sponsored training sessions prior to each Judging Center Session in a consecutive 6 month period at the Great Lakes Judging Center.

The Chairperson of the Center, in consultation with the Training Coordinator and Center judging personnel, will determine if an interview is in order. If an interview is approved, the Training Coordinator will schedule an interview of the prospective Student Judge. The interview is typically scheduled before a Center Judging Session. The interview team will consist of fully Accredited Judges only. Prospective Student Judges are asked why they wish to become AOS judges and about their past participation in orchid-related activities, are tested on their knowledge of the Orchidaceae, and must pass a color vision test during the interview. Following a recommendation of acceptance by the interview team, the observer will be considered for acceptance at the next semi-annual business meeting.

Approved November 20, 1999
Updated February 2016

Excerpts from the: *American Orchid Society, Handbook on Judging and Exhibition, Tenth Edition*

IV. American Orchid Society Judges

4.2.1 Student Judge

Any person aspiring to become an AOS judge and fulfilling the requirements therefor, regardless of his/her place of residence, may apply to any center for appointment as student judge and upon satisfactory completion of the requirements as provided in this chapter ultimately may become an accredited judge. . .

4.2.1.1 Selection Procedure

Student judges are selected to meet the requirements of the AOS, not to serve their personal ambitions. Knowledge of orchids and competence in evaluating them are indispensable qualities in a judge, but equally important is the judge's behavior in applying this knowledge. Personal integrity must be beyond question and a judge must work effectively and harmoniously as a member of a team. Responsibility for the selection and training of student judges is delegated to the judging center committees. The number of student judges is not mandated; each center selects sufficient candidates to meet its long-term needs, taking into account turnover and the long process by which a student becomes a fully accredited judge.

Following the receipt of an application, the judging center chair shall arrange for the candidate to be interviewed by a committee of accredited judges who, insofar as practicable, will be unacquainted with the candidate. This interview will give the candidate an opportunity to ask and answer questions and to elaborate on material contained in the application. At its option, the judging center committee may prescribe additional steps in reaching a decision about an applicant. The judging center committee shall make a timely decision and notify the applicant in writing. Failure of a candidate to gain acceptance may not reflect the candidate's potential but may simply signify the fact that the center cannot currently absorb additional student judges. Such a candidate may reapply at any time, and at its discretion the judging committee may dispense with the interview or other evaluative steps.

4.2.1.2 Qualifications

Candidates for student judge must:

- (1) Have a long-term commitment to orchidology, including the growing and exhibition of orchids.
- (2) Anticipate serving as judges long enough to justify their training and to make contributions to the judging system.
- (3) Pass a color-perception screening test as prescribed by the AOS before their applications are acted upon by the judging center committee.
- (4) Have broad interest in orchids beyond those directly related to judging, e.g., orchid conservation, developments in research, education of the public in orchidology, etc. Concentrated experience in a specific area such as hybridization or photography is advantageous but does not overcome the need for the candidates to meet the other criteria.
- (5) Be eager to expand their knowledge. The essential quality at the point of selection is the applicant's capacity and desire to learn.
- (6) Be able to make independent judgments and to maintain a point of view without becoming contentious or defensive.
- (7) Maintain high standards of personal integrity and ethics and avoid any conduct which could be construed as unethical by an

observer. They must recognize that they reflect upon the AOS and that they themselves will be judged by their appearance, demeanor and competence.

(8) Be committed to the judging system and to its orderly evolution. Their criticisms should be constructive and aimed at improving the equity and uniformity of the judging process.

(9) Maintain membership in the AOS, possess the current edition of the *Handbook on Judging and Exhibition* and subscribe to *Awards Quarterly*. (Note that membership should be maintained in the name that will appear on judges' roster to enable proper name recognition when checking membership status.)

(10) Give evidence of potential for leadership.

(11) Be able to meet the requirements of the judging system with respect to available time, ability to travel, physical and mental fitness, and participation in training and judging activities.

4.2.1.3 Application

The written application from candidates for student judge shall include complete name, address including zip code, home and work telephone numbers, and the following information in enough detail to permit thorough evaluation of their qualifications.

(1) Have you previously applied for appointment as student judge or served as an AOS judge? If yes, explain briefly.

(2) How long have you been a member of the AOS?

(3) Describe your experience in growing orchids (length of time, types grown, facilities used, size of collection, etc.).

(4) Describe your participation in orchid societies of which you are currently or have been a member.

(5) Have you exhibited in orchid shows? Row extensively?

(6) Describe your participation in orchid shows other than as an exhibitor.

(7) Have you attended or participated in activities of your judging center's committee such as judging sessions or training courses? Describe.

(8) Describe your orchid library in general (books, periodicals, photographs, etc.).

(9) On a separate sheet, list books and periodicals in your personal library.

(10) Do you own a copy of the latest edition of the *Handbook on Judging and Exhibition*?

(11) Do you subscribe to *Awards Quarterly*?

(12) Describe any feature of your regular work or hobbies which would enhance your knowledge of orchids or your ability to evaluate them.

(13) Describe any other training or educational activities related to orchids in which you have engaged.

(14) Why do you want to become an orchid judge?

(15) What do you regard as your strongest qualification for serving?

(16) Give the names and addresses of two or more persons who have knowledge of your interest in orchids, growing experience, etc.

(17) Do you understand and agree to meet the requirements for serving as judge as specified in the *Handbook on Judging and Exhibition*, specifically, the requirements for time and travel?

(18) Signature and date.

(19) Provide evidence of passing a color-perception test.

(20) Sign the student affidavit provided by the AOS in the form approved by the JC.