

2007 President's Report to NOCI AGM and

Tenth Anniversary 2008-02-15

by Doris Ames, President

Madame Chairperson, Members and Guests:

What a privilege it is to deliver the President's Report on Native Orchid Conservation's tenth anniversary! It seems like just yesterday that I joined the organization but when I looked at some of my photographs in the album we prepared I rapidly became convinced that it must have been **more** than ten years ago.

During the last ten years, Native Orchid Conservation has grown, matured and evolved just like the rest of us, but I hope it always retains the qualities of youth. Because, to quote the late Bobby Kennedy, "this world demands the qualities of youth; not a time of life but a state of mind, a temper of the will, a quality of the imagination, a predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite for adventure over the love of ease". He spoke these words in 1966 but I believe they hold true for today. These are the qualities that brought NOCI where it is today and they are the ones we will need to continue to do our small part to protect the environment and to make a difference in our ever-changing world.

2007 was another busy and exciting year, but the high point for me was accepting the Canadian Environment Award (Silver) in the Community Conservation category on behalf of NOCI. We were among a very few non-profit organizations in Canada to receive such a prestigious award.

We carried on with our usual activities throughout the rest of the year as follows:

Feb 24 - presentation about our Seed bank Project on "Seedy Saturday" at the Assiniboine Park Conservatory

Feb26 - presentation on native orchids as part of the MNS indoor program

March 1-3 - Peggy, Eugene and Doris attended the Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference in Regina, Saskatchewan. We enjoyed the lectures and the networking and we were delighted to see NOCI member Marilyn Latta receive the Prairie Conservation Award for her work over the years to protect Manitoba's Tall Grass Prairie.

March 21 - presentation to the Friends of Assiniboine Park Conservatory on "Orchids and Carnivorous Plants".

Mar 23-25 - MOS orchid show - received first prize for our educational display on our Seed bank project.

April 26 - presentation at the Millennium Library on native orchids.

June 4th - Peggy, Doris and Ruby Tekauz travelled to Montreal to accept the CEA Conservation Silver Award and also went on a fieldtrip to see orchids in Gatineau Park near Hull, Quebec with fellow orchid lovers Dr Marilyn Light and her husband Michael McConnail.

June 17 - the Orchid Festival in Senkiw, MB was a great success thanks to our volunteers and co-hosts Crow Wing Trail (Franklin part) and the Parish of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Nativity of St. Mary. I am here to tell you that nobody can make better hotdogs than John Dyck.

June 27 - Richard, Eugene and Doris conducted a fieldtrip to the Brokenhead Wetlands for people attending the Manitoba Model Forest AGM.

Aug2 - Peg and I attended a pow wow at Brokenhead Ojibway Nation.

Aug 11 - we had a display about our Seed bank Project during Prairie Days at the Manitoba Tall Grass Prairie Preserve.

Oct 26th - NOCI Members Night - a fun-filled evening with presentations by members Rose Kuzina and Lorne Heshka on Gambia and "orchidizing" respectively.

Dec 3 - attended the MNS Members Market

As well, in May and June we conducted 5 regular fieldtrips under the guidance of fieldtrip coordinator Iris Reimer and our terrific fieldtrip leaders. NOCI member and outdoor enthusiast Bep Vandewoude arranged two more enjoyable casual outings; one to Bird's Hill Provincial Park and one to Beaudry Park. A total of 84 people attended those seven trips. I was pleased to see Bep take this initiative because it sort of filled in the major gap left when NOCI member Morris Sorenson, the Urban Naturalist, passed away and was no longer leading fieldtrips in or near Winnipeg.

In late summer and fall we continued to gather seeds for our seed bank project and this year managed to put seeds in storage from some very rare orchids like the Western Prairie Fringed Orchid, the Small White Lady's-Slipper and the Great Plains Ladies' Tresses.

In addition to all this we published a special 2008 calendar to mark our tenth anniversary. We have some here tonight for those of you who have not yet had a chance to purchase one or two. Thanks to Heather Reeves for the outstanding design.

Another highlight of the year was our involvement along with the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation in the production of EKO a 25min educational video on the Brokenhead Wetlands. Debwendon Inc. was responsible for its production and EKO will be shown in public for the first time tonight. Copies of the DVD will be available for purchase and proceeds will go towards the installation of boardwalks and interpretive trails in the Brokenhead Wetlands. I encourage you to buy a copy of the video and to also consider making a donation to this worthwhile project. Tax receipts for your donations can be issued by NOCI until Debwendon Inc. obtains CRA Charity Status.

We have many more exciting events planned for 2008 including a display at the MOS Orchid Show March 28-30. I am delighted to tell you that the theme of the show is "In Praise of Native Orchids". Please come out and attend this wonderful event at Assiniboine Park Conservatory.

It will soon be time to go out on fieldtrips and we are planning to visit some new areas this year so don't forget to sign up as soon as the dates are published. Mike James has asked me to mention one of the early ones. On May 31st we are conducting a nature hike in conjunction with the Woodlot Association of Manitoba at the James Property just north of Grand Beach. The theme is Wetlands, Woodlands and Wildlife. Please join us.

As for this evening, Peggy and the other board members and volunteers have prepared a very entertaining program for us. It includes a presentation by long time NOCI member, supporter and donor Nora Reid. Nora and her husband Bernie are life-long naturalists and have explored many of the hiking trails and natural wonders of Manitoba. They are both teachers and Nora is also an artist. Many people consider art to be the bridge between the individual and nature and she would have a special understanding of that concept. Many of us, I am sure, find that nature brings peace and meaning to our lives and I am very interested to hear what Nora has to tell us in her presentation entitled "Artistry in Nature".

In closing, I would like to thank all the members who came out this evening and all those who support us by volunteering, participating in our events and donating all through the year. I also want to thank all our friends and the other environmental organizations in the Province who have worked with us and supported us. **You** have all made it possible for us to reach our tenth anniversary.

But I would **especially** like to thank NOCI board members John Neufeld, Iris Reimer, Huguette Calvez, Peggy Bainard Acheson, Richard Reeves and Eugene Reimer for their loyalty, hard work and support to NOCI, and to me, this year and in all the other years.

Enjoy your evening and thanks for coming out!