

# FEATURED MEMBERS' HIGHLIGHTS



## Bill & Kathy Ethridge

Our featured members this month are Bill and Kathy Ethridge. They have a passion for all things of the green variety and have had this passion for a long time. They host the KOS picnic every other year and their yard attests to this passion. This couple is passionate about life, love people and definitely keep themselves busy (translated --over-achievers that never will be bored with life!)



### 1. How long have you been in the Kansas Orchid Society?

An orchid member and friend, Velma McDaniel, had encouraged us to become members for several years. We decided that the time was right when our oldest daughter graduated from high school in 1996.

### 2. How did you start growing orchids?

We have been interested in orchids for many years. It started when a friend gave us a green and white cypripedium back in the 1970's. We didn't know what to do with it and it survived for many years living in a pot using regular garden soil.

### 3. What do you like about growing them? And what do you dislike?

**Like:** There are so many different types of orchids and they are all so unique with different flowers and growing conditions. We enjoy trying something new and challenging all the time.

**Dislike:** Trying something new and not being successful is frustrating, but it is part of the learning process.

### 4. How many orchids do you have and where do you grow them?

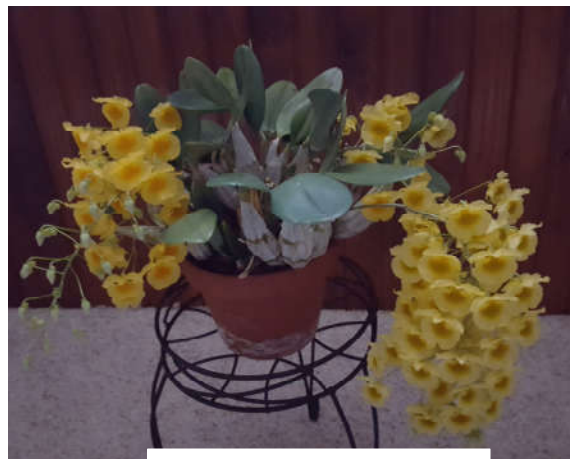
We have over 100 different orchids of various kinds. We grow them under high pressure sodium and metal halide light fixtures in the basement. The temperature keeps around 80 degrees in the summer and 70 in the winter with a small heater going.

### 5. What do you particularly favor? and why?

We like them all, especially the ones that bloom more than once per year. Mini Cattleyas are a favorite, as well as phragmipediums and paphiopedilums. They seem to like the artificial lights.

### 6. Which orchid is the most difficult for you to grow?

There are several, but vandas are one of the most difficult. We love the flowers, but constant watering is a challenge. In the summer, we carry them outside and hang them on hooks on the pergola. Putting them outside makes it easier to water them. Then we just hope that they will bloom for us.



Dendrobium Aggregatum

**7. Do you have a bloom of which you are proud?**

Yes but we can't choose just one so are offering several for your visual pleasure!



Prag Grande



Prag shroderie Rosum



Prag Inca Embers



Brassia new start

**8. Any experiences you would like to share with others? words of wisdom?**

Have fun with your orchids. Don't get discouraged when a plant or project doesn't look or perform the way you expected. It's just part of the adventure.

**9. What are your other passions?**

Bill likes flyfishing and fly tying. We both like to garden, go camping and we go to the Walnut Valley Bluegrass Festival every year in Winfield. Twice a year, we go camping in Roaring River, Missouri. We love to hike the trails every spring looking for the wild yellow ladies slipper. Of course, we never dig any up to bring home, as they are endangered. It is great to see them every year in their natural environment. We have been keeping data on two different clumps since 2011. They are multiplying, but not very fast.

**10. Please tell us one thing we do not know about you.**

Kathy has been Treasurer of KOS since 2005, 13 years!

We both became Master Gardeners in 2011 – Bill is on the advisory board.

Bill is President and Kathy is Treasurer of the Wichita Area Garden Council.

Bill is on the Board of Trustees at Botanica.

Bill is treasurer and on the Board of the Flatland Flyfishers Club.

We also belong to the Kansas Pond Society, Hosta Club, Audubon, Flatland Flyfishers Club, and the Classic Thunderbird Club. (Ask him about his honey of a Thunderbird!)

We belong to the Riverside Christian Church.

We have been married for 50 years, worked together for 30 years, and been in the same house for 40 years. ...

We are boring. (Don't you believe it!)