

CENTRAL SPINE

Newsletter of the CENTRAL ARIZONA CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY

SEPTEMBER, 2001

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT—JULY 2001

I hope all your relatives and friends are alive and unharmed.

Sadly, Steve Southwell of RSVP Nursery in San Jose, California, passed away Monday, September 10, 2001, of lymphoma. Steve lectured to us on a number of occasions and the crowd was always excited to hear him. I have some nice *Dudleya* and seedling *Matelea* to remember him by. After the exertion of the CSSA Convention in July, he and Rowena also went to the Intercity Show at the Los Angeles Arboretum in August, pushing himself to the end. Would that all of us could be so determined. We will have a big card for all to sign at the meeting, and you can all send individual cards to Rowena at the address printed elsewhere in this issue.

The Fall Plant Sale Festival approaches. See the announcement from Cathy B elsewhere in this issue.

What do you want to hear on next year's programs? Let Cathy B or me know. Our phone numbers are listed with the other officers in every issue of *Central Spine*.

Remember the road spree to Tucson nurseries Saturday, November 3. I wrote the wrong cost last time. Tickets for the bus are actually \$25.00 per person and will be non-refundable unless the trip cancels. We need 20 attendees to book the bus and, as I write this, 19 have paid. The bus will have LOTS of storage space below. Even if you don't want to buy anything, it will be a fun day.

It is time to think about election of officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer) and Directors for next year. A nominating committee will be formed in September. Nominations will be presented at the November 18 meeting and any nominations from the floor will be taken. A vote will be taken at the December 9 Holiday Party. Officers should have been Directors now or in the past. Officers serve one-year terms and Directors two-year terms. All must step

down after three consecutive terms but can run again after sitting out one term. If you are interested in serving the club as Director, please contact any of the current Directors to be added to the list of nominees.

It is also time to start thinking about next April. Our Show is Wednesday the 3rd (setup), Thursday the 4th (judging), and open to the public Friday the 5th through Sunday the 7th. Since plants exhibited for competition must have been in the owner's possession at least 6 months, you have until October 3rd to find plants to enter next year.

Also in April 2002, the International Organization for Succulent Studies (IOS) meets Sunday the 7th through Friday the 12th at the DBG; Ted Anderson was to have been honored. Because the IOS will be using the new auditorium, our Show will be in Webster Auditorium, possibly for the last time. Last year Dr Anderson asked the CACSS to host a reception for the IOS and all CACSS members Sunday evening, April 7th, 2002, and we agreed. We are looking into how to arrange this; a potluck is a possibility. Cathy B has asked us to leave our plants, if possible, in Webster Auditorium so the IOS members can view the Show during the reception. We could pick them up any time Monday, April 8th, and the Garden would also keep the gates open and Webster Auditorium guarded and unlocked after hours for those of us who could not make it during normal hours.

With the nights cooling somewhat things are springing into growth. I keep some summer-dormant plants on a high shelf in a northwest window where they sleep without water all summer. Early this month I go up on a chair to dust and spotted *Albuca spiralis* in bud. This is not a showy plant but some of the small-scale, intricate plants are among the most fascinating. Many of my mesembs have also sprung to life, showing signs of active growth. I barely sprayed some *Cheridopsis speciosus* in early August and they promptly rotted. Next time, no water all summer. Other *Cheridopsis* seem to take at least some summer water without

complaint. *Ch. duplessii* and an unidentified one did fine with watering only when shrivelled this summer.

I haven't talked to *Conophytum* growers recently but I bet by the time you read this they have given their plants the first drink of Fall and watched the plants break out of their summer pajamas. For the conophyte this is like the New Year.

This would also be a good time to finish planting cactus seed and begin fall sowing of mesembs and other plants from winter rainfall areas of Africa, such as *Crassulaceae*, succulent *Geraniaceae*, *Othonna*, *Tylecodon*, and winter bulbs.

This month's speaker is Mark Kiah of Pacific Palms Nursery (<http://www.pacificpalms.com>), 2538 East Mohawk Lane (east of Loop 101 near Cave Creek Road), Phoenix, 602-721-2835. He will speak on Cycads for Arizona. There are a number of species in this ancient group of plants, once dinosaur food, native to seasonally arid regions of Africa, Australia, and Mexico. Botanists think cycads may have been the first plants to develop an insect-dependent pollination system. Sadly, though they have survived for over 200 million years, we may be about to do in many species in Africa due to urbanization and, most unfortunately, collecting for the horticultural trade. With seedlings not difficult to grow and readily available, this just should not happen, but to wealthy collectors a beautiful plant over 1,000 years old is irresistible, even if torn from the wild. The CITES convention, to which the US is a signatory nation, was intended to protect plants and wildlife. But, it seems to be part of the problem rather than a solution with its drastic prohibitions against bringing wild plants into cultivation. And, as we know, what people want and will pay for, they get, legal or not.

Next month, on Sunday, October 28, at 2 P.M., will be our Silent Auction. I am propagating a number of goodies to bring, which will probably again be overlooked as too obscure. But I saw plants, which I donated to past Silent Auctions, winning ribbons in last year's Show. Come on! Bring some plants, pots, rocks, books... whatever... to auction.

Our November meeting will not be held the last Sunday due to the Thanksgiving weekend. It will be Sunday, November 18, in Webster Auditorium. Woody Minnich of Cactus Data Plants will talk on *Mammillaria* of Mexico. I have seen his *Mammillaria* house and it is spectacular. Woody has travelled extensively in Mexico, legally collecting many many cacti and other plants in years past. He sells propagated

plants with collection data. This is terribly important: Under the new Biodiversity Convention, which the US has not signed but is enforcing, and CITES, which the US has signed, no plants brought into cultivation now (except legally, which is effectively impossible to do) may be traded across national boundaries. In the future, if our government goes on as usual, plants may be impossible even to possess without proof of legality. So, you need to keep careful records on your plants—where you bought them, from whom, and exactly when. Woody's plants come with these collection data. If you are looking for anything in particular, especially from his wonderful *Mammillaria* collection, ask him in advance and maybe he will bring plants for you. Woody Minnich, Cactus Data Plants, 9607 Ave S-12, Little Rock, CA, 93543, 1-805-944-2784.

Leo A. Martin

DBG FALL PLANT SALE FESTIVAL OCTOBER 19-21

Cathy B, CACSS past president and Desert Botanical Garden succulent horticulturist, informs us the DBG Fall Plant Sale Festival will be Friday through Sunday, October 19–21, from 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. each day. Friday will be Members' Day, as well as 8–9 A.M. Saturday. CACSS members have always volunteered in the past to help with questions about C&S, and we will be there again this time. Cathy will have a sign-up sheet for volunteers at the September 30 meeting. Or, you can call Jo D. to add your name to the list.

PLANTS OF THE MONTH— GERANIACEAE

Family Geraniaceae is widespread over the entire Earth. Members of this family are distinguished by usually lacy leaves, five-petaled flowers, often zygomorphic (symmetric if split in a plane down the middle but not if rotated on the axis of the flower) and by narrow seeds with one sharp end and the other end retaining a piece of the fruit that, when dry, curls into a corkscrew. By this the seed plants itself: wet the corkscrew and it unwinds, spiralling the seed into the soil.

One is a little winter garden weed here, with a central root, a rosette of lacy thick leaves pressed tightly to the ground, and upright stems bearing tiny purple flowers and then seeds.



Pelargonium cortussifolium

Genera Monsonia, Pelargonium, and Sarcocaulon have succulent species in Africa. Most come from winter rainfall desert areas and grow alongside many mesembs. Some come from desert areas that might receive rain at any time of the year. Most successful cultivators of these seem to water so long as the plants have leaves, and expect most leaf production and growth in the winter. They tend to need long rests without water and in the shade during hot periods. They need good winter light for optimum tight growth and regular light fertilizing while in growth. They may be attacked by aphids, mealybugs, and scale insects. The flowers are beautiful: papery white to yellow to pink, often borne singly but sometimes in clusters. As an added bonus, many of the plants are fragrant.

CACSS Member's Plant Sale—October 20

CACSS member Bob T is opening his property in Paradise Valley for a member plant sale of cacti and other succulents for landscaping and pots. He's offering at least ten different varieties of each of *Agaves*, *Aloes*, *Opuntias*, and columnar cacti (and some large cuttings). He also offers other kinds of plants and some uncommon ones.

[*Editor's Note: Since CACSS members will have already attended the DBG Member Plant Sale by 9 A.M. Saturday, they can move on to Bob's sale during the rest of the day.*]

In Memoriam

Steve Southwell passed away Monday, September 10, 2001, after struggling since February of this year with lymphoma.

He was a high school teacher beloved of his pupils. He was also owner, together with his wife Rowena, of RSVP Nursery, which they ran from the back yard of their home at 729 Moonglow Court, San Jose, CA, 95123. Those of us on the recent buying trip to the Bay area remember Steve, Rowena, and RSVP with great fondness.

Steve spoke on our programs to the CACSS often. He was scheduled to speak to us last February only days after he became ill. We were looking forward to hearing him again but it was not to be.

Those of us attending the July CSSA Convention saw Steve for the last time. He and Rowena were in the plant sales area. Steve attended some of the lectures and auction. He was dragging an oxygen tank, he was very pale and in pain, but he was always smiling and cheerful to his many friends.

We will miss him.

Leo

CENTRAL ARIZONA CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY 2001

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Vice Pres.	Judy B	xxxx
Secretary	Dana H	xxxx
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Deadline for insertion in next issue of the *Central Spine*: October 18, 2001. Send insertions to Jim Davis at: pantenor@dancris.com

All opinions are those of respective authors. Publication herein does not imply that CACSS or any CACSS members agree with any statements published.

CALENDAR

September 30 Mark Kiah on Cycads for Arizona
October 28 Silent Auction
November 18 Woody Minnich on Mexico's
 Mammillarias
December 9 Holiday Party & Elections

**Meetings are at 2 P.M. in Webster Auditorium,
unless otherwise noted. All meetings include a
question and answer session on growing plants.**



Sarcocaulon pattersonii

**C.A.C.S.S.
P O BOX 8774
SCOTTSDALE, AZ 85252-8774 USA**

