

# CENTRAL SPINE

NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTRAL ARIZONA CACTUS & SUCCULENT

## President's Letter

February 2005

I begin this month's letter on a sad note. You probably heard that Patrick Quirk, Curator of the Cacti Collection, succumbed to cancer earlier this month. It was a sad day for the DBG and all who knew Patrick. Many of us have never known the DBG without Patrick, a 27 year veteran of the institution. He was the "go-to" guy when you had a cactus problem no one else could solve. The DBG is going to have a hard time finding a replacement with Patrick's wide range of experience and knowledge. His will be big boots to fill, indeed.

There is going to be a celebration of Patrick's life at the DBG on March 7<sup>th</sup>. It will be held on the Ullman Terrace and begin at 5:30 p.m. Contact the Garden for further information.

On a lighter note, when did Phoenix turn into Seattle? Can you believe the amount of rain we have received since the beginning of the year? It certainly is a good news/bad news situation. Most of my plants are loving the rain. My aloe garden has never bloomed as nicely. Almost everything else looks healthy. Unfortunately, the weeds in my yard and in some of my pots are loving the moisture a little too much. I also learned that a couple of my plants did not appreciate cool, wet "feet."

We had a very good General Meeting last month. We outlined the club's activities for the coming year, heard a great presentation by Kelly Griffin from Rancho Soledad Nursery and had an incredible silent auction. The only negative was that the meeting took too long. For that, I apologize. This month's business portion of the meeting will be considerably shorter. I plan to mention the activities on the horizon but not go into great detail about any of them. I will identify the person or persons in charge of each activity so that members can know whom to talk to about a particular event. Remember, all of the CACSS's activities need your participation. Please volunteer to share some of your time and talent to the activities that interest you the most.

You won't want to miss our speaker, Woody Minnich, owner of Cactus Data Plants in California. He is going to be telling us about the Cacti of Brazil. He is an informative and entertaining speaker.

If you are in need of some pots, you will want to be at this meeting. The silent auction will have scores of pots of all sizes for sale. Bring your checkbook.

Lee



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## Calendar

### February 27 meeting

Woody Minnich's topic is the Cactus and Succulents of Brazil. This presentation is based on Woody's 107<sup>th</sup> trip to South America. Very few American's have done this much field work in either Mexico or South America.

### March 18-20 DBG Spring Plant Sale Festival

Friday is for DBG members only. Saturday and Sunday are open to the public 8am to 5 pm

### March 20 meeting

NOT the last Sunday of the month as to not conflict with Easter. Regular time at 2pm. Speaker to be determined

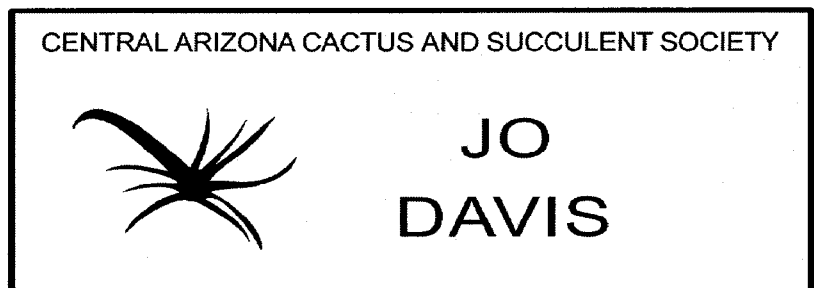
### April 20-24 CACSS Annual Show and Sale

4/20—8am to 12pm Setup 12pm to 7pm plant check in

4/21—Judging and vendor setup. Not open to the public

4/22—4/24 Show and Sale open to the public 9am to 5pm

### August 5-10 CSSA National Convention



Interested in one of the name badges you see other members wearing? You can have one of your very own! Talk to Jo Davis at the meeting or send her a check for \$7.50 made out to "Jo Davis" to her home address:

**2714 W. Monte Ave  
Mesa, AZ 85202**

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Include name(s), mailing address, telephone, E-mail.

**CACSS Librarian Retires; New Librarian Sought...Make That FOUND!!!!**

Librarian Paul Schuenemann announced his retirement, effective March 31, 2005. Through Paul's herculean efforts our books are now housed in the book cabinets in Webster Auditorium; our entire catalog is on the CACSS Web page; and the job of the next Librarian will be much simpler. Thanks again, Paul.

**Harold Stoetzer**

Has stepped forward to fill this essential position. As a brief introduction to himself, this is what Harold had to say:

Not much to say.....I've been growing plants of some kind or other in the Valley for 45 years. I knew Henry Triesler and W. Hubert Earle when we all belonged to the Valley of the Sun Men's Garden Club - way back when it was a men's garden club!

In the past couple of years, my collection of cacti and succulents just seemed to keep multiplying - picking up one here and a couple there - I'm sure many can relate to that. But I still have a lot to learn about growing them successfully. So I joined CACSS to do just that. Maintaining the library as well as Paul has will be a challenge, but he will be available to help out when needed. I've had experience managing another large club library, which should be helpful. I'm hoping the members will continue to enjoy and use the wonderful book collection our club has.

**CSSA Affiliate Representative Sought**

Founding Member Henry Triesler, Jr, was our representative to the Cactus and Succulent Society of America. With Henry's passing, we need to fill this role.

The CSSA Affiliate Representative communicates our calendar to the editor of the CSSA Newsletter and to the CSSA Affiliate Director. The CSSA Affiliate Representative also fills out the annual CSSA Affiliate Membership Renewal, gets a check from our Treasurer, and mails it.

At each CSSA Convention, CSSA Affiliate Representatives who choose to attend vote on the location of the Convention to be held four years hence.

This job is not a lot of work but the publicity can be very important for our club, especially for our Show and Sale. Contact Leo for more information.

**Plant Rescue News**

President Lee Brownson reports the CACSS now has liability insurance. It is no longer necessary for our members to join the Tucson society to go on CACSS rescue operations. You will still need to join the TCSS to go on their rescues. Lee welcomes help with Rescue; our next dig should be very soon, west of Phoenix.

**Show and Sale April 20-24**

This year almost all of Dorrance Hall will be devoted to the Show, and the Sale will be on Boppart Courtyard just south of Dorrance Hall, under tents. We will have a lot more room.

We have relaxed judging for the Novice categories. There's no reason to fear! Bring in 5 plants and have lots of fun! For each Division, we will group separately and judge separately Novice, Advanced, and Masters plants.

We will again have a non-judged category. Bring in your plants!

Think about entering an educational exhibit, your photographs, or your succulent-related art works.

Remember to enter plants! We reached membership of 200+ in 2004. If each of us brought just 5 plants we would have the best Show ever.

Leo will host an evening workshop at his home in February and again in March to demonstrate preparing plants for showing. Bring one or more plants to the workshop and see how pretty you can make them!

How Rules and Regulations were distributed at the January meeting and will soon be posted on the Web site. If you would like a copy, contact Cecilia to have one brought to the February 27 meeting.

Gard Roper is Show Chair. Please contact him to help with the Show.  
Denise Diederich is Sale Chair. Please contact her to help with the Sale.

### **DBG Spring Plant Sale Festival March 18-20**

Please volunteer! We hope to have a staffed club table in the shade.  
Contact Cathy Babcock.

### **Programs**

Vice President Michael Gallagher wants your suggestions for speakers.  
The Board has established a budget for speaker travel expenses. We can bring in speakers from all over the US. Call Michael with your wishes.

### **Welcome New Members**

Board member Doug Dawson is coordinating the Welcome Committee, consisting of Doug, Jo Davis, Gard Roper, and Leo Martin. Doug would like your assistance. New members will visit established members for a garden visit and some personalized attention.

We would like to send a new member packet to all new members, including a copy of the most recent Central Spine, bylaws, Show rules, and a name tag order form. We need a volunteer to keep a few packets on hand ready for mailing. The Treasurer will contact this volunteer when a packet needs to go out. All expenses will be reimbursed. Contact Doug if you would like to help with this.

### **DBG Donation**

As in years past, at the January meeting the CACSS membership voted a donation from the club treasury for calendar year 2004 to the Desert Botanical Garden. This year's donation, directed to the Horticulture Department, is in the amount of \$1,500.00.

### **CACSS Property Manager**

The CACSS owns a lot of stuff - stuff for the annual Show and Sale, a coffee maker, and paper records.

Currently this stuff is being stored at various homes all over the Valley.

We would like to find one person to store all this stuff, maintain a catalog of all of it, and make it available when needed.

As of now our stuff includes three large boxes of table coverings for the Show; several boxes of paper records from past Shows; several boxes of Show items such as blank entry cards, staplers, and yarn; and a party-size coffee maker.

Please contact Cecilia Phelan if you can help.

Thank you Leo Martin for the majority of our news



## MINI BITS.....Ray Daley

Well, I've complained enough about the frequent lack of material in the Central Spine, so here's my 'put my money where my mouth is' offer. Nothing deep or terribly wise, as you'll see, just some things to help Galyn fill up the space each month. I'll bet you could do the same, and probably better. Anyone up to the challenge? And if you're wondering what's with the name of this column, I drive a MINI as I did in the mid-60's when I wrote a monthly column of the same name for another special-interest group I was part of then. Just don't expect me to do it for five years now like I did then.

First off, I'd like to present a few things new members might like to know about the CACSS.....

- the CACSS was originally formed in the 1960's as the Cactomaniacs, and was officially changed to the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society in 1973, to promote the study and collecting of cactus.

The club was incorporated in 1990 as a non-profit educational organization with a purpose "to foster, disseminate, and advance the knowledge and propagation of cacti and other succulents; to support the Desert Botanical Garden and other organizations with similar purpose, and to encourage conservation measures to protect desert plants." The club had 203 members at the close of 2004.

- the club has a vast amount of knowledge in the distributed processing system that is the membership. For example:

- if you want good answers on Agave issues, check with Gard Roper (former Pres & VP).  
- if you want good answers on Aloe issues, check with Cathy Babcock (former Pres) or Mike Gallagher (current VP).

- if you want good answers on Sempervivums, check with Denise Diedrich or Sheri Dormas.

- if you want good answers on growing cacti from seed, check with Doug Dawson.

- if you want good answers on palm tree issues, check with Ken Jones.

- former CACSS president Jim Elliott, along with wife Electra, own and operate Arizona Cactus Sales Nursery in Chandler. They have a lot of landscape size plants, and the times I've been there have also had a pretty good selection of smaller potted stuff as well. CACSS members get a 10% discount on most plant purchases, plus the pleasure of dealing with them. Check them out at

<[www.arizonacactusales.com](http://www.arizonacactusales.com)>

I plan to list other member-owned nurseries in the future. And don't forget the club's own website at

<[www.centralarizonacactus.org](http://www.centralarizonacactus.org)>

- finally, don't forget next month's meeting - Woody Minich always has a good program, and so far, has always brought some excellent plants to sell.

## *Aphids: Amazons Of The Insect World .....By Sue Hakala*

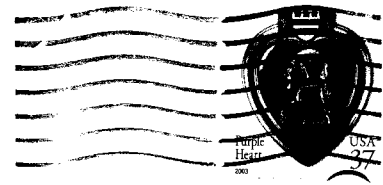
Aphids are the Amazons of the insect world. The virgin females give birth to about seven live young a day all summer long. In autumn males are born without mouths solely to service the females, sort of like the ultimate Stepford male. Eggs laid at this time that will over winter to emerge in the spring.

Hungry these drill-mouthed little beings will be born to be. They aren't particularly picky, happy to suck up thousands of plant species' proteins and sugars. Aphids are defenseless against predation, and enlist ants as their security guards. The ants stroke the backs of their small friends encouraging them to excrete a drop of honeydew from their teeny, tiny butts. Honeydew, mostly made up of water, contains nutrients: amino acids (the building blocks of proteins) and sugars. In delighted return, the ants keep them safe from parasites and predators. When need be, ants will sometimes even build little shelters over them. Herded together by the ants as a dairyman does his cows, the aphids thrive.

Unfortunately, your plants won't. The best defense is to strike when the aphid population is small. Check your plants carefully for natural enemies of aphids such as green lacewings, aphid predator midges, lady beetles (ladybugs), and parasitic wasps. If present, these predators will keep the population in check with no action on your part needed. If not, then blast them off with a hose every 2-3 days, and get under the leaves. Once blasted off, they can't find their way back on. Some people swear by insecticidal soaps, others by spraying on water with a few drops of dishwashing soap in it. Systemics work too. Check with your nursery for the best one to use on your plant as different ones work on different aphids.

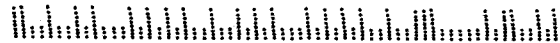


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ARTICLE SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR NEXT  
 CENTRAL SPINE ISSUE IS: MARCH 5, 2005  
 SEND TO GALYNKJ@COX.NET

83254-8254



**FREE!! FREE!! FREE!!**

Got your attention? At our next meeting (Feb.27), we will have a drawing for 2 free one year memberships to the Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA). This includes the CSSA Journal and several other benefits. To be eligible, you must be present at the Feb. meeting, be a paid up member, and never have been a member of the CSSA. If you don't win, please consider joining anyway. Attendance at all the activities of the August CSSA Conference are open only to CSSA members. So join now instead of later and enjoy a timely delivery of the CSSA Journal and other benefits before August

**FREE SANSEVIERIA BOOK**

If you are at all interested in Sansevierias, you might want to download, free of charge, Hermine Stover's 72 page book, The Sansevieria Book, at her website [www.endangeredspecies.com](http://www.endangeredspecies.com). Hermine is the first to admit the book is outdated, but so are many other plant books, often as soon as they are published, but that doesn't diminish the value of what's there. This book, which by the way is not in our club library, will give you good foundation knowledge to identify Sansevierias, and you can't beat the price.

If nothing else, heed her correct pronunciation of the word:  
 SAN SEV EE AIR EE A.