

CENTRAL SPINE

NEWSLETTER OF CENTRAL ARIZONA CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

APRIL 2000

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

As always, the Wallace garden left me in awe. It grows thicker, bigger, more beautiful each time. And, it's been a while since I saw a gopher snake. We owe the Wallaces a huge debt of gratitude for their hospitality.

There will be no regular meeting this month, so there will be no Plant of the Month. But, I would like to congratulate Scott McMahon, who brought in spectacular examples of *Conophytum* to last month's meeting. He seems to grow them as easily as I grow *Kalanchoe tubiflora*.

Our Show fast approaches. Setup will be Wednesday, April 12 until 7 pm; judging will be Thursday, April 13; the Show will be open to the public Friday, April 14 to Sunday, April 16; and we will need to have Webster Auditorium emptied by 5 pm Sunday April 16. There is still time to enter! You don't have to bring dozens of plants. Just bring one! If you have never entered before, there is nothing to fear, and you need not feel intimidated. Last year member Richard Maxwell, on his first entry in any plant show ever, took an important special ribbon for his *Mammillaria heyderii*. If you wish to enter the show, please call me at 602-852-9714, 602-212-6724 (voice mail), or E-mail me at leo1010@attglobal.net.

Some people don't exhibit because they don't want to compete. We will again have a non-judged table for beautiful plants. The public likes seeing our plants; even if you don't enter the competition, please bring plants to display.

We need volunteers to staff the show. Call Jo Davis if she hasn't already called you: 480-839-3792.

Even if you are not on the help list, you are welcome to drop by and help any time during the show. Check-in is a great time to see plenty of well-grown plants. It is lots of fun staffing Webster, talking with other club members about the plants, and learning how they grow things. It is also fun talking to the visitors. We have small plants to give kids and get them interested. We get new members each year due to the efforts of our club members at the show.

See you at the Show!
Leo Martin
leo1010@attglobal.net

Central Arizona Cactus & Succulent Society Annual Show

Wednesday April 12, 2000
10:00 AM ~ 7:00 PM Setup

Thursday April 13, 2000 Judging

Friday April 14, 2000

Saturday April 15, 2000

Sunday April 16, 2000

8:00 AM ~ 5:00 PM Open to Public

Plants must be removed at 5:00 PM
Sunday April 16, 2000

Central Arizona Cactus & Succulent Society

P.O.Box 8774
Scottsdale, AZ 85252

2000 Officers

President	Leo Martin	602-852-9714
Vice President	Debra Korobkin	602-493-7003
Secretary	Dana Hiser	602-368-8606
Treasurer	Alan Rinestone	602-996-9636
Past President	Cathy Babcock	480-921-9396
Directors	Pam Bass	602-460-4369
	Damon Billings	623-846-1708
	Judy Brody	480-951-1363
	Jerry Chapman	602-945-6543
	Bob Davis	480-839-3792
	Janet Hazlet	480-902-0892
	Richard Maxwell	480-252-6101
	Regina Rodgers	623-974-1105
	Fran Tolleson	602-943-6729
	Henry Triesler	480-946-1122
	Richard Zeh	602-224-0811
Affiliate Representative	Henry Triesler	480-946-1122
	<i>Appointive Offices</i>	
Librarian	Muriel Beroza	602-840-8912
Newsletter	Nick Diomede	602-636-0873

Central Spine

Deadline for articles and submissions for next newsletter:

May 12th 2000

Send to:

Nick Diomede

1022 East Osborne Road Unit C.

Phoenix, AZ 85014-0873

602-636-0873 / desertsegu@earthlink.net

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Sunday, April 30, 2000, we will have a special meeting. Alan Butler, owner of Brookside Nurseries in England, will be visiting the US and has agreed to lecture to us on Succulents of Saudi Arabia. Normally there is no club meeting the month of the annual Show however, when presented with this opportunity, your board thought it would be a great idea. The meeting will be in the classrooms at the DBG (Webster Auditorium is reserved) and space will be tight, but we should be able to squeeze in. The classrooms are near the propagation area, past the gate east of the plant sale area (normally off-limits to the public.) Park as usual and follow the signs.

Ready... Set... Show

A few thoughts about preparing plants for the show:

Read the rules. Know what is expected.

A common plant well-grown, well-cleaned, and nicely displayed, will usually beat a rare plant that's not prepared well.

Try to make your plant an object of art, a thing of beauty. It's a little extra effort but not that much.

Listen to the volunteers. They are there to make things run smoothly and see rules are followed. Remember they are volunteers.

When judging is complete, you may ask the judges how they arrived at their decisions. They might be willing to tell you. Listen but don't argue. You will learn a lot about what is expected of winning plants.

It's OK to repot plants just for the show. It eliminates scrubbing salt. New labels look better, too.

To clean salt from clay pots, dip plastic pot scrubber in vinegar and scrub. Sometimes a file or coarse sandpaper is needed. Elbow grease is essential. It comes off easier when wet. Get that pot spotless.

Staffing the Show--Dealing with the Public

-Remind yourself to smile all the time. Before you talk to a visitor, put a smile on your face. They will know how much you like these plants.

-Act like you would rather be there in Webster Auditorium than any place else on Earth. Enthusiasm is contagious.

-Walk around the room while visitors are present. Speak to them and let them know you can answer their questions.

-If you hear visitors discussing a plant, especially if they seem to have questions, speak up and tell them about the plant. Tell them they can have all their questions answered at club meetings.

-Let visitors know about our club, the meeting times, and what we do. Show them a newsletter. Tell them it is a good way to get free cuttings from other members.

-Remind visitors of raffle.

-Remind visitors of the plant sale area by the main entry to the Garden and of the gift shop.

-Watch visitors unobtrusively. You would be upset if one of your plants disappeared. Continually walking throughout the auditorium and speaking to everybody keeps visitors even from thinking about picking up plants.

A note from New Mexico

Gretchen Haukereið

I made the move to the East Mountains of ABQ in fine shape and our family is settling in very well. I have to leave all the plants that I intend to keep in a temporary shelter at a friends' house in Glendale, AZ. They are not plant people so I know I am pushing my luck. As it snows here in the East Mountains, it can average 56 inches a year in a wet year. I am working on getting a greenhouse that will be suitable for this type of weather and yet not cost an arm and leg to keep running. I have visited Steve Brach in Belen, NM and looked over his greenhouses. All 10 are home constructed with double 6 ml plastic, gas furnaces, manual windows and vents and blowers to keep them inflated. He used 2x4 and 4x4 construction and quik klips for the plastic. They are all pitched roof with one side down, meaning not peaked at the top, and all face north/south except his enormous "Aloe House" which is facing east/west as it stays much hotter. When I went into this greenhouse, it seemed like I was at home with all my things. Unfortunately, they also are not very aesthetic to look at. He was very against hoop frames as they build up heat at the top and need fans to ventilate, therefore using extra energy. Also, I have not heard favorable things about the Lexan/polycarbonate houses as they supposedly have too much contraction and expansion within one days time due to the wide temperature swings here and they leak. Plus it is said that the fiberglass and Lexan deteriorate quickly and are more expensive and labor intensive to replace. I have looked at a hoopframe 18'x48' greenhouse locally that was built from a Crop King kit, three years old with 30% shade screen over the double 6ml plastic which he painted each year with a bio degradable white slime/paint to increase the life of the plastic and further shade the interior. There are wooden waist high benches throughout, an Aerocool evaporative cooler (which I wonder if I'll need as we have no cooling unit on our house even) and a gas furnace, inflator blower, 2 box fans with shutter vents and fiberglass ends with glassed screen doors. Asking price is \$2200 and he offered some help in rebuilding it at my place. I know this is a lot of details but I am wondering if any one there has any suggestions of personal experience with greenhouses in my type of environment.

On a second note, the ABQ club is very small in comparison, approx. 40 members but very cohesive. They are quite casual about meeting format and have not had a newsletter lately for lack of someone to publish it and more so for lack of material that would be interesting. I bragged about your efforts and how nice the CACSS newsletters have been and the great articles, especially Leo Martins'. I wondered if there could be an exchange of info or if and when the NM club prints again, could some of the past articles from PHX be used here?



Thank you for your time
Gretchen Haukereið
NMDutch7@AOL.COM
5 Derby Court
Tijeras, NM 87059

Checklist of essentials for well-prepared plants:

- Well-grown. No damage visible on plant. Properly pruned if appropriate.
- Dying leaves/flowers removed unless seed being gathered.
- Pot size and style appropriate for the plant. Nice pots help a lot. Under or overpotting looks bad and is detrimental. *The pot should enhance the plant and not distract attention.*
- Pot correctly sized for class. Read the rules! Measure! If it's too big or too small for the class, it will be rejected.
- Pot clean without cracks, chips, breaks, or salt deposits.
- Fresh, natural-colored top dressing.
- No decorative objects in pot except in dish gardens when allowed. Read the rules!
- Minimize supports.
- Legible label with correct plant name. Genus is always capitalized, species is not. If you don't know the species, write "Genus [correct genus name] sp." and if you don't know the genus, look it up or ask somebody.
- Don't enter more plants per class than allowed. Read the rules!
- Don't bite off more than you can chew. Better to enter 5 well-presented plants than 25 haphazard ones. This is supposed to be fun!
- Enter something! It's not that hard!

Do you like mysteries, cactus, or orchids? Nathan Walpow, author of *The Cactus Club Killings*, will be in Scottsdale Saturday, May 20, at The Poisoned Pen, 4014 N Goldwater Boulevard. He will be signing copies of his new book, due to be released April 11, *Death of an Orchid Lover*. You can sample the first chapter online at <http://walpow.com/dolchap1.htm>. While I have not read *Cactus Club*, friends have, and they say it is a good murder mystery with lots of plant information, too. The author says, "Although orchids are the focus of [the new] book, there's still plenty of cactus and succulent stuff."

SHOW PREPARATION

by Sue Hakala

To help club members prepare for the spring show, three past exhibitors/winners were asked to share their methods: Edra Drake, Scott McMahon and Fran Tolleson.

Edra has 22 years experience growing cactus and succulents, and presently grows over 1,000 plants. Scott has 20 years experience growing, and has 400-500 plants. Fran has been growing plants about as long, and says she has no idea how many she has. All grow their plants under some shade cloth.

How do you choose which plants to enter?

Edra: "I wish I knew. This may sound silly, but sometimes I do promise a plant if it grows well that I will exhibit it. I do try to choose a less common plant, so there won't be as much competition. If a plant is blooming it seems more likely that it'll get an award. I also like the plant to be centered in the pot. Sometimes I just choose a plant because it's different, and I'd like people see it."

Scott: "Some categories have a lot of competition so I stay away from those. I look for plants that are well grown and of a decent size. I find that ones that are hard to grow usually will win something, if the judges are aware of this. Most importantly, I think people should enter something that they feel proud of."

Fran: "First I look at the categories available, then I walk among my plants choosing ones for each category that I want to enter. I think that they need to look good at first glance and be eye-catching if possible."

How do you prepare the plants for exhibit?

Edra: "I start by cleaning up the plant by vacuuming it. Then the pots get wiped, then I spruce up the top dressing (gravel on the top of the soil).

Scott: "After a general clean up of the plant, I'll use Armoral-All on plastic pots. Generally, I like a more natural staging using clay or glazed pots."

Fran: "I grow my plants in the pots I show them in choosing a pot and top dressing that compliments the plant. I make sure that there aren't any chips or cracks in the pots, and that everything is clean. It's like getting a child ready for a birthday party."

Where do you find your pots and top dressing?

Edra: "I'm always looking at garage sales, discount stores. The best pots are plain ones that don't detract from the plant. I've read that bugs are attracted to yellow and orange so I stay away from those colors. Judges don't seem to like them either or white. Toned down colors are better. I get top dressing at

places that sell rock, by collecting neat looking rocks all the time, and at stores that sell fish. I do stay far away from the bright colors."

Scott: "I like 1/4" decomposed granite available from places that sell rock. River beds and dry washes yield some nice rocks. For a more formal look, I'll buy rock used in aquariums. Basically, I like the staging to have a more solid feel."

Fran: "Some nice rock is available from nurseries, pet stores. Pea gravel from building supply stores is good too. I also always am on the look out for nice stones."

How do you identify your plants?

Edra: "I buy plants identified, and pray that the tags don't fall out."

Scott: "I always have plants identified when I buy them as keying them out later can be very difficult. At the master exhibitor level plants need to be identified correctly. Other club members have been very helpful in aiding me in figuring out the correct name."

Fran: "I make sure that I buy plants that are identified, and keep the tags with them. If I should lose a tag other club members have helped me to identify the plant."

What is the most difficult thing about entering a plant for exhibit?

Edra: "There is a limit of 50 plants that each exhibitor can show. I usually enter 50 so it takes a lot of time to clean and prepare the plants and to transport them. The transporting can be especially hard on the plants so I take all the precautions that I can with them."

Scott: "It takes a long time to fill out all the cards."


Fran: "I worry about people touching the plants. Sometimes I've seen people writing down the name of the plant and then poking it with a pen/pencil."

Why do you exhibit your plants?

Edra: "I want people to see that other kinds of plants can be grown successfully in the desert besides roses, tropical and sub-tropical plants. People just aren't aware of the variety."

Scott: "I like to educate club members and the public as to the variety of plants that can be grown in the desert. It's not important to win awards, but just for people to see the plants."

Fran: "The awards don't really matter to me as the judges have their own likes and dislikes. I hope that showing my plants encourages others to try growing cactus and succulents, and entering them in shows for others to enjoy."

Page 3 & 4 of your Year 2000 CACSS library list 

Central Arizona Cactus & Succulent Society

SUCCULENTS: (general)

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Folsum et al. Dry Climate Gardening with Succulents. (1995, 224 pp).
Jacobson, Hermann. Lexicon of Succulent Plants. (1974, 133 pp).
Oliver, Ian B. Grow Succulents – A Guide to the Species, Cultivation & Propagation of South African Succulents. (1998, 63 pp).
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Storms, Ed. Growing the Mesembs. (1976, 24 pp).
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- Euphorbia Society. The Euphorbia Journal, Vol 1. (1983, 130 pp).
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- Desert Gardening. (Sunset Books). (1971, 96 pp).
Mielke, Judy. Native Plants for Southwestern Landscapes. (1993, 310 pp).
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BOTANY/BIOLOGY:

- Arnett, Jr., Ross H. & F. Basinet, Jr. Plant Biology, A Concise Introduction. (1977, 553 pp).
Bailey, L.H. How Plants Get Their Names. (1963, 180 pp).
Treshow, Michael. The Environment & Plant Response. (1970, 422 pp).

MISCELLANEOUS

- Baker, Jerry. I Never Met A Houseplant I Didn't Like. (1974, 320 pp).
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Epele, David E. On The Desert. (1990, 58 pp).
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McDonald, Elvin. The World Book of House Plants. (1963, 318 pp).

JOURNALS & PERIODICALS

AGAVE: Magazine of the Desert Botanical Garden, Phoenix, AZ

- Vol. 1, No. 1 (Spring 1983).
- Vol. 1, No. 2 (Spring 1985).
- Vol. 1, No. 3 (Summer 1985).
- Vol. 2, No. 1 (Summer 1986).
- Vol. 2, No. 2 (Fall 1986).
- Vol. 2, No. 3 (March 1987).
- Vol. 2, No. 4 (Fall 1987).
- Vol. 3, No. 4 (Fall 1990).

ALOE: Succulent Society of South Africa.

- Vol. 24, No. 3 & 4. 1987. Featuring "The Succulent Riches of South Africa and Namibia." By Ernst Van Jaarsveld.
- Vol. 29, No. 1. 1992. Featuring Longiflorae & Gasteria, Ernst Van Jaarsveldt.

Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society

Post Office Box 8774

Scottsdale, AZ 85

19 March 2000

H. B. and Jocelyn Wallace
Scottsdale, Arizona

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Wallace,

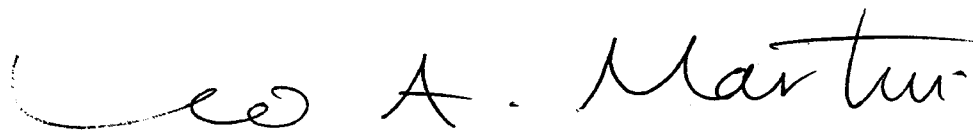
On behalf of the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society, I would like to thank you for allowing us to tour your wonderful gardens.

We are all inspired by the beautiful, healthy, large plants; the pleasing design; the intriguing use of technology; and your generosity in allowing us to visit.

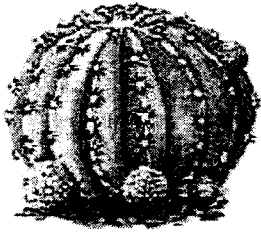
Each time the garden is more spectacular as older plants grow yet more impressive and many new ones enter the landscape. Each of us, no doubt, learns the names of unlabeled plants in our own collections!

We know we are fortunate to have you in our club, and still luckier that you invite us to your home. Again, thank you.

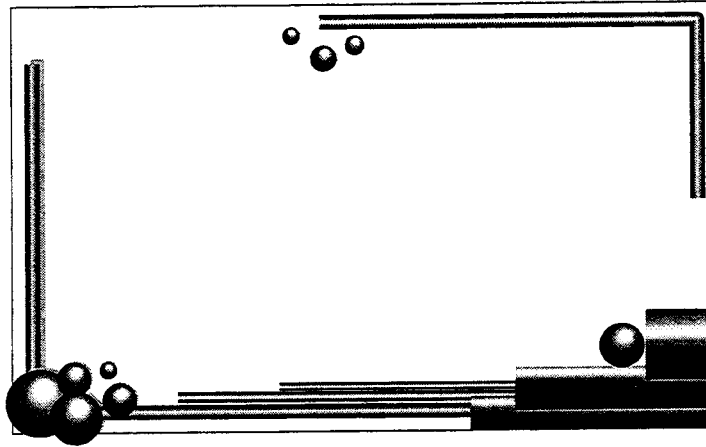
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leo A. Martin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Leo A. Martin
President, Central Arizona
Cactus and Succulent Society



Central Arizona
Cactus & Succulent Society
P.O.Box 8774
Scottsdale, AZ 85252



Central Arizona Cactus & Succulent Society

Meetings held last Sunday of the month

Time: 2:00-4:00 PM

Location: DBG Classroom

Next Meeting: April 30th 2000

Alan Butler of Brrokside Nusery, England

APRIL 8th ~ 9th 2000 **CSSA Board Meeting, Desert Botanical Garden**

APRIL 12th ~ 16th 2000 **CACSS Annual Show.**

APRIL 30th 2000 *Special meeting:*
Alan Butler, Brookside Nursery, England, Succulents of Saudi Arabia
(location to be determined, not in Webster Auditorium)

MAY 5th ~ 7th 2000 (TCSS) **Sonoran 3 Conference, THE DESERT AT NIGHT**
To receive the registration package when the program is finalized, please send your postal mail address to TCSS, c/o Tucson Botanical Gardens, 2150 North Alvernon Way, Tucson AZ 85712.

MAY 21st 2000 Awards for show. **Spring Silent Auction.**

June 25th 2000 **Dr. Edward Anderson; Director DBG**

July 30th 2000 T.B.A.