

# CENTRAL SPINE

January 2025

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My friends posing with the biggest cardon we saw in central Baja. By Sue Hakala.

Join Daniel for our monthly program **January 12, 1-4 p.m. in Dorrance Hall at Desert Botanical Garden.**



Everything in the desert is connected and always changing. We'll explore how the environment—the mountains, the rocks, the climate, the washes, and more—affects the plants and animals that live here, things in turn change the environment, and how climate change and increasing development may impact what we see here.

**Bio:** Dan is the former principal and senior partner (retired) of Deloitte Consulting. He holds a B.S. in Philosophy and Physics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and an M.S. in Operations Research (applied mathematics) at the Stevens Institute of Technology.

Since retiring, Dan has served in a variety of volunteer capacities with several conservation-related organizations near his Arizona home, notably the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy. He founded the Conservancy's research center, the Field Institute and is an active citizen scientist. Dan has authored numerous research papers, contributed to several books and teaches courses about the natural history of desert ecosystems. He also is a strategy advisor to Conservancy volunteer leadership, staff and board. Dan currently has an adjunct faculty position at ASU in the School of Life Sciences.

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Be sure to visit CACSS on the web at: [centralarizonacactus.org](http://centralarizonacactus.org), Facebook, Instagram and YouTube at: [CentralArizonaCactus](https://www.facebook.com/CentralArizonaCactus), and members only at: [CentralArizonaCactus Swap](https://www.facebook.com/CentralArizonaCactusSwap) and Shop.

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## 2025 CACSS MONTHLY CLUB MEETINGS AND KEY EVENT SCHEDULE

By President Don Begley

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As 2024 comes to an end, we need to turn our attention to 2025, a year in which all our club meetings will be in Dorrance Hall. Due to the club's preference for meeting in Dorrance Hall, we need to be flexible in adjusting our meeting dates to accommodate receiving this space (free of charge) where we comfortably fit a growing membership and an active auction. We are grateful to Desert Botanical Garden for providing our meeting space and for supporting our projects.

In 2025, we return to our Annual Show and Sale event featuring a full show in Dorrance Hall and over 20 vendors selling fantastic plants in Boppart Courtyard. Circle your calendars for Wednesday, March 26 through Sunday, March 30, 2025, open to the public March 28-30, 2025.

The annual Mega Auction will also be in Dorrance Hall on November 9.

To help plan your 2025 CACSS participation, here are the dates of our nine club meetings and the above two events.

### 2025 CACSS confirmed Desert Botanical Garden Schedule

- Sunday, January 12, 2025, 1-4 p.m. Dorrance Hall monthly meeting
- Sunday, February 2, 2025, 1-4 p.m. Dorrance Hall Monthly Meeting
- Sunday, March 9, 2025, 1-4 p.m. Dorrance Hall Monthly Meeting
- Annual Show & Sale March 26-30, 2025 Dorrance Hall and Boppart Courtyard
- Sunday, May 4, 2025, 1-4 p.m. Dorrance Hall Monthly Meeting
- Sunday, May 25, 2025, 1-4 p.m. Dorrance Hall Monthly Meeting
- Sunday, June 22, 2025, 1-4 p.m. Dorrance Hall Monthly Meeting
- Sunday, July 27, 2025, 1-4 p.m. Dorrance Hall Monthly Meeting
- Sunday, August 24, 2025, 1-4 p.m. Dorrance Hall Monthly Meeting
- Sunday, September 28, 2025, 1-4 p.m. Dorrance Hall Monthly Meeting
- Annual Mega Auction November 9, 2025, Dorrance Hall

For each monthly meeting, the doors open at 12:30 for setup, and at 1:00 for Meet and Greet, with the formal meeting beginning at 2:00 for announcements and speaker presentations, followed by the Silent Auction.

Please check the club's website at [www.centralarizonacactus.org](http://www.centralarizonacactus.org) for more information as the event draws closer.

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## HONORARY LIFETIME MEMBER AWARD WINNER CRICKET PETERSON

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Where did you grow up/go to school? I grew up in northern California and then moved to Scottsdale at the age of 12 and went to Cocopah Elementary/Chaparral/Coronado High School. I also attended Scottsdale Community College.



When did you start gardening? I think I started gardening at an early age because my grandfather always had a garden and I visited him quite frequently. I have always loved all plants and being outdoors.

What is your most favorite cactus/succulent plant/why? I'm not sure I can name a favorite plant because I enjoy so many, especially those that flower. I love aloes and grow a lot of flowers in my garden.

Why do you volunteer for the club? I volunteer because I get to meet people from the club and it keeps me moving. I also learn things when I volunteer.

What kinds of club activities have you been involved in through the years that got you the lifetime member status/what are you most proud of? I was the club president for three years and enjoyed serving as a board member. I have also participated in helping with the Show and Sale by helping set up tables and being a greeter at the show. I have done publicity for the Show and Sale.

Do you have any memorable moments from your time in the club that you'd like to share? I have really liked going to the holiday party, especially when we had it at Papago Park which is outdoors. We grilled and played games.

What is your favorite potting mix and variation you use depending on the species? I don't have a brand of potting mix because I compost, so I make my own mix with a combination of mulches and the compost.

What legacy/impact do you hope to leave behind for future members? I wish that I was able to get more people interested in plants, especially younger people.

Tell us about some of your other hobbies/interests. I enjoy hiking, yoga and tai chi classes and working in my garden. I love cats and I have three. I volunteer at the Desert Mission Food Bank one day a week. I love to travel with my husband Don.

Where do you go for help with C&S problems? Chris Ginkel has a wealth of knowledge and is a great person to answer questions.

Any tips for newcomers? If you're a newcomer, then I would say please go to the meetings and listen to the great speakers and learn, and please volunteer. You get a lot out of volunteering.

What are your favorite cactus and succulent reference books? The books I often reference are those books I got when I became a Master Gardener. I love the guide *Landscape Plants for the Arizona Desert* and the *Arizona Master Gardener Manual*.

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## AFFILIATED SOCIETY EVENTS By Don Begley

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The biannual Cactus & Succulent Society (CSSA) Convention is now on the horizon for April 23-27, 2025 in San Diego. Get ready for a fantastic cactus and succulent event for plant hobbyists of all levels, including beginners, growers and scholars.

The convention will feature botanists, explorers, authors and growers. It's not only a great place to catch up on the latest research, but also to make connections with these top-tier succulentists. In addition to the four-day convention and banquet, the San Diego club has organized several tours of local gardens as well as Anza Borrego State Park for Wednesday and Thursday before the start of the convention.

For more convention information click on:

[CSSA 2025 Biennial Convention – Cactus and Succulent Society of America](#)

Can't make the convention or still interested in the activities of others? Go to the CSSA website and check out the Events Calendar.

[CSSA & Affiliated Societies Event Calendar – Cactus and Succulent Society of America](#)

Enjoy and safe travels.

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HOLIDAY PARTY Organized by Sue Glen Photos by Kim Andrews

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Members had a great time at the Holiday Party socializing, enjoying a delicious lunch, getting free plants through the plant exchange, and participating in a raffle. A big thank you to Sue and her helpers Jo Davis, Emily Glenn and Mary Miller for putting on another fun event.



Left, Jo Davis and Nancy Mumpton help with the plant raffle.



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## MOROCCAN MOUNDS: TREASURES OF THE ATLAS MOUNTAINS By Kathleen M. McCoy

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No need to book an exotic trip to the Atlas Mountains, near Marrakesh, to find a stalwart group of euphorbias commonly known as moroccan mounds, resin spurge, or locally in Morocco as “zaggûm” (*Euphorbia resinifera*). The moroccan mound is one of the 8,000 members of the euphorbiaceae family. A visit to Desert Botanical Garden provides an enchanting setting for this unique plant’s mounding appearance. Moroccan mounds are leafless group-oriented beings. Their shape is formed by tightly packed grey-green singular 12–24” plants that look a little like a group of tiny soldiers (or for the young at heart ,minions) with their distinctly columnar vertical stance. Undaunted by their diminutive size, moroccan mounds can spread almost six feet, with taller stems located toward the center.

Superficially, these tough little evergreen plants are often mistaken for cacti, but they are succulents. Their four squared stems are lined with tiny white or brown spines which are much less dagger like than those found on most cacti. Petite simple yellow flowers bloom along the stem margins in late winter and early spring. Relatively easy to grow, the moroccan mound tolerates heat, drought and temperatures as low as 20F. Tips and edges, much like leaves in the fall, turn a festive reddish in cold weather.

Provided with sandy, well-draining soil and full sun to partial shade, the *Euphorbia resinifera* is an appropriate candidate for a low water or xeriscape garden. Undaunted by urban pollution, this succulent has been reported to thrive in inner city locations. The plant can also be quite attractive in containers, either as a singular species or with plants using similar cultures. With an appropriate environment, the slow growing plant can grace a landscape for up to 60 years.

In its natural state, the moroccan mound extends quite rapidly by suckering. The root or base of the plant sprouts new growth which are clones i.e., new plants, genetically identical to their parent. Cuttings are the most common technique used to propagate the plant domestically.

A three step propagation process entails removing an offset. Next, sap or latex is washed from the severed end. The plant is left to dry to form a callous over the wound. The time needed to form the callous will vary depending on the temperature and humidity of the surroundings. Once the plant has healed, it is ready for Mother Earth or a container.

Simple as the process may seem, a danger lurks for the unknowing. Like all euphorbias, the latex, which is actually resin, is poisonous to mammals, including humans. Gloves typically are sufficient to protect skin, but a momentary lapse of awareness by rubbing an itchy eye or scratching an irritated nose can remind you in a painful way to be more mindful. The basic rule after handling euphorbias is to wash hands thoroughly until they are completely clean and wear eye protection.

The plants, ironically, have been documented through ethnobotanical reports as one of the oldest medicinal plants and cultivated for euphorbium, the extracted latex. More recent traditional western studies are also reporting positive medicinal properties. Traditional folk medicine recognizes the moroccan mound as belonging to one of the most important families of medicinal plants. More specifically, curative powers of the *Euphorbia resinifera* have been attributed to a wide range of serious conditions, e.g., several types of cancer, diabetes, hypoglycemia and [many more illnesses](#).



Moroccan mound grown by Jo Davis, photo by Sue Hakala.

Interestingly, not a “one size fits all” plant, treatment employs different parts of the plant addressing different types of conditions.

The explanation for multiple beneficial powers may reside in the fact that various chemicals, especially phytochemicals, are found in the latex. Extracts from the moroccan mound have indicated the presence of several chemical types in phytochemical compounds. These compounds protect the plant by engaging the immune system, as well as those who ingest the plants, from unwanted or threatening bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites.

Euphorbia honey is largely used in traditional medicine of many Mediterranean countries. Daghmous or unifloral honey made from the flowers of

the moroccan mounds is highly prized for distinctive flavor and health benefits. Euphorbia honey is thought more of as a medicine than a sweetener [benefiting asthma, cysts and cancers](#).

Whether a cornucopia of medicinal miracles, a striking stand gracing a rock garden, or a carpet of green growing along the side of a mountain, the moroccan mound is truly one of nature’s treasures.



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## CACSS SHOW AND SALE MARCH 28-30, 2025 By Kathi Metzger

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In two months, the exciting CACSS Show and Sale will be open to the public at Desert Botanical Garden from March 28-30, 2025. Hundreds of incredible plants from collections of our members will be on display, allowing CACSS to share our love of cacti and succulents with the public. The 2025 Show and Sale will continue to provide a channel to promote our organization, share the talents of our members and serve as a significant means to highlight our collaboration with Desert Botanical Garden.

CACSS members will be able to support the activities during the week of preparation or when the event is open to the public. An online volunteer sign-up will be available in January 2025 and will be accessed through a link provided in a future email blast. Snacks and lunch will be provided to our volunteers from Friday to Sunday. We are still in need of people to serve as photographers and plan to post photos of the winners and events on the CACSS website.

Over twenty vendors are planning to participate, selling lots of fantastic plants, pottery and assorted goods. At this time, we anticipate all vendor space will be filled. This will be a great opportunity to add to your plant collection and buy the perfect pot for your plant.

Please consider entering your plants into the show. Whether you're a seasoned cultivator or a newbie, all plants are welcome. Please review the information on the CACSS website regarding the Show and Sale rules and a listing of the Plant List, Categories and Divisions. <https://centralarizonacactus.org/show-and-sale.html>

Additionally, Jenny Kuo and Cliff Fielding have two excellent videos available on YouTube pertaining to how to prepare for the Show and Sale. They can be viewed here:

How to prepare for the Show and Sale:

<https://youtu.be/PZmmwQjsNqE?si=JPtew4tnDs9SOd1w>

General conversation with Cliff:

<https://youtu.be/eaXWOzG9gqQ?si=ceuuwhnu3W9CrClg>

Thank you for your passion to create an event with elegance and excitement for others to enjoy.

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## CULTIVATING CACTI AND TRADITION: THE BACH FAMILY'S 54-YEAR JOURNEY

Submitted by Sue Tyrell Photos by Sue Hakala

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Bach's Cactus Nursery, located in Tucson, Arizona, was started 54 years ago by Dan and Diane Bach. Starting with humble beginnings, Diane used the kitchen table to plant cactus gardens, and the family went to craft fairs to sell their wares. They became a leader in the field of propagation and development of cacti. The Bach family continues to grow exceptional plants and carry on a legacy of quality to this day. Their nursery at 8602 North Thornydale Road in northwest Tucson is the home base for their business and a travel destination to experience the beauty of their cactus and their beautiful blooms.



Just one of many plant houses at Bach's open for the public.

Only last year did Dan and Diane retire, passing the management reins on to their daughter Christine, making her the second-generation botanist in the family. While her parents are still very involved in the process, Christine has dived in head first and is making strides to continue the legacy they have worked so hard to build. Growing up, Christine was immersed in the plant business, learning all she could about plants and

the level of detail her parents went to in order to produce a quality plant. "Their tremendous passion for plants and those who love plants is amazing. I believe they could do this job with a blindfold on!" Christine reminisced.

Botany and horticulture have long been of interest to Dan who received his bachelor of science in horticulture and his master of science in plant physiology. Christine, daughter and current owner, commented on how much experience her father has in growing cactus from seed. She said, "He has a lifelong passion for plants. At the age



of 12 he began collecting cacti and fell in love with the beautiful flowers. In high school, he built a shade house and greenhouse at home." Today, production from seed is a large part of the current business, as well as the production of new hybrids. The nursery strives to produce a new hybrid each year to keep the selection fresh and exciting.

Growing cactus from seed is challenging, but the resourceful Bach family has found a way to make it work. Fifty years ago, Christine's grandfather built the seed propagation tables that are still in use today. This is where their seedlings start life. With the greatest respect for his expertise and passion for cacti, Jim Bach, Dan's brother, has worked alongside Dan and Diane for 47 years at the nursery.

For decades, Bach's Cactus Nursery has maintained a singular focus on cacti, a strategic choice driven by their low water usage, making them perfect for the arid southwest landscape. The customer base, which includes retail and wholesale, is treated to a wide selection of cactus varieties from all over the world, including seasonal items like Christmas cacti.

Christine's full-time transition into this role has allowed her to extend her parents' passion for the community of people who enjoy the outdoors, plants and the beautiful low-water landscape. But she is a realist and knows nature likes to throw curve balls, which keeps things interesting. "There is always something to learn and ways to improve in this field, which keeps us on our toes," Christine comments.

Bach grows the iconic saguaro cactus from a tiny seed, compared to the massive plant it becomes. The seed is propagated in a flat, and from there is transferred into a clump of flats by an expert who has worked at the nursery for as many as 30 years. As the cacti grow, they are moved into areas with more room to accommodate the growth.



An essential factor for the success of a saguaro is acclimation to the harsh desert environment. In nature, this cactus often grows under a nurse plant, such as a mesquite or palo verde tree, protecting the seedling from the harsh sun and elements. Bach's provide similar protection for their saguaros until they reach the size of a softball. At this point, the cactus is ready to be moved to an outside production area and eventually into someone's yard.

Looking into the future, Christine sees herself continuing her family's work, growing great new plants and doing it as a community and family for their customers. The loyalty of their customer base, from homeowners and collectors to other nurseries, is a testament to the Bach family's commitment. Customers have been returning to Bach's year after year, drawn not only by the quality of the plants, but also by the personal relationships they have built. "Our customers and employees are a huge part of our business; we work hard to cultivate those relationships. We've got a great group of people who have done many great things here at the nursery," she said. "We are fortunate to have very low turnover, and most of our employees have stayed at the nursery for decades!"

When asked why Bach's has long been a member of the Arizona Nursery Association, Christine said, "ANA is an invaluable community for us to work together in. This collaborative platform is instrumental in helping our small businesses succeed. The communication and events foster the sharing of knowledge and information we need to continue to be successful while growing an amazing community of support, which ends up helping everyone."

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## CENTRALARIZONACACTUS FACEBOOK PAGE By Michelle Schrade

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Fall weather in the greater Phoenix area finally arrived bringing mild temperatures and hints of autumnal color to the desert. November posts featured several hikes and pictures of cactus in habitat. Several CACSS members took a day trip to the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, hosted by the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy. Check out Gina Clark's November 9 post for photos.

Please take the time to post photos of cactus, succulents and related topics, share information and observations, or answer questions posted by members. Our Facebook page is an important outreach of our society. It is only as good as our members make it. That means creating content and interest, and most importantly, taking time to educate. I look at it as a way to volunteer for our club. Let's see some new members post. We would love to see your photos and perspective. A huge shout out to those who regularly share your knowledge and pictures.



Left, Cactus of the Month: *Trichocereus* hybrid posted November 1 by Chris Ginkel.

Right, Succulent of the Month: *Fouquieria splendens* posted November 18 by Ronald Souder.

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## HONORARY LIFETIME MEMBER AWARD WINNER TRISTAN DAVIS

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Where did you grow up/go to school? I grew up in northern California and got a BS at Louisiana State University (Baton Rouge) and an MS at University of Kansas (Lawrence).



When did you start gardening? I started gardening in 2001 when I moved to Arizona.

What is your most favorite cactus/succulent plant/why? It changes regularly. Currently *Estevesia alex-bragae* as it is recently discovered, rare in cultivation, threatened in the wild, and part of my conservation efforts.

Why do you volunteer for the club? I enjoy learning from society members.

What kinds of club activities have you been involved in through the years that got you the lifetime member status/what are you most proud of?

- CACSS PEG (Propagation Education Group) administrator
- CACSS show cactus judge (twice)
- CACSS presentations (three times)
- CACSS board member
- CACSS Research Grant Committee chairperson
- CACSS Seed Depot manager

Do you have any memorable moments from your time in the club that you'd like to share? Every PEG meeting is especially memorable, particularly the popular annual Agave Extravaganza.

What is your favorite potting mix and variation you use depending on the species? The one I use the most is C&S mix/pumice (75/25). For more rot-prone, C&S mix/pumice (50/50)

What legacy/impact do you hope to leave behind for future members? That taxonomy changes are GOOD and reflect our evolving understanding of the natural world.

Tell us about some of your other hobbies/interests. I like

- Ornithology
- Running
- Traveling
- Backpacking
- Visiting all 435 national park sites

Where do you go for help with C&S problems? It depends on the problem.

Tips for newcomers: Start documenting your collection NOW.

Favorite cactus and succulent reference books. I like *Todos los Cactus del Peru* (2014)



*Opuntia diplurosina* by Steve Plath.

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*CONOPHYTUM QUAESITUM* Photo and text by Scott McMahon

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*Conophytum quaesitum* is a member of the family Aizoaceae, which includes other succulents like lithops and numerous species of ice plants. This species was described by N. E. Brown (1849-1934), renowned taxonomist and authority on Aizoaceae, Asclepiadaceae and Labiatae.

*C. quaesitum* comes from the Western Cape of South Africa and southern Namibia. It grows in cracks and crevices at high altitudes on quartz and gneiss.

All conophytums are active in the fall, blooming at different times through the winter. They are dormant during the summer when they require only light spraying with water to



keep them hydrated without rotting them. I keep mine on the floor of the greenhouse during the summer where the air is cooler. They like well drained soil and light fertilizer during the fall.

Every year, they emerge with twice as many heads as before, growing to nice sized clumps in a few years. My original plant came from Plants for the Southwest Nursery in Tucson in 1998. I have since divided it and now have two additional smaller clumps. In addition to Plants for the Southwest, Mesa Garden has a large selection of live conophytums available.



I've always been an early adopter of technology, eager to learn new ways of getting things done and exploring its limits. I've been working in the Apple ecosystem since 1986 with the emergence of Desktop Publishing, creating marketing communications for weekly newspapers, advertisements, brochures, catalogs, trade shows, and special events. I've worked for Patagonia, Wild Oats, Whole Foods, and operated two creative agencies in order to grow personally and professionally.

I've been using website technology since 1995 with the advent of Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML). HTML on Hyper Text Transfer Protocol (web browsers) is exactly like the old issues of the *Central Spine* newsletter where a typewriter was used to create content. As desktop publishing evolved, so did the *Central Spine*. You can see this progression by comparing past issues of *Central Spine* on the website.

HTML evolved too, incorporating browser styling technology, known as Cascading Style Sheets (CSS), and server technologies consisting of databases to store content and templates, Hypertext Preprocessor (PHP), and JavaScript (JS) to spice up the HTML. This has created dynamic web pages and elements.

Just as desktop publishing still uses computer apps to create printed communications, web technology still creates HTML. Just as there are several apps one can use to create communications that can be delivered printed and digitally, there are several website Content Management Systems (CMS) that create websites and manage the content.

The previous iteration of the CACSS website was built in WordPress and hosted by WordPress.com on servers built expressly for WordPress. This is akin to an oven that will bake a pre-mixed recipe consisting of flour, eggs, milk and sugar. Changing any of the ingredients (HTML, PHP, CSS, or JS) will eventually cause the oven to malfunction.

Because WordPress continues to use the same premixed ingredients, changing its recipe always creates points of failure. In the case of the CACSS website, that failure occurred due to a massive, overdue PHP upgrade (too many eggs!) that no longer was able to communicate with and display the web pages. Not only did the recipe fall apart, so did the oven!

This is my fifth time dealing with a catastrophic WordPress failure, and it's easily the worst. Were it not for the internet archive, called the Wayback Machine, I'd have no idea what web pages to recreate nor be able to rebuild the site.

Up until 14 years ago, I used and learned the limits of a whole host of Content Management Systems (CMS). Ecommerce was a thing and full of headaches and stress. Various open source CMS organizations implemented the shopping cart and payment processor functions differently, with the same results: an inflexible pre-mix that

forced one to use the entire CMS as is. It was a perfectly square cookie cutter. One change would break the whole thing. Tears were shed, lessons were learned and minds began to rethink how things should work.

Setting up an eCommerce website that took six months to barely complete now takes five minutes to set up and another few hours to complete, depending on what's needed.

One outstanding solution was MODX, which stands for Modularly Xtensible. The website technologies are independent of each other, just like flour, eggs, milk, and sugar are before mixing. And most importantly, the recipe itself is independent of the ingredients and the oven. MODX is equivalent to desktop publishing: you're limited by your knowledge and creativity. You are the designer and you can create whatever you want.

MODX enables me to create diverse websites tailored to various client's needs. Maybe you've seen the third and current iteration of Jan Emming's website: <https://dfranch.com/> Likewise, this is the third iteration of Highland Bees' website: <https://highlandbees.com/>

There are 27,000 recipes using flour, eggs, milk, and sugar. MODX can bake them all. I'm looking forward to enhancing the CACSS website to better connect members, foster stronger relationships and grow members' plant knowledge and skills.



Be sure to stop by the Club Ambassador table at each meeting and say hi to Daniela Pal. Pick up seasonal handouts to help you care for your plants and other items of plant interest.

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## TREE ALOES AND LANDSCAPE DESIGN By Sue Hakala

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Many CACSS members requested information about tree aloes in the recent member survey. Be sure to read *Tree Aloes* by Rick Rosenberg in the March 2024 edition of the *Central Spine*. Rick has grown them successfully for many years. Find the issue on the club website under the newsletter tab.

For those who expressed interest in learning more about landscape design, there is a whole section in the Miscellaneous Index on the website. Just click on the articles below, and you will go directly to the article.

### LANDSCAPE DESIGN

- [Desert Landscaping Tips](#) compiled by Tom Gatz, 6/13, page 5
- [Incorporating Art in the Garden](#) by Rick Rosenberg, 1/22, page 12
- [Is Your Patio Appealing or Going to Pot?](#) by Tom Gatz, 1/03, page 3
- [Landscape Design With Cacti and Succulents in Mind](#) by Lillian Barker, 10/14, page 6
- [Landscaping with Succulents](#) by Tom Gatz, 9/05, page 3
- [My Quest for Landscape](#) by Daniel Sumberg, 10/21, page 3

Do take some time to become familiar with the newsletter indexes as there is a wealth of information in them written by members/growers who live here and have successfully grown cactus and succulents under our harsh conditions. The Indexes include newsletter articles that go back to our first newsletter published in 1973.

I've been putting together the indexes annually. Barbara Macnider assists me by proofreading and double checking that I haven't forgotten something. If you find something amiss, please let me know so we can keep the indexes as clean as possible.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS WILL NO LONGER BE PROVIDED IN THE NEWSLETTER AS ISSUES HAVE OCCURRED.**

To contact a board member, committee chair, specialist, or others use the Contact Us form on the club website. When filling in the form, put the name of the person in the subject field that the message is intended for so it can be forwarded to the appropriate person.

Just click on the direct link: [centralarizonacactus@gmail.com](mailto:centralarizonacactus@gmail.com)

**Next Meeting: Agavoideae Extravaganza VIII**  
**January 18, 2025 9-11a.m.**  
**Dorrance Hall at Desert Botanical Garden**

It's a new year, and CACSS members know that can only mean one thing—time for our Agave Extravaganza. This is the EIGHTH year we are having this extravaganza event! But, this year, we are renaming it to “Agavoideae Extravaganza” because, as you all surely know from last year’s presentation, agaves have recently been shown to represent several related genera.



*Agave yucuanensis* by Tristan Davis.

If you haven't yet been to an Extravaganza event for PEG, you are missing out. This event's purpose is multi-fold:

- Learn the latest about agaves and their relatives. This can include new scientific or cultivation advancements for the group and even what new species have been described since we last met.

- Learn about the best propagation techniques for agaves and relatives—what works well in the valley, and what doesn't.

- How did your agaves fare the past couple of summers that are demonstrating the true impacts of climate change? Any tricks that you found that can help them survive as we see summer temps continue to trend upward and “non-soons” become the norm?

- How to grow agaves from seed. Is it really that difficult? (Hint—it isn't.)
- How do agaves propagate themselves?

Additionally, as always, we will have some really cool giveaways for the PEG raffle, which is available to all paid-up CACSS members (must be paid up *through* 2025). These specialty raffles are a benefit of being a paid member of the CACSS, so be sure you have renewed your 2025 CACSS membership before the meeting (we will be

verifying member status). Please remember to bring your CACSS membership name tag (or proof of payment for 2025 dues).

The best part of the Agavoideae Extravaganza is the free giveaways of agave pups that our members have accumulated over the course of the year. In the past, we have had over 50 species represented in our giveaways, and everyone (including non-CACSS members who are visiting us) always walks away with at least one free agave pup, seedling or offset for their own collection.

As usual with PEG meetings, we encourage free discussion and contribution by attendees, so please come with any questions you may have.

Of course, we always welcome any guests/non-members of the society, and they are welcome to participate in the giveaways, but those guests won't be eligible for the specialty raffles.

Remember: we are NOT able to take new memberships or renewals at any PEG meeting. However, you can sign up/renew online at [www.centralarizonacactus.org](http://www.centralarizonacactus.org) and pay via PayPal and just show me your electronic receipt on your phone.

As always, please feel free to bring along any show-and-tell plants applicable to the topic at hand from your own collection. And, if you have any seedlings or plants related to the topic that you would like to donate to the free giveaways and/or raffles, please be sure to bring them too. Contact me ahead of time if you are wondering if the plants you have would be a good addition.

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NOTE – if you bring pups, bulbils or plants to the meeting for the freebie giveaways, you MUST NOT LEAVE the meeting until all the items you brought are gone. If you must leave prior to your plants being claimed, you need to take the remaining plants you brought with you. We are unable to dispose of any unwanted plants.

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If you have any questions in the interim, please contact me via email ([minime8484@hotmail.com](mailto:minime8484@hotmail.com)).

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## LIBRARY NEWS By Diana Rogers, Co-Librarian

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The CACSS Library thanks the following five members for their generous donations in 2024: Pat Adler, Kim Andrews, Julie Catlett, Rita Gosnell, and Jennifer Woelke.

The CACSS Library is seeking three book carriers to replace volunteer members retiring in 2025. There are nine meetings per year where the library is available for current members to browse and check out materials. The library provides a cart and plastic bin for the carriers to bring their books to the monthly meetings and store them until the next meeting.

Requirements include the following: current membership, year-round availability, ability to lift or carry heavy loads, be able to store cart and bin between meetings, respond promptly (year-round) to search requests or questions from librarians, and attend most if not all nine meetings per year.

Some of our carriers volunteer as couples or teams, and most agree it is one of the best CACSS volunteer positions. As a book carrier, you take home your bin of different books monthly, and that's a lot of reading!

Please contact librarians Diana Rogers or Nancy Mumpton to apply, or stop by the library for more details at the next meeting on January 12, 2025.

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## SPECIALISTS TO CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS

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- **Tristan Davis** Specializations include plant propagation and heading PEG (Propagation Education Group).
- **Doug Dawson** Specializations include growing from seed, flora of Namibia, lithops, other mesembs, *melocactus*, and miniature cacti and succulents of Arizona.
- **Tom Gatz** Specializations include *adenium*, agave and growing succulent trees as bonsai (bursera, portulacaria, ficus, operculicarya, pachycormus, etc.)
- **Dean Patrick** Specializations in softwood stem-cuttings, plant division and seed starting, rooting cacti, *agave*, and *aloe*.

Direct any comments, questions, ideas  
to Editor Sue Hakala

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## CACSS OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2025

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Officers: President **Don Begley** | Vice President **vacant** | Secretary **vacant** | Treasurer **Glen Legus**

Members-at Large: **Pat Adler** | **Kim Andrews** | **Chris Ginkel** | **Joanne Johnson** | **Joan McDonnell** | **Kathy Metzger** | **Mary Miller** | **Ruthanne LaQua** | **Erik Ruggard**

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## CACSS PROGRAM AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS 2025

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- Annual Show and Sale Team: **Pat Adler, Bob Hopfner, Joan McDonnell and Kathi Metzger**
- Archivist/Historian: **Lois Schneberger**
- Assistant Treasurer: **Hank Radda**
- CSSA Affiliate Representative: **Don Begley**
- Calendar Coordinator: **vacant**
- Donations Coordinator: **Chris Ginkel**
- Education Committee chair: **vacant**
- Facebook Coordinators: **Tom Briggs, Celeste Gornick, Ken Luiten, Erik Ruggard, Thom Young**
- Facebook Swap and Shop Page: **Erik Ruggard and Tom Briggs**
- Google Workspace Chair: **Emily Adler**
- Graphic Designers: **Erik Ruggard, Bob Hopfner**
- Holiday Party: **vacant**
- Instagram Coordinator: **Erik Ruggard**
- Keeping in Touch with Members: **Jo Davis**
- Co-Librarians: **Diana Rogers and Nancy Mumpton**
- Meeting AV Support: **Enna Post**
- Membership Chair: **Beth Kirkpatrick**
- Mega Auction Chair: **Javier Gurrola**
- Monthly Auction Chair: **Javier Gurrola and Ann Winchell**
- Newsletter Editor: **Sue Hakala**
- Outreach: **Kathi Metzger**
- Private Plant Sales at Meetings: **Chris Ginkel**
- Propagation Education Group (PEG): **Tristan Davis**
- Pumice Sales: **Tom Briggs**
- Recognition Committee: **Cricket Peterson**
- Speaker Coordinator: **Nadia Whiteside**
- Technology Committee: **vacant**
- Trip Coordinator: **vacant**
- Website: **Peter Bockenthien, Angela Stephens**