Graptopetalum pentandrum v superbumb was awarded Best Succulent of the Show and the Desert Botanical Garden Best in Show for Artistic Merit at our Annual Show. This beautiful plant is grown by Steve and Julie Plath. Photo by Sue Hakala.

There is no meeting in May due to the Memorial Day holiday and scheduling conflicts with the Desert Botanical Garden. The next meeting is June 5 with Cathy Babcock. We resume our regular schedule on June 26 with David Yetman.
Officers 2016  President: Beth Kirkpatrick 480.275.4833 bethalia@gmail.com | Vice President: Mike Gallagher 602.942.8580 mgallagher26@cox.net | Secretary: Jeanne Ann Brush 414.405.4919 jabmom2@hotmail.com | Treasurer: Nick Diomede 602.772.8282 nich.diomede@gmail.com

Directors 2016  Carol Parrott 602.438.4003 caparrott21@hotmail.com | Dan Smith 480.981.9648 smithdans@outlook.com | Edmund Hunt 847.514.0812 e-hunt@neiu.edu | Jo Davis 480.839.3792 | Sue Glenn 920.327.3137 skmgleann@hotmail.com | Tristan Davis 480.540.9540 minime8484@hotmail.com

Directors 2017  Nancy Mumpton 480.649.1558 nancy.mumpton@gmail.com | Jim Oravetz 602.284.9854 oravetz@cox.net | Mike Cone 602.300.7012 inakepots11@hotmail.com | Lucy Rand 623.261.5793 lucyrand@yahoo.com | Diana Crummey 602.495.1813 assegai@cox.net | Judy Tolbert 602.421.5290 tolbertjl10@gmail.com
Cathy became interested in succulent plants somewhat late in life, in her mid-30's, after a trip to Grigsby Cactus Gardens and other California nurseries in 1985. She went to ASU and earned her bachelors degree in Urban Horticulture, with the express focus of obtaining a position in horticulture at the Desert Botanical Garden. After 22 years at DBG, she decided to look for another challenge, accepting the position as director of horticulture at Boyce Thompson Arboretum in Superior where she has been since 2011. Cathy's plant passion is for *Aloes* and *Cycads*. Cathy's presentation will be about the weather patterns in the areas from where your succulents might originate. Does our local weather matter to your plants? In some cases, yes. Most succulents are fairly easy to grow in the Phoenix area but, there are those than can be somewhat cantankerous, especially during our monsoon season. It will be educational and fun to see what's going on in other parts of the world. The focus will be on Africa, Arabia and Madagascar.
Many of you have been questioning why it has been so long between meetings and why no meeting in May. We typically do not have a meeting in April because of all the activity around the annual show and sale. Since the last Sunday in May is Memorial Day weekend that was out, and Dorrance Hall was not available any other Sunday in May. Webster Auditorium is no longer an option because we now have over 150 people attending our meetings. Consequently, we are having two meetings in June. Cathy Babcock will speak on June 5 and the June 26 program will be with David Yetman. At our meeting on June 5 we will be honoring the winners of our show and sale.

We had a nice event in May. Rick and Barbara Rosenberg had an open garden on May 7 that was well attended. They have 1.2-acre property that over the last 25 years, Rick has taken from a bare horse property to a lovely desert garden with mature trees and a great variety of cactus and succulents. Thank you Rick and Barbara for opening your garden and for the treats you served.

I sent out my last notice to folks who had not renewed their membership and I received some interesting feedback. One ex-member wrote, “The reason I did not renew my CACSS membership is because, for the time I have been a member (nearly 2 years), and including the numerous monthly meetings I have attended, not a single soul spoke to me or introduced themselves to me. Even when I approached people, they were distant and I felt as though I was not a real ‘member of the club.’” I feel bad about this kind of feedback and want to make you all aware that sometimes we get so caught up talking to our friends we might not appear as friendly as we are. I know some of you go to great effort to be inclusive and I thank those of you who do and for the rest, I encourage you to be more open, inclusive and welcoming.

And to new members, I encourage you to get involved in the activities of the club as a great way to meet people. I have personally found volunteering at our show and sale, going to open gardens, workshops, and going on bus trips has helped me make friends in the club. I would also encourage you to run for a board position or make it known you want to take on one of the committee chair roles. The more you get involved the greater the benefits.
Scott McMahon was made an honorary lifetime member of the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society in recognition of his many contributions to our club over the years. I sat down with him in his office recently to find out more about him and his interest in cactus and succulents. It turns out Scott was almost predisposed to a career involving plants. His dad ran a successful landscaping business in Phoenix and his mom, Nancy, loves to garden. She still volunteers most weeks at the Desert Botanical Garden where Scott has worked since 2001, first as an arborist and currently as the Cactaceae Collections Manager. Scott speaks Spanish and has traveled to Mexico several times to teach landscaping techniques to students there, and he especially enjoyed seeing cactus in habitat on a botanizing trip to Peru.

Although not particularly interested in plants as a boy, Scott recalls that his dad kept specimen plants such as the Cardon and other desert-adapted plants in their yard to show to clients. Back then, some of his dad’s landscape plants were so uncommon in the trade that plant men like Ron Gass would stop by to harvest seeds from his Texas Ebony and Mexican Honeysuckle, likely the only specimens in town at the time.

Scott received his BS and MS degrees in plant protection at the University of Arizona in Tucson. He was not a plant collector back then, but loved bicycling in his free time. One of his best cycling buddies mentioned to him that he collected Euphorbias and invited him over to see his collection. The rest is history.

Scott McMahon rescues a roadrunner caught in fishing line in a toothpick cactus at the DBG.

Scott purchased his first specimen, Euphorbia fruiticosa, from Whit Evans.
cactus nursery near 52nd Street and Van Buren. He joined the CACSS, entered it in the show and won a blue ribbon in the novice category. He was hooked.

The oldest *Euphorbia* in Scott’s landscape is a *Euphorbia resinifera* that he got back in 1977, almost 40 years ago. I asked him why *Euphorbias* were his favorite succulents. He said some things about their unique cyathia (flower heads), and how interesting it is that they have evolved to resemble cactus, but finally summed it up with “they’re just cool.” In addition to an amazing *Euphorbia* collection, Scott also enjoys collecting *Ariocarpus* and *Turbinicarpus*, among many other genera.

I asked Scott to share some insights with us. He said he still occasionally loses a plant, often after transplanting, and suspects hot summer nights might be the reason for the demise of some of our cactus and succulent specimens. He recommends a potting medium of 50 percent cactus mix and 50 percent of either pumice or perlite. He said that he tried to glean as much as he could from books and journals, but didn’t really start learning about his plants until he joined our club.

I asked him what advice he could provide to folks just starting out in our hobby. He recommended that they focus on one group of succulents that they really like, try to learn as much as they can about them, and get to know people in the club that share their interest in those particular species. He said that the more you learn about them, the more you will enjoy them. Scott also mentioned that, at least for most of us, this is a hobby and not a job. It should be fun. So if you start to burn out on one group of plants, don’t be afraid to switch to another group that interests you.

Next time you are at the DBG, look for Scott and his volunteers in the Garden’s beds, caring for a collection of almost 13,000 accessioned cactus plants.
representing about 1,200 cactus taxa; approximately 66 percent of the world’s cactaceae family (based on a total of 1,818 per Hunt’s Cactus Lexicon).

Thanks to Kristen Kindl, plant registrar at the DBG, for tracking down the currently recognized number of species of cactus at the DBG and in the world.

Enjoy reading articles written by Scott McMahon for the Central Spine:

Neoraimondia, 7/14
Euphorbia, 4/04, 7/02, 10/99
Agave Weevils, 10/99
The CACSS Facebook page grew another 14% in the month of April, and now has over 1,023 members from around the world. The CACSS Facebook page is a great forum for identification of plants, sharing photos, new ideas, giving and receiving information on cactus, succulents and related flora and fauna.

April postings and discussions centered around the flowering spectacle of late winter and wonderful spring. So many of our plants were in bloom: *Bulbine*, *Adenium*, *Arrojadoa*, *Caralluma*, *Cleistocactus*, *Echinocereus*, *Myrtillocactus*, *Opuntia*, *saguaro*, *Trichocereus/Echinopsis*, *Thelocactus* and others too numerous to mention. The array of cactus and succulent flower colors is amazing and several were pleasantly scented to the surprise of many.

This month’s posts included various discussions, plant IDs, plant health assistance and wonderful photos of our collections and environment. April had requests for plant identification for five succulents and eleven cacti. All plants were identified. Thanks to those FB participants for sharing your knowledge.

Each month we feature a photo of a cactus and a succulent that a CACSS member shared on the CACSS Facebook
This month the cactus photo is from Steve Mack. It is the bloom from a *Carnegiea gigantea* (saguaro), and is one of the largest cacti and iconic to the Southwest U.S.

The succulent is *Albuca spiralis* ‘Frizzle Sizzle’ in full bloom from Nancy Popp Mumpton with its first place blue ribbon from the 2016 CACSS Show and Sale in April. We need all CACSS members to become members of the CACSS Facebook page. There is no charge and it is very easy to use. If you have a question, just contact us.

**PHOTOS FROM THE 2016 SHOW AND SALE**

By Loran Rodewald

From upper left: Members Steve and Julie Plath tend their sales area. Gard Roper and Mike Gallagher (below) answer questions for visitors.
The 2016 Show and Sale is over and thanks to everyone, it was a great success. I’m sure by now everyone has recovered and, hopefully, all your plants have recovered. I know two that didn’t but will talk more about that later. The reason it went so well is all the people who worked so hard.

Wednesday was plant arrival day. It was amazing to watch all the beautiful plants coming in and even more fun watching people babying their special plants. Isn’t it amazing what we go through to show our plants? There were about 74 of us doing that. After all the plants had arrived it was time to make the tables look beautiful. Steve Mack was terrific arranging the plants on the tables. When we left Wednesday evening the place looked spectacular. Wednesday was also sale area setup. Mike Cone and Steve Plath did a terrific job setting this up. I don’t think it was ever arranged so well. I think they were tuckered out when they were done moving tents and tables. That’s hard work and I’m speaking from experience.

Thursday was vendor arrival day. All the vendors worked hard getting their area set up and looking beautiful. This day is also plant judging day. After judges Judy Pigue, Raul Puente-Martinez, Woody Minnich, and Scott McMahon and I returned from lunch, they put their noses to the grindstone. It’s very hard work trying to decide which of the plants and displays are the best, and they took many hours doing that. When the judging was completed, it was time to set up the trophy table. Sue Tyrrel and Rebecca Senior were the volunteers that made that table beautiful along with help from many of the strong people that carried the heavy pots to the table. We also had to readjust the tables (I believe the term is re-spiff) to account for all the plants that were moved to the trophy table.

Friday was show time. We arrived all bright eyed and bushy tailed thinking we’ve got this thing in the bag, when we found out we had visitors during the night. It appears that mice liked several of our trophy plants. Unfortunately, the mice had very good taste. Cliff Fielding had two of his beautiful plants eaten. We all felt horrible and, of course, the Garden personnel were very apologetic. Steps were taken to eliminate the problem. There was some discussion about next year having, along with a people’s choice award, a mouse’s choice award.

Friday morning was also the typical madhouse in the sale area. It’s incredible how quickly and efficiently Nick Diomede and all his volunteers got people checked out with their favorite buys. I’m sure the check-out people were happy to see the end of the day. Nick did a terrific job...
getting the vendor contracts out, the bar
codes printed, cash registers programmed,
and managing that entire operation every
day.

Friday a star was born. Channel 10, the
local TV station, came to film our event
and actually did a short piece in the show
area live. I can’t thank Steve Plath
enough. He left his sales booth and was
interviewed by the reporter. He was an
excellent spokesperson for our society.

The weather forecast had been warning
us that Sunday would turn out to be a
stormy day. As it was windy along with
wet, Nick moved the checkout equipment
into the show area and we continued on.
Sales had already been very good so I
don’t know anyone who was too unhappy
that it rained. We did find much more
interest in our show, but of course, it was
because people wanted to get out of the
weather. Just think of how many people
we might have influenced because of the
bad weather.

No one likes Sunday afternoon because
the hard work began again. Everyone
picked up their plants and the show and
sale areas was cleaned. Rental tables
were folded and stacked, table cloths and
other show equipment were boxed and
loaded in the rental truck. Then of
course, the equipment was taken back to
storage and the rental truck was returned.
I’ve never seen the job done faster. All
those involved should pat themselves on
the back for doing such a fine job.

There were over 140 volunteer positions
filled by slightly more than 70 people, and
all of you were great. I can’t mention
them all, but there are a few that deserve
special recognition. Jo Davis was the
first one there and among the last to
leave every day of the event along with
attending every organizational meeting.
About the time I thought of something
that needed to be done, she had already
done it. Lois Schneberger is another who
needs recognition. Along with the
trophies, she did a million other things
that made the entire event work. Her
memory and attention to detail kept me in
line many times. Rita Gosnell took care
of our tummies all three days and who
doesn’t love those cookies in the
afternoon? She and her crew were great.
Chuck and Jeanne Ann Brush have done
the entry forms and sign-up details for
years along with many other things. Mike
Cohn and Steve Plath put together the
best sales area ever. The number of
vendors and the organization of the area
was terrific.

I’m missing many people and I apologize
to those I missed. Please remember that
it was you who made the event a
success. You are the people that brought
in your plants and you are the people that
spent so much time there. You are all
terrific. Thanks for allowing me to work
with you.
2016 CENTRAL ARIZONA CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY
SHOW AWARDS

Desert Botanical Garden Best in Show for Artistic Merit to Steve and Julie Plath
Plant: *Graptopetalum pentandrum var. superbum*

Best Cactus of Show to Steve and Julie Plath
Plant: *Epithelantha micromeris var. greggii*

Best Succulent of Show to Steve and Julie Plath
Plant: *Graptopetalum pentandrum x superbum*

Judges’ Choice for a Succulent to Steve and Julie Plath
Plant: *Portulacaria afra ‘cork’* (bonsai)

Judges’ Choice for a Cactus to Steve and Julie Plath
Plant: *Echinocereus davisii*

Annual Cactus Show Most Blue Ribbons to Steve and Julie Plath

Chairperson’s Special Award to Jarien Crumbley
Plant: *Operculicarya decaryi*. Photo by Sue Hakala.

Best Aizoaceae to Cliff Fielding
Plant: *Lithops dortheae*

Best *Ariocarpus* to Mike Gallagher

Best Advanced Succulent to Sue Hakala
Plant: *Adromischus maculatus*

Best Agave to Gard Roper
Plant: *Agave impressa*

Best Mammillaria to Mike Gallagher
Plant: *Mammillaria parkinsonii*

Best Junior Novice Cactus to Katherine Mann
Plant: *Echinopsis ssp.*
Best Arizona Native Plant in Show to Steve Mack
Plant: *Echinomastus johnsonii*

Best Advanced Cactus to Sue Hakala
Plant: *Echinocereus reichenbachii* ssp. *albispinus*

Best Cactus Collection to Cliff Fielding
Plants: Collection of *Copiapoa*

Best Novice Cactus to Heather Holst
Plant: *Mammillaria elongata*

Best Euphorbia to Rita Gosnell
Plant: *Euphorbia horrida*

Best Junior Novice Succulent to Andrew Mahn

Best Junior Novice Cactus to Katherine Mann
Plant: *Echinopsis* ssp. Photo by John Crummey.

Best Cactus Collection to Cliff Fielding
Plants: Collection of *Copiapoa*

Best Novice Cactus to Heather Holst
Plant: *Mammillaria elongata*

Best Euphorbia to Rita Gosnell
Plant: *Euphorbia horrida*

Best Junior Novice Succulent to Andrew Mahn

Best Aloe to Gard Roper
Plant: *Aloe pillansii*

Best Gasteria to Nancy Mumpton
Plant: *Gasteria brachyphylla*

Best Crest or Monstrose to Gard Roper
Plant: *Agave potatorum*

Best Ferocactus to Steve and Julie Plath
Plant: *Ferocactus chrysacanthus*

CACSS Cactus Sweepstakes to Steve and Julie Plath

Best Succulent Collection to Gard Roper
Plants: Collection of *Aloe* hybrids

Best Seedling to Laurence Garvie
Plant: *Cylindropuntia echinocarpa*

Sweepstakes Award for Most Points to Steve and Julie Plath

Best Haworthia to Cliff Fielding
Plant: *Haworthia kolmanideum*

Novice Sweepstakes CACSS to Heather Holst

Best in Class of Variegated Succulents to Sue Hakala

---

People’s Choice Award to Jim Oravetz awarded by visitors to the 2016 show for his *Adenium*
Plant: *Agave potatorum* var. dwarf

Best Educational Exhibit to Dan Smith
Exhibit name: *Adenium*

Best Novice Succulent to Loran Rodewald
Plant: *Fokea edulis*

*People’s Choice Award to Jim Oravetz awarded by visitors to the 2016 show for his Adenium. Photo by Wendy Barrett.*
FAVORITE TOOLS FOR DESERT PLANTING

By Scott McMahan
Desert Botanical Garden Cactaceae Collections Manager

People often wonder how we handle our cacti at the Desert Botanical Garden without getting hurt. Sometimes I’ll be in the garden planting a cactus either by myself or with some helpers, and a guest will happen by and ask what’s the trick to not getting stuck. Well, it’s no trick but rather experience combined with having the right tools on hand to get the job done. It’s possible to plant all sizes of cacti from small globular species to medium columnar types to large specimens that require heavy machinery. We can handle and plant unexpectedly large plants if the process is researched and planned ahead.

Cacti come in a variety of forms that require different ways of moving them around. For example, a set of leather gloves is all you need to pick up or unpot many species of cacti that are what are called globular, short and rounded. Even though a single spine might be able to penetrate a leather glove, a plant with numerous spines can be handled without any reaching your fingers. This is the “bed of nails” concept. Many spines will support the weight of the plant and distribute the force evenly. Many globular species, however, will have hooked central spines such as Mammillarias, and great care must be taken not to pull the spines out of the plant while detaching yourself. Pulling the spine out of the cactus runs the risk of taking the entire areole with it.

The “bed of nails” concept goes out the window when handling chollas and prickly pears, as many of you will attest. These plants have spines and glochids that are barbed and will stick to your gloves or skin like Velcro. One of the tools we use for this job is no farther than your barbecue. Long-handled tongs are well suited for picking up small cholla stems and prickly pear pads. For larger chollas and prickly pears we use a more specialized tool, a beaker tong that has curved pincers used to encircle pads and stems without penetrating the delicate tissue. In this way, the stem can be picked up near the center of gravity and held at arm’s length minimizing your risk of being a pincushion.

What about those large, heavy plants? Often our exhibits call for more mature barrels, small saguaros, chollas and prickly pears. One tool we use extensively is pieces of used carpet (no shag, please). The other tool is used garden hose cut into 6-10 foot lengths. The rubber surface of a hose will not typically catch the spines of a cactus, reducing damage to the plant during handling. With hose pieces we can lift and manipulate large plants onto carpet for easy transport to a planting site. The
carpet can be used by itself to carry and raise a large cactus into a hole or in combination with hose pieces. The bigger the plant, the more people will be involved to accomplish the task.

With large cacti, proper centering in the hole is critical for it to remain standing. This may require people in different places to steady the plant with hoses or carpet until the vertical position is established and backfill can begin. We don’t like using props at the DBG unless they’re for big saguaros, and these are installed by companies equipped to transport and plant these specimen-sized cacti. We have had success using small boulders carefully placed at the base of a medium-sized cactus after the hole is partially backfilled. After compacting the soil, the boulders are then covered up to appear as if the plant has no extra support. For larger, heavier plants use boulders that are partially above ground.

Cacti can be damaged during transport, whether they are big or small, if they are not secured in the back of a pickup, for example. Again, carpet pieces are essential to be placed under the plant to protect the spines and to provide a cushion. We use bags of potting soil alongside large plants to keep them from rolling around. Remember, the sheer weight of a large cactus will cause it to partially crush itself during transport, so slow down for bumps! While saguaros and cardons have substantial skeletal structure, others such as totem poles, Espostoas, Cephalocereus and other species with thin ribs are at risk of breaking if part of the plant is not supported, such as hanging off the back of a pickup. An extra board or sheet of plywood will prevent this.

Part of being prepared is wearing the right clothing. Sturdy boots and pants such as jeans will help from getting scratched, and long-sleeved shirts are preferable. Be careful not to brush up against other cacti in the area, especially chollas and prickly pears, as these spines will detach and remain in your clothing to surprise you later when you least expect it. If the cactus is marked for orientation, maintain that when it is planted, and if it is in a new sunnier location, place some shade cloth on the plant to make sure it doesn’t sunburn. Planning ahead using these techniques will prevent a lot of mistakes and ensure your cactus has the best chance for establishment in its new location.

CORRECTION: For Information about Selling at Meetings contact Sue Tyrrel. Her email address should be: styrrrel@cox.net (2 r’s not 2 l’s).
PLANT SUBJECT MATTER SPECIALISTS TO CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS

- **Tristan Davis** 480-540-9540 | minime8484@hotmail.com
  Specializations include plant propagation, and heading PEG (Propagation Education Group).

- **Doug Dawson** 480-893-1207 | dawsonlithops@hotmail.com
  Specializations include growing from seed, flora of Namibia, Lithops, other Mesembs, Melocactus, and miniature cacti and succulents of Arizona.

- **Mike Gallagher** 602-942-8580 | mgallagher26@cox.net
  Specializations include Aloes, Haworthias, columnar Cacti, and Turbinicarpus.

- **Dean Patrick** 480-759-0312 | desertpatrick@cox.net
  Specialization in softwood stem-cuttings, plant division and seed starting (rooting cacti, Agave and Aloe).

- **Steve Plath** (623) 238-3342 | sbotanica@inreach.com
  Specializations include general propagation and desert revegetation, Ariocarpus, Astrophytum, Cyphostemma, Echinocereus, Fouquieria, and Thelocactus.

- **Dan Smith** 480.981.9648 | smithdans@outlet.com
  Specializes in adenium, raising adeniums from seed, grafting and adenium culture in general.

- **Bob Torrest** 480-994-3868 | robertst9114@msn.com
  Specializations include desert landscaping, unusual (including rare fruit) trees and shrubs, Aloes, Agaves, and columnar cacti.
A special thanks to Barbara and Rick Rosenberg for hosting an Open Garden and Studio on May 7. It was a lovely walk over 1.2 acres and, the Ironwood trees were in full bloom.  *Photo by Wendy Barrett.*

Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society
POB 63572
Phoenix, AZ 85082-3572

Next newsletter issue submission deadline: June 10, 2016. Email all submissions to: Editor, Sue Hakala at cacsscentralspine@gmail.com. Members are encouraged to submit medium resolution images of their plants with captions for inclusion in the newsletter when and where possible.