Welwitschia mirabilis is the subject of an article by Dan Smith this month. This photo taken by club member Doug Dawson in Namibia, shows a perfect example of a plant in its natural environment. Cliff Fielding, also a club member, gives scale to the plant.
Steve Plath will be presenting the **November 20, 2016** program at **2 p.m.** Note the date change. **This is a change from our normal program start time.** After a short break Dr. Kim McCue and Kristen Kindl will give a short presentation on the new Desert Botanical Garden Horticultural Center followed by a tour of the site (see below). There will be no business meeting but, we will have our usual silent auction.

Steve has spent over 22 years working on ecological restoration projects which have taken him on many adventures around the Southwestern United States. Sometimes he’s sequestered in remote locations for days or weeks at a time which has allowed him to explore during off-work periods. In this program, he’ll show some of the fascinating cacti, succulents, other plant types, and some of the animals he’s encountered while working in the field.

Steve is a native of Southern California, predominantly raised in the west Los Angeles area, and later resided in the San Francisco Bay area during his early adult life. As a child, he was interested in plants and animals of every kind. At the age of 12 he accompanied his sister to a local nursery for a plant buying outing where he discovered what would be a life-long passion, cacti! Though his college degree was in architecture he still studied and maintained an extensive collection of succulent plants. Sixteen successful years of designing structures throughout California eventually gave way to the desire to be outdoors and work with nature.

In the 1990’s, while living in Las Vegas, Nevada, Steve gave up his architectural career and exchanged it to work in the plant nursery industry. Before long he ended up with a job as a nursery manager, but with a bit of a twist...at a gold mine (Castle Mountain Mine, Viceroy Gold Corp.). The mine was required to mitigate some of the habitat loss from the mining activity and it was there that he cut his teeth doing ecological restoration in the middle of the Mojave Desert. It was during the period of working at the mine when Steve met his wife, Julie, in Las Vegas. She was working at The Bellagio Hotel and Casino as the greenhouse manager for the conservatory.
Steve and Julie currently operate their native plant nursery, Signature Botanica, in Morristown, Arizona, 40 miles northwest of Phoenix. There they do contract growing of native plants for numerous Federal, State and local governments and Native American tribal agencies for restoration projects. One of the recent additions to the plant pallet at Signature Botanica have been native milkweeds (Asclepias spp.) for habitat restoration of Monarch butterflies.

Echinocactus polycephalus and Dudleya pulverulenta gems along the trail.

Besides devoting energy to the nursery, Steve also works for RECON Environmental, Inc. as a habitat restoration specialist and manages field projects throughout the Southwestern U.S. Steve has served as a director and vice-president of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America. He is a past president of the Cactus and Succulent Society of San Jose (California), Cactus and Succulent Society of Southern Nevada, and the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society, and has been a certified show judge of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America for over 25 years. He is currently a director of the Society for Ecological Restoration / Southwest Chapter.
DESERT BOTANICAL GARDEN’S NEW HORTICULTURE CENTER—A TRANSFORMATIONAL SITE FOR PLANTS AND PEOPLE  
By Kimberlie McCue

Project Co-Lead, Kimberlie McCue and Project Manager, Kristen Kindl will share the story of the multi-year process of bringing the concept of a new Horticulture Center from idea to reality after Steve Plath’s program. Beginning with aspirations to build a state-of-the-art facility to care for the Garden’s world-class plant collection, educate the public, and to support staff and volunteers, the process of planning, design, deconstruction and construction will be told. Learn how the new greenhouse range will better serve the Garden’s plants, how sustainability is incorporated into the architecture, and how the Horticulture Center’s Learning Lab and Outdoor Classroom will enhance experiential learning. The presentation will be followed by a short walk to see the Horticulture Center site and buildings under construction. Phase I will open March 1, 2017.

2017 SPEAKERS AND TOPICS  
By Program Chair Diana Crummey

• January 29  Andy Siekkinen graduate researcher  TOPIC: Terrestrial Bromeliads: A Family with Succulents Often Overlooked by the Cactus and Succulent Community

• February 26  Karen Zimmerman succulent plant propagator The Huntington Desert Collections  TOPIC: Aloes on My Mind: Exploring Aloe Hybrids One Generation at a Time

• March 26  Lucas C. Majure, Ph.D. biologist of new world succulents, Desert Botanical Garden  TOPIC: Systematics of the Cacti of Cuba and Hispaniola

• May 21  Evan Meyer assistant director of Mildred E. Mathias Botanical Garden at UCLA  TOPIC: Conserving Plants on a Changing Planet

• June 25  Peter Breslin CACSS member  TOPIC: New Tools to Save Vanishing Plants: Cutting Edge Conservation Biology Strategies for the Cactaceae

• August 27  Cliff Fielding CACSS member  TOPIC: Atacama Extreme Desert, Amazing Plants

• September 24  Jon Rebman, Ph.D. curator of botany, San Diego Natural History Museum  TOPIC: The Flora of Baja California Sur (with an emphasis on new botanical discoveries and succulent plants)

• November 19  Panayoti Kelaidis, senior curator and director of outreach, Denver Botanical Gardens  TOPIC: Cacti and Succulents from Botanical Gardens around the World
Wow. I went to her home to interview Lois about her recent Lifetime Membership Award from our club for all of her contributions to the CACSS. However, I never even opened my notebook for the first hour as I wandered about her front yard and patio, awestruck by the specimen plantings in her front yard including great back-lighting on a large cholla, a creosote bush the size of a small tree and the thickest specimen of *Pachycereus schottii* forma *monstrose* cactus I’ve ever seen. It was acquired from Arizona Cactus Sales and Lois affectionately named it “Gard.” Lee Brownson did much of the initial landscaping for her years ago. Lois has an immaculate collection of smaller succulents and cactus, meticulously paired with just the right pots in every nook and cranny of her welcoming front patio. Pleasingly staged at various levels on one-of-a-kind stands (including a cleverly re-purposed pie-saver), I could just feel the love she has poured into her collection.

We finally settled down for a cup of coffee under the filtered shade of her pergola.

As I attempted to jot down some notes about this former Iowa farm girl from a family of 7 boys and 5 girls, retired ASU librarian, DBG volunteer, and long-time CACSS member, Lois’ huge (but fortunately very affectionate) cat Bruiser settled down on my open notebook demanding attention. Another perfect excuse for me to return my gaze to the almost magical display around me while I petted my new best friend.
In 1969, a telegram from the president of ASU offering Lois a librarian position brought her to town. Like many of us, her first succulents were “friendship” aloes given to her by a neighbor. After the aloes attempted to take over her property, she parted company with them and began collecting smaller, more well-mannered succulents and joined the CACSS in 2004. Her collection now includes over 100 aloe species and hybrids, along with many, many of her favorite *Gasterias* and *Haworthias*.

Lois said she was very shy when she first joined our club and is grateful to Ingrid Swenson for taking her under her wing and encouraging her to enter her plants in our show and, eventually, to run for a directorship on the Board. She was surprised to receive blue ribbons in almost all of the novice categories that she entered and, she was blown away when she got a trophy for the best succulent, a wonderful *Hoodia gordonii* that is still in her collection.

We finished our coffee and Lois invited me into her backyard framed by colorful walls to see her shade structure full of smaller cactus and other succulents that appreciate the 50% protection from the sun, and yet more specimen plants, including an amazing *Agave zebra* (maybe she will bring some pups to our next auction), a great side-by-side comparison of *Agave victoriae-reginae* and what is now called *A. nickelsiae* (formerly *A. Ferdinandi-regis*) in honor of Anna B Nickels, an intrepid plant collector from Laredo, Texas. There is a large planting bed in the center of her deck. Originally installed as a hot tub for her hip rehabilitation, she eventually got fed-up with the trees shedding their leaves in the tub and, looking for just one more plot of ground to add cactus to, she finally said, “to hell with the hot tub,” drilled holes in the bottom and converted it to an appealing focal point.

Lois’ next project is to transplant some of her larger potted specimens into the ground to make them easier to care for. She said she really appreciates all the help she receives from other club members including Gard Roper, Sue Tyrrel and Sue Hakala. If she did anything differently, she said she might have added more leafy plants to her landscape to “soften” the more sculptural look of the cactus and other succulents. Her potting mix is pretty simple: 50 percent pumice and 50 percent commercial cactus mix. Her sage advice to beginners is to find a mentor in the club. She said it will save you lots of time and money. She adds, “Be sure to get to the club meetings early for all the freebies.”

*Read the December 2015 newsletter to find out about all of Lois’ contributions to our club.*
Since our bus trip to California, there has been some renewed interest in this plant and, it's one that I have found to really enjoy. There are also a few misconceptions that I would like to correct, and an overview of the plant and its care.

“It is out of the question the most wonderful plant ever brought to this country and one of the ugliest.” This was the response of the Regius Keeper of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in 1863 when presented with a plant of *Welwitschia mirabilis*. Unsurprisingly, Josef Welwitsch, an Austrian explorer and botanist, was the first to discover this plant in 1859.

*Welwitschia* is a monotypic gymnosperm genus. If you’re like me, you are saying to yourself: “Sure, I knew that!” In biology, monotypic means having only one representative, as a genus with a single species. “No other organism on Earth can lay such a claim to being one of its kind,” writes Biologist Richard Fortey.

Gymnosperm is defined in *Encyclopedia Britannica* as any vascular plant that reproduces by means of an exposed seed, or ovule unlike angiosperms (flowering plants) whose seeds are enclosed by mature ovaries, or fruits. The seeds of many gymnosperms (literally “naked seeds”) are borne in cones and are not visible until maturity. So *Welwitschia* reproduce from cones, similar to pine trees.

It is also a dioecious plant species. This means that these plants produce a male plant and a female plant and not usually a single plant with both male and female parts.

OK, now that we have that out of the way, let’s talk about the plant. This plant grows in the Namib Desert which is on the west coast of Africa mostly in the country of Namibia. This costal desert is about a thousand miles from north to south.
south and anywhere from 30 to 100 miles wide. While this area gets little rain, it can get up to 180 days of thick fog. As you can guess, the two leaves of a *Welwitschia* are well constructed to take advantage of this fog. Not only do the leaves absorb the moisture through their stomata, but the moisture also condenses and runs down to the ground where it feeds the roots.

Not sure if you caught that but yes, the plant has only two leaves. As the plant matures, the leaves continue to grow longer and wider. According to the Kruger Park website, they grow about 3 to 6 inches a year. They also have the record plant, which was 70.5 inches wide and 18 feet long with over 3 feet of living tissue. Carbon dating measured the age at 1,500 years. When you see photos of this plant in its natural habitat you will see what looks like a pile of leaves. That is just two leaves but as they grow longer they split and become a tangled mess. The cover photo, taken by Doug Dawson on his trip to Namibia, shows a perfect example of a plant in its natural environment. As you can see, Cliff Fielding, also a club member, was on this trip.

Along with those two leaves and a swollen truck, the plant grows a very long tap root and a small network of roots under the leaves. Although it gets most of its water from the leaves, it still searches for water with the tap root. The woody trunk widens with age to become a concave disc up to three feet across, from which grow small branch systems that serve only to bear pollen and seed cones.

The plant has become a bit of a tourist attraction in Namibia. If you care to go, you might want to use the *Welwitschia* travel agency to plan your trip and hop aboard the *Welwitschia* Shuttle to get you around town. According to the Royal Botanical Garden, Kew, the species is not threatened but may become threatened in the future. Some of the issues threatening it are: off-road vehicles, collection, and overgrazing by zebra, rhino and domestic animals. The local officials have given the plants some protection which Doug’s photos 1 and 2 show.

Many have asked the question about caring for this plant here in the Valley. It’s very important to remember that this plant is not a succulent. We should never let this plant become dry. Often, *Welwitschia* are planted in a tall pot. The Plants for the Southwest website tells us that this is not necessary. I have mine in a tall pot (photo 3) because it allows the leaves to hang down more and they take

![Photo 3](image-url)
up less space. I would recommend a large pot only because they don’t dry out as quickly. The current pot is 10” high and 9” in diameter. I bought this plant (photo 4) from Plants for the Southwest in March 2014. You can see that it has grown significantly in two and a half years.

I keep this plant in my greenhouse where the humidity is higher, although that is not necessary. The greenhouse is covered with 60% shade cloth and, of course, the polycarbonate panels add some shade. I water it several times a week in the summer and less frequently other times. The pot is full of cactus mix with additional pumice so I water until the water runs out the bottom. I don’t have a standard routine for fertilizing but, when I do, I use the 10-16-38 that our society sells.

About a year ago, I was lucky enough to obtain some *Welwitschia* seeds. Photo 5 shows two of them. The seeds are about .8 in. at their broadest point. I planted 3 seeds on September 24 and 26 days later they were starting to germinate. *Welwitschia* grow two cotyledons that can reach .9 to 1.3 inches in length in the beginning. Then two foliage leaves, which are the permanent leaves, grow at right angles to the cotyledons. Photo 6, taken on October 16, shows the cotyledons. Photo 7, which was taken on August 23 of this year, gives a good example of a more mature seedling. The leaves have grown appreciably and the cotyledons are dying.

Well, I’m sure some of you are wondering about blossoms. A plant this interesting surely must have beautiful blossoms right? Well, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Remember that I said this was a dioecious plant. The male and female plant have their own special show. The
male cones are salmon colored and are small, and oblong shaped. Photo 8 taken at the Huntington Botanical Gardens by Sue Tyrrel, shows what the guys look like.

The female cones are blue-green and have more of a taper. There is some thought that a wasp, which is common in the area, pollinates the plants (see photo 9 taken at the Huntington by Wendy Barrett). The *Welwitschia* usually blossom from late spring till early fall.

Of course, there is tons of information on the internet if you care to learn more. I don’t think they are difficult plants to grow if you remember one thing. Never let it dry out.

I hope that this has given you an overview of these interesting plants. Of course, there is tons of information on the internet if you care to learn more. I don’t think they are difficult plants to grow if you remember one thing. Never let it dry out.

I would very much like to thank Doug Dawson and Tom Gatz for technical assistance and Doug, Sue Tyrrell and Wendy Barrett for some of the photographs.

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**ELECTION**

The time is approaching for our annual elections. Watch for an email from [electionbuddy.com](http://electionbuddy.com). It will have a link that will take you to the election web site. You will cast your vote there just like we did last year. Results will be announced at our Holiday party on Sunday, December 11.
THOSE DAMN THRASHERS!

Photos and Text By Tom Gatz

Don’t get me wrong; I love birds. When I first moved to Arizona, one of my favorite species of birds was the curve-billed thrasher. But then I started gardening, and my love affair with thrashers quickly went south. If you have had your cactus seedlings uprooted, your Lithops punctured, your bonsai excavated, or your bulbs unearthed by these orange-eyed hooligans, you feel my pain. And they seem to get worse every fall.

What to do? Well, don’t kill or remove them. That’s not kind. And it is illegal. Protected by state and federal laws, harming, trapping or relocating them can result in fines up to $500, six months in jail, or both. Besides, nature abhors a void, so if you create an empty territory, another pair will soon move in and your task (and potential fines) will never end.

Here is a simple, legal, humane, and effective (for me) solution to condition your pair of non-migratory thrashers to leave your plants alone. It involves training your resident thrashers with mousetraps set upside-down, so as not to kill or injure them, but to frighten them. Please note, a mousetrap set upright can kill or seriously injure a bird, and when the wildlife agent finds out, you will be in trouble with the law.

Here is what works for me. Go to a hardware store or the Dollar Store and buy a dozen or so wooden mousetraps. Set the traps (no need to bait them) and carefully place them upside-down near the base of the plants you want to protect. Use two or more traps for larger plants or scatter several around the edges of a mass planting or your plant benches. If thrashers, wrens or towhees are searching for grubs and seeds in your garden or pots, they will soon encounter the mousetraps and be startled off by the sound and motion of the trap snapping shut when they step on or poke at it. You will need to re-set and replace the traps for several days and may lose a seedling or two in the process, but after a week or two, they quickly learn to avoid areas where these “threatening predators” disguised as 4 X 1.5 inch rectangular pieces of wood are lurking.

After a while, I no longer need to even set the traps, and non-functional traps (rusted and warped after months in the rain and sun) are just as effective. Their presence alone is enough to remind the thrashers not to trespass in this area. Still, periodic refresher classes using set, functional traps are a good idea since your resident thrashers can live as long as 10 years. Also, if a hawk or cat kills one of the pair, you will need to “train” its replacement with functional traps. Each

Although its demonic-look suggests evil intent, the curve-billed thrasher digs holes in the soil with its long, decurved bill, to search for insects and seeds. Photo by R. A. (Bob) McQuade.
spring, there may be new fledgling thrashers that need to be trained with set traps, at least until their parents chase them out of their territory (and out of your yard). For aesthetic (and safety) reasons, I temporarily remove the traps when guests are visiting.

Note: If you do need to trap rats or mice in your garden, be sure to place the traps under an upside-down cardboard box with a small entry hole cut in the side so that you don’t inadvertently kill any birds.

Extensive field testing by the author concluded that “Victor” mouse traps with metal treadles sold by Ace Hardware are much more durable than those with plastic treadles.

A Bursera microphylla ‘Waterman Mt.’ clone ‘bonsai forest’ in the author’s yard is protected by upside-down mousetraps (see arrows).
NEW LOCATION FOR ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY!  
By Sue Glenn

Our new location is just south of the 202 in Chandler. We have a beautiful room to celebrate the holiday and there is plenty of parking. Please RSVP with your name and item you will bring to pass (main dish, appetizer, salad/vegetable or dessert). Please include a serving spoon/fork with the item you bring. We will supply plates, napkins and eating utensils and turkey and ham for all to enjoy. We will need volunteers to help set up and clean up at the end. We will have a plant exchange for anyone interested. If you bring a plant, you will get a ticket from Jo Davis. Jo will conduct the exchange during the meal, so please wait for your number to be called before taking a plant.

RSVP to Sue Glenn 920-327-3137 or ekmglen@hotmail.com.

Tumbleweed Recreation Center
Cotton Room
1-3:30 p.m., Sunday, December 11
745 E Germann Road
Chandler, AZ 85286

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PLANT TATTOO  
By Sue Hakala

Only one person has responded so far with a plant tattoo photo. If you have a photo of one you’d like to share, please send it to cacsscentralspine@gmail.com.

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Club member Monte Crawford submitted this boojum tattoo on his friend Rocco DeMota. Monte says, “If I had arms this size I would do the same!” Don’t be shy, submit your tat.
Henry Shaw was a philanthropist and founder of the Missouri Botanical Garden. He was born in Sheffield, England in 1800 and died in 1889 in St. Louis, Missouri. He made his fortune selling hardware to the ever increasing numbers of settlers heading west in the first part of the Nineteenth Century.

During the two decades he stayed in this business, roughly 1819 to 1839, St. Louis grew quite rapidly. Shaw sold his goods to the people of St. Louis, to soldiers and farmers, and to the other immigrants new to the area. He also found a ready market in the pioneers making their way to the open lands of the West. Many of the pioneers moving westward were outfitted in St. Louis before moving West, and Shaw had the kind of hardware, tools and cutlery they would need to make the trip and set up a new homestead.

By the age of 40 he was one of the largest landholders in the city and was able to retire. This gave him the freedom to travel and to pursue his great interest in botany. Shaw built Tower Grove House on his estate, and with the help of botanists, started the garden which would become Missouri Botanical Garden. *Agave shawii* is named in his honor.

*Agave shawii* on coastal California at Cabrillo National Monument. It gets mostly winter rainfall with cooling coastal conditions in the summer. Photos by Sue Hakala.
A GARDENER’S LEGACY: The Ruth Bancroft Garden, Walnut Creek, California

Photos and Text By Linda Larson

Ruth Bancroft’s succulent and cactus garden in Walnut Creek, CA has been growing since 1972. This was long before drought conditions introduced gardeners to such interesting plants as *Aeoniums*, *Agaves*, *Aloes*, *Euphorbias*, *Sedums*, and *Yuccas*. Curiosity inspired Ruth to go beyond the natives of California to seek out plants from Africa, Arabia, Australia, Mexico, and Madagascar. For over 40 years, this garden filled with succulents, cactus, shrubs, and trees continues to inspire visitors to expand their idea of a beautiful garden.

As a child, Ruth loved the natural environment surrounding her. She liked to watch tadpoles grow into frogs and she was always reaching for a flower. In 1938 she married Phillip Bancroft and moved to his family’s 400 acre walnut and pear farm. There she began to grow roses, iris and other blooming flowers all around her new home. As time passed, Ruth realized the climate of her home was very challenging. The rainfall was limited and the temperatures ranged from 14° to 104°. In the early 1950’s, a chance meeting with a gardener provided Ruth the opportunity to buy some succulents. She found the succulents and cactus fascinating and so began a transformation in her
garden focus. By 1971, the farm with the walnut orchard was sold and Ruth, at age 60, had three acres available for creating a new garden.

She envisioned a garden of low water use plants, which she called her “dry garden.” By that time, she had two small greenhouses filled with over 1,000 plants. She wanted a garden rich in textures, shapes and colors grown to thrive in the local climate. She knew she wasn’t a landscape designer, but she knew what she liked. She hired nurseryman Lester Hawkins to help her layout the pathways and planting beds. Her plan was to foster relaxation as a visitor meandered through the garden. She planted in groupings of small plants which were easier for her to manage, knowing if it didn’t work, she could change it. In an interview she said, “I chose trees and plants because I liked them and then I found a place for them. I realize that isn’t the way a garden should be designed.” Within a year, she had the garden planted.

Ruth carefully researched her plant choices, considering the size, shape and textures of the mature plants in her arrangements. She began using more columnar cactus to add variation in height. Her trees grew and provided filtered shade. Still, the climate challenged her and she lost many plants to cold weather. Undeterred to begin again, she designed covers to protect the most fragile plants. She experimented and she had success and failure as is the way of all gardening.

She enjoyed sharing her garden with visitors. In 1988 Francis and Anne Cabot toured Ruth’s garden with its extensive collection of rare and mature succulents and cacti, many in full flower and all thriving. During the visit, Mrs. Bancroft mentioned to them that there were no plans for the garden beyond her lifetime. (Conservancy website.) Francis was an avid gardener and a wealthy financier. Afterward, Anne asked her husband Francis, “Why don’t you start a garden conservancy?” So from a visit to Ruth Bancroft’s garden, the idea for the Garden Conservancy, formed by Francis Cabot in 1989, dedicated to “saving and sharing America’s outstanding gardens” began.

Ruth’s garden opened to the public in 1992 with the Conservancy adding gardening staff and management assistance. Ruth has a lifetime ownership of the property allowing her to continue to enjoy the fragrance of a blooming jasmine vine she planted.
about 50 years ago by her front door. (NYT9/3/08) At 91, Ruth was still working every day in her garden, weeding, planting and wheeling her wheelbarrow through the pathways to her next project. The direction and priorities for the garden were absorbing her attention at 102. She celebrated her 107th birthday by touring the garden.

Today, there is no shortage of news about the physical and mental benefits of gardening. Gardening is credited with reducing blood pressure, improving flexibility, grip strength, and exercise. Gardens promote healing, reduce stress and promote calming. The research supporting these claims is done with control groups and comparative studies, but now and then anecdotally a gardener shines as evidence of all these things. Ruth Bancroft is just such a person. Timber Press released *The Bold Dry Garden* in September, 2016 on Ruth’s 108th birthday.

Ruth Bancroft’s legacy is a beautiful garden that inspired the Garden Conservancy of North America which fosters garden preservation to benefit many. All the while, Ruth continues her life-long love affair with nature. She is evidence of a gardener’s life well lived. Certainly an inspiration for all gardeners to keep calm and garden on.

*Linda Larson is an advocate for the importance of public green space and the value of nature in our lives. She writes as A Traveling Gardener, wandering, wondering, noticing. . . [http://travelinggardener.com/wordpress/] She is a life-long lover of flowers, Master Gardener and gardener in Mesa, AZ for over 30 years. One of her earliest memories is of daffodils lining the small stone path to her grandmother’s door. Personally visiting hundreds of gardens in many parts of the world, she shares her insight and discoveries entertaining readers and audiences.*
IN MEMORIAM: CYNTHIA ROBINSON

Cynthia Robinson was a long-time contributing member of CACSS. Her mother, Judy Pigue, is president of the CSSA. In Cynthia’s memory, CACSS is putting a tribute in place in the form of a memorial trophy for our annual show and sale. Cynthia L. Robinson, 39, died October 4, 2016 in Escondido, California.

She was born January 21, 1977, in Kansas City, Missouri to Judy and Earl Robinson. When young, Cynthia spent summers traveling with her maternal grandparents in remote areas of the U.S. and developed a love of nature, especially the Southwest and California. She graduated from Raytown South High School and attended Longview Community College. She worked for Physicians Reference Lab, Overland Park, Kansas then moved from the Kansas City area to Phoenix, working for the Mayo Clinic. She decided to go back to college, attending Arizona State University majoring in applied mathematics.

She loved dancing and was a member of the Klogghoppers competition team in the ’90’s through 2003. She was especially artistic and creative, loving every facet of art and crafts. She also loved growing cacti and succulent plants and was a board member of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America. She was the 2017 Biennial Convention Chair, Social Media Committee Chair, Children’s Potting Workshop Chair, and was elected to become the society’s treasurer. Cynthia was a member of The Huntington Botanical Gardens, San Marino, CA and the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society.

She recently realized her dream of living in California. She loved the ocean, wonderful weather for growing her plants and being closer to so many of her friends.

Cynthia is survived by her mother, Judy Pigue; father, Earl Robinson; aunt, Orene Peevy; stepfather, Bill Pigue; and many cousins, nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to: Huntington Children’s Gardens, The Huntington, 1151 Oxford Rd., San Marino, CA 91108 (please write Desert Garden Endowment or Children’s Garden Endowment on the subject line) or, the Cactus and Succulent Society of America Research or Conservation Funds, P. O. Box 1000, Claremont, CA 91711.
The national election is over, but our CACSS election of officers and board members is upon us. You will shortly receive an email from electionbuddy.com that will contain your ballot. If you do not have an email address, you will receive a paper ballot. Results of the election will be announced at our December holiday party and will appear in the January newsletter. Many thanks to those who agreed to be nominated and serve the society.

We have had another successful annual October auction at the DBG. About $2,600 was made and folks were able to take home many interesting plants. Mike Gallagher and his team did an excellent job organizing and conducting our auction again this year. Many thanks to all who contributed their time, plants and talents to this effort.

Our holiday party will be in Chandler on Sunday, December 11, at Tumbleweed Recreation Center. It is a lovely facility with plenty of convenient parking. I hope to see you there.

CACSS members enjoying the annual live and silent auction. Hundreds of plants exchanged hands.
We continue to grow! The CACSS Facebook (FB) page grew over 6% in October. Our FB page now has over 1,691 members from around the world. Are you still hesitant to join the CACSS FB page? Read on, there are many reasons to join included in this article. Our FB page is an open forum on cactus, succulents, and a variety of commentaries and requests to identify cactus and succulents.

The CACSS Silent Auction was held October 9. Great plants and associated pots, yard art and all things plant related were available. Oh, and did I mention the great values that were had? What deals! What a great event. Also, the Desert Botanical Garden fall sale occurred the weekend of October 14. We hope you were able to attend both activities. Images were posted on our FB page.

In October, there were plant identification requests for six (6) succulents and seven (7) cactuses, and nine (9) of the thirteen (13) plants were identified.

Unfortunately, vandalizing our garden plants is on the uptick. We have reports of damage from razor blades used to cut the tips off Agaves, pellet guns shot into Senitas, and people are pulling or kicking Opuntias out of the ground. Please keep an eye out for these vandals in your neighborhood.

Prepping for winter in Arizona and around the Facebook world, our FB page had member posts of hoop houses, pergolas, garages, grow lights, and plant shelters being erected and prepared for over-wintering our cacti and succulents. Stunning displays of our FB member’s collections moving to winter shelter were posted.

A request for assistance for a Agave ‘Moon-glow’ was made. After reviewing posted photos and many questions, a diagnosis was made. The Agave was heat stressed due to the sub-optimal plant location in all day sun. Our members suggested replanting to an area with afternoon shade. The Agave was relocated and showed positive results immediately. Great responses from our Facebookers – thank you.

Cochineal scale is back. There is an easy solution: just grab your garden hose and spray the pads to knock off the scale.

Great photos were posted on what was blooming in October. Here are a few: Haageocereus versicolor ssp aureispinus, Plumeria, Ferocactus hamatocanthus, Echinopsis (still!), Stapelia, Gerrardanthus lobatus, Mammillaria, Agave (unfortunately!), Echinocereus, Espostoa mirabilis, Pachypodium, Fouquieria columnaris (boojum tree), Asclepiads, Mila fortalezensis, Opuntia, Echinopsis pachanoi, Ariocarpus, Euphorbia and many, many more. Go check out the FB page.

Once again, I would like to thank all of those FB members for their plant knowledge and assistance in the cactus/succulent identification as well as all of the wonderful photos posted. Each month we feature photos of a cactus and a succulent that CACSS
members shared on the FB page. The cactus photo of the month is an *Echinopsis* flower posted by Terry Porter. The succulent photo of the month is the bloom of *Orbea lutea ssp vega* posted by Tristan Davis. Please enjoy. Any questions on the FB photos should be directed to the photographer via Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society FB page.

Thanks to all CACSS members who contributed and/or joined the CACSS FB page. We have room for many more CACSS members. So, please take the time to become a member. There is no charge and it is very easy to access, enjoy and participate in our FB page. You can find us on FB @ Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society.

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*Above Echinopsis bloom by Terri Porter. At right, Orbea lutea ssp. vega in bloom by Tristan Davis.*
### SPECIALISTS TO CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS

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November 1995, 22 members attended the monthly meeting along with 7 guests. In 2016 we have 485 members with around 100 attending meetings.
PLANT REFERENCE INFORMATION

Web site: University of Arizona Horticulture Publications

The University of Arizona has compiled this web site. It’s one to bookmark as it has answers to so many questions about gardening in the Phoenix area. Just a few topic headings are listed below.
Care of desert adapted plants
Problems and pests of Agave, Aloe, cactus and Yucca
Plant selection (and deciding on placement)
Plant diseases and deficiencies
Transplanting a cactus
Diagnosing nutrient deficiencies quick reference
Insects and pests
Insect repellents
Arizona native plant law
Javelina resistant plants
Frost protection
Using rainwater in urban landscapes (rain barrels and water harvesting)
Other topics: citrus, turf, ornamentals, vegetables, weather, weeds, wildlife, flowers, fire prevention, fruit, nuts, and so much more.

Be sure to visit CACSS on the web at:
centralarizonacactus.org the Society’s web site.
Facebook Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society
CACSS Swap and Shop a place to connect with members.

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Next newsletter issue submission deadline is December 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.