President’s Letter… Kathy Butler

Thank you, Leo and Lee for taking over the Board and General Meetings while I impersonated the Traveling Gnome.

Just in case you think I was off having a good old time, after leaving Atlanta, Georgia, I worked a convention in Lake Tahoe, Nevada. Southwest Airlines lost my bag with my heavy winter coat in it. Ever mindful of my need for exercise and fresh air, my employer was careful to book me in a hotel (during a whiteout) that was a healthy walking distance from the convention hall and served toxic Shrimp in the restaurant.

Last Reminder

A few days ago there were still over 50 volunteer time “slots” open on the Annual Show and Sale schedule. It takes committed people to make this wonderful event happen every year. If there is not enough help this year, there may not be a grand Show and Sale next year.

Joan Skirvin’s “How I Found the CACSS” and Cynthia Robinson’s “My Cactus and Succulent Filled Life” articles in last month’s Central Spine were warm additions to the Newsletter.

CACSS is blessed with so many knowledgeable and talented members who contribute tremendously to the success of this wonderful organization.

What better way to get to acquainted with our fellow members than to share how each of us traveled our respective paths and, without knowing it at the time, were to arrive at the same destination.

I hope each of your gardens was blessed by the recent rain. I am reasonably sure that during Friday’s rain storm, I heard the tiny voices of shriveled lithops singing the Hallelujah Chorus.

Kindest Regards,
Kathy Butler
**Officers**

President—Kathy Butler  
602-840-9612  
butlergrin@aol.com

Vice President—Leo Martin  
602-852-9714  
leo@possi.org

Secretary—Sue Daley  
623-876-0060  
daleyspudbud4250@msn.com

Treasurer—Tom Ballen  
480-502-8639  
tballen@aol.com

Past President—Lee Brownson  
480-951-9494  
lsbrownson@cox.net

**Directors**

Lee Brownson  480-951-9494  
lsbrownson@cox.net

Ray Daley  623-876-0060  
daleyspudbud4250@msn.com

Denise Diederich  
rainbowvalleynysy@aol.com

Laurence Garvie  480-855-3850  
lgarvie@cox.net

Celeste Gornick  602-938-9590  
hheaven77@aol.com

Dana Hiser  480-368-8606  
dana2garden@aol.com

Cynthia Robinson  602-615-2261  
crobin500@msn.com

Lois Schneberger  480-946-8373  
lschneberger@cox.net

Ingrid Swenson  602-957-9865  
iswenson@cox.net

Robert Torrent  480-994-3868  
robertst9114@msn.com

Librarian—Eric Anderson  
480-967-3984  
woodcraftman@earthlink.net

Newsletter Editor &  
CSSA Affiliate Representative  
Cynthia Robinson  602-615-2261  
crobin500@msn.com

**Calendar**

April 28th - 30th, Friday - Sunday, 9 am - 5 pm  
Annual Show & Sale  
Desert Botanical Garden  
Dorrance Hall & Boppert Courtyard  
Volunteers are needed! Contact Ingrid Swenson for details.

May 5th - 7th, Friday - Sunday  
Sonoran VI  
Tucson Cactus & Succulent Conference  
Inn Suites, Tucson, AZ

May 21st, Sunday, 2 pm (Not the last Sunday)  
Regular club meeting  
Dorrance Hall, Desert Botanical Garden

June 10th, Saturday, 8 am - Noon  
Weird Plant Sale  
Tucson Botanical Garden  
Go to: tucsonbotanical.org or call (520)326-9686 for more information.

June 25th, Sunday, 2 pm  
Regular club meeting  
Dorrance Hall, Desert Botanical Garden

June 30th - July 2nd, Friday - Sunday, All Day  
Annual Show & Sale of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America  
Huntington Botanical Gardens  
Los Angeles, CA  
All CSSA members or members of an affiliated club may enter plants. For more information, contact Cynthia Robinson or Leo Martin.

July 30th, Sunday, 2 pm  
Regular club meeting  
Dorrance Hall, Desert Botanical Garden

August 27th, Sunday, 2 pm  
Regular club meeting  
Dorrance Hall, Desert Botanical Garden

September 2nd, Saturday, All Day  
23rd Annual Huntington Succulent Symposium  
Huntington Botanical Gardens  
Los Angeles, CA

**Editor's Note:** I would like to apologize to all members for not getting the March Central Spine published in March as it should have been. A hard drive crash and a string of unfortunate events caused the delay. Due to the late publication of the March Central Spine, there will be no April Central Spine, unless I get a large amount of articles in my inbox within the next week (hint hint!) If no April issue is produced, the next Central Spine should arrive in your mail the week before the May meeting.

-Cynthia Robinson

Publication of the material in the Central Spine does not imply agreement with the ideas expressed therein by any portion of the membership of the CACSS, nor does it constitute an endorsement or support for any portion of such material by the CACSS, or the Central Spine, regardless of any position or office held by the author(s). All such material represents a comment and/or personal opinion of the author(s).
CACSS Board Meeting Minutes for February 26, 2006

As of February 26, there were 105 paid members.

Volunteers are needed for our upcoming Show and Sale. Sign up with Ingrid Swenson for any one of a number of jobs--it's fun! Also, we need donations of small plants in 3" pots to be given out to children who attend the event. Donors can speak to Ingrid about this as well. It is hoped that Arizona native rescue plants will be available from the Tucson club. In addition, Rainbow Gardens Books will be here--a super chance to add to your personal C&S library.

Lee Brownson is still looking for other possible rescue sites. Contact him if you have any information about future developments.

Lee also reported that a lawyer now has all of the information needed to help the Club gain tax-exempt status.

Celeste Gornick inquired as to whether we would be having a California trip this coming summer. The problem is usually "Who will arrange the trip?" After some discussion, Celeste offered to look into the possibility of a trip to the TriCity Show in August.

Denise Diederich expressed a willingness to start a Membership & Community Involvement Committee for the purpose of dissemination of information about our club and recruiting new members. Contact her with ideas or to volunteer to help.

Sue Daley

2006 Show & Sale Plant, Pottery & Book Vendors

Have you been searching for an elusive plant that you just can’t seem to find? Maybe you have a list already put together, but are not able to make it to the sale at 9 am Friday morning. Why not contact a vendor to “pre-order” the items on you “wish list” or ask to see if they have that plant that you just can’t seem to find here in the Valley. Most vendors love to know that their merchandise is already sold before they even get it to the Show!!

Baobab Pottery Company
Mike Cone
(623)215-7692
imakepots@hotmail.com

Cactus Data Plants
Woody Minnich
(661)944-2784
cactusdata@thegrid.net

CT Creations
Cynthia Crawford
(480)671-9085

Desert Gems
Jimi Asencio
(520)792-0320

Jim Sudal Pottery
Jim Sudal
(602)852-0651
jasudal@att.net

Lithic Vision
Steve Holmes
(520)795-1842

Plantas del Sol
John & Dorothy Pasek
(520)682-8883

Rainbow Gardens Bookshop
Kevin & Helen Barber
(520)577-7406
kevin@rainbowgardensbookshop.com

Rainbow Valley Nursery
Sheri & Denise
(520)424-3464
rainbowvalleynsy@aol.com

Starr Nursery
Greg Starr
(520)743-7052
gstarrsprint@earthlink.net

Succulent Productions
Maury Clapp
(520)908-9001
desertmule@earthlink.net

Sticky Situation
Jana & Kim
(520)743-9761
cactus@stikysituation.com

Xerophytic Design
Thomas Park
(602)231-9728
2006 Show & Sale News

Show & Sale Schedule

4/26, Wednesday: Show set-up
  8 am - 12 pm: Table set-up
  12 pm - 7 pm: Plant check-in
**Please have as much of your entry cards filled out as possible.

4/27, Thursday: Show judging & Sale set-up
**Reminder - any plants brought in on Thursday will not be judged.

4/28 - 4/29, Friday - Saturday: 9 am - 5 pm
  Show & Sale open to the public

4/30, Sunday: 9 am - 4 pm
  Show & Sale open to the public

Volunteers Needed!!

What are you doing on the Saturday afternoon or the Sunday morning of the Show & Sale? If you answered nothing, why not consider volunteering a couple hours of your time to help out? There are a variety of positions that need to be filled: Cashiers, Greeters, Floaters (answering questions), etc. For additional info, contact Ingrid Swenson at (602)957-9865 or iswenson@cox.net.

Show Plants

Last year there were over 800 plants entered in the Show. I am hoping that we will exceed 800 this year. That may be high hopes, but I think we can do it! If everyone would bring at least 5 plants, that will put us well on our way to meeting my goal.

If you need entry cards or a show schedule, you can pick them up in the plant shop at the DBG. If you’re not able to make it out before the show, just give me a call at (602)615-2261 or send me an e-mail at crobin500@msn.com and I’ll be happy to mail them to you. You can also download the show schedule off of our web-site, centralarizonacactus.org. Don’t miss out on this opportunity to show-off your collection!

The Raffle is On!!

If you haven’t already heard, we will be able to have the raffle at our Show & Sale. This is great news, as the raffle generally covers the cost of the rental tables and tents, food and other miscellaneous expenses.

Everyone knows that it would be quite hard to have a raffle without items to sell chances on. Jo Davis is currently working on getting items for the raffle, but I'm sure she could always use some help. If you would like to help Jo or if you know of anyone who would want to donate a new cactus and succulent related item, give Jo a call at (480)839-3792.
My Cactus & Succulent Filled Life...  Daniel Sumberg

I enjoyed Joan Skirvin and Cynthia Robinson’s stories so much that I have been inspired to share my story, which would more aptly be named, "My Plant Filled Life."

I think the plant "bug" first bit me when I put a dry lima bean in a wet paper towel in kindergarten and witnessed the miracle of germination. Growing up in South Florida, I was fortunate to have a neighbor who had a large greenhouse in his backyard. I visited this wheelchair bound man often as a boy and watched him pot and care for a wide variety of plants. As a teenager I worked at a plant nursery after school and became fascinated with tropical plants especially exotic fruits. It’s amazing how quickly a papaya seed will become an eight foot tall fruit bearing tree.

After leaving Florida in 1972, I spent two years in Tennessee and one in Israel farming. When I say farming, I mean row crop farming, like wheat, corn, soybeans and cotton. I still remember the thrill of starting with a rough field and going through the various steps of tillage and ending up with a crop. Not necessarily worth more than the costs of production, but a crop nonetheless.

I lived in Wisconsin for six years in the late 70’s and early 80’s. Every year I grew vegetable gardens and loved landscaping with the plants that thrived up there. Two years ago, I visited my daughter in Madison and went by the home I lived in, in the early 80’s. The Norway Spruces I planted back then from one gallon pots were thirty feet tall and the Colorado Blue Spruces were close to twenty!

My years in North Carolina from the early 80’s until moving to Arizona in 2001 brought more gardening. I built raised beds with solid wooden planking between the rows. Out east it’s all about weed control. In 1985 my wife and I considered going into the container plant business. Our research took us to Long Island, NY where we visited operations ranging from low tech perennial hoop houses to capital intensive annual greenhouses. Our conclusion---it would be difficult to make a living competing with the big growers, and we would probably lose our love for plants as they would become units in a mass production process. If anyone has figured this one out, let me know. My love for landscaping continued and I was able to salvage hundreds of containers from a nursery that went out of business.

Everywhere we traveled, from San Francisco to England, we would seek out arboreums and botanical gardens. I developed a love of Japanese Zen gardens and the art of Bonsai. My Zen garden featured a weeping blue atlas cedar trailing along a structure made of large timbers, San Jose junipers, and stones. My favorite bonsai was an azalea that stayed outdoors on the north side of the house in all weather except the few nights the mercury went below the low 20's. It was a showy plant. Every May it was so covered in pink blooms you couldn’t see the foliage. Unfortunately, I was ill advised and brought it to Phoenix. It didn’t stand a chance.

Now that I have become a desert creature, I have fallen in love with cacti and succulents. When I stood up and introduced myself at the January 2005 CACSS meeting and answered Lee’s question, "what is your plant interest," I simply said cacti. Well that was then. Now I find myself appreciating so many more plants from agaves and aloes to euphorbias and more. I have landscaped my newly remodeled home with many rescued as well as purchased plants, and am building a collection of potted plants under my newly constructed 60% shade-cloth area. It’s all been great fun.

Pumice...  Daniel Sumberg

I met Tim Doyle of Tufflite at the CSSA Convention last August. Since then I have been going to their plant in Glendale about once every two months and filling five five-gallon buckets with 3/8" minus pumice to make my soil mix. Tufflite will no longer allow this. I would like to know if there is any interest in the following idea. It would require someone being able to provide a place to dump 20, 30 or 40 cubic yards of pumice. I manage a roll-off container company. I would be willing to donate the transportation if the club or a group of club members would like to get a bulk load.

Questions regarding logistics and pricing should be directed to Daniel Sumberg at daniel@cmsmorrell.com.
FEBRUARY 28 - Sweet acacia (A. farnesiana) and Eucalyptus torquata (coral red long-lasting flowers) continued to flower. Mescal bean (Sophora secundiflora) with its fragrant violet-blue flowers and Caesalpinia mexicana (Mexican bird) have been flowering for several weeks and Palo blanco (A. willardianna) is getting started. Leucaena retusa (golden lead ball tree) and Chinaberry (Melia azedarach) are leafing out as are pomegranates. The yellow flowered cassias were mentioned last time. They all continue to flower along with Cassia phyllocladina (silver leaf). Cape honeysuckle continues to flower, as does ruellia, chuparosa, salvias and justicia. Although not really shade plants or succulents, calmondins (miniature tangerines), limequats and Mexican limes are all very colorful this time of year (as are all the usual citrus).

Aloes done flowering include A. vaombe, branddraaiensis, crytopoda, ferox, arborescens, secundiflora, dorothaeae and sinkatana. Aloes still flowering include striata, variegata, saponaria, somaliensis, zebrina, vera and hereroensis x sinkatana, variegata x saponaria and echinata. Flowers are getting started on A. divaricata, kedongensis, camperi, karasbergensis, barbadensis and several still unidentified. Aloe vaombe, in particular has been rewarding. The plant in the most exposed location flowered first and most prolifically but produced little seed. Others in more shaded spots are still flowering but only with small clusters. One plant in the warmest spot in full sun produced lots of seed. By placing A. vaombe in various locations you can enjoy an extended period of the bright red flowers. On the other hand, A. secundiflora was also in a variety of locations but only flowered in the most exposed spot.

Lots of mammillarias have been flowering but not the "native" yet. Three very different plants are M. lindsayi with a wooly top and yellow green flowers, M. spinosissima ("super red") and M. pilcayensis ("brittle brush") with a ring of purple-red flowers just below the top. Cleistocacti are very colorful for a long time. C. straussi ("silver torch") has red flowers while C. dependens has a purple flower with a yellow tip. One with golden spines forms nice clusters with lots of red flowers and there is even one that that gets long enough to climb in trees. There are buds on senitas, Stenocereus marginatus and nopals and Arizona organ-pipes are showing new growth. Also flowering are some stenocacti and neoporterais and Ferocactus glaucescens. So far, only the cristate form of Myrtillocactus geometrizans has been flowering and fruit is starting to form.

If you heard Leo's talk on Feb 26, you know that Agave titanota and one he identified as FO 076 seem to integrate in habitat. Last month I listed them separately. In these articles we are concerned with landscape applications, and the "old" A. titanota a medium-large, robust plant with glaucous white leaves, simply does not look at all like the usual form of FO 076 which is apple green with brown horny edges and teeth and medium-small (i.e., effectively different plants for landscape applications). We are now getting to watch the rapid growth of the flower stalk of Agave vilmoriniata (the "octopus") which, at about 6 ft, is growing 2 ft a week, but I cut off the flower stalk of A. utahensis var. nevadensis at Gard's suggestion in the hope of producing some pups.

Rabbits destroyed a full 2 gallon sized Yucca elata right after it was planted. That is, there was nothing left but a white stub. Surprisingly, within a few days it was putting out leaves. A rare white ruellia (1 gal size) was eaten to the ground, but with chicken wire around it, it too is coming back. So...when things go wrong, don't be too quick to give up!!
MINI BITS........................ok, did you guess last month's 'mystery catalog' was from Tony Avent's Plant Delights Nursery in Juniper Level, NC, (also at plantdelights.com)? - The rest of the catalog is just as interesting, especially his introductory section which includes ".....Nice customers get amazingly better results than those with a different attitude. We hire only nice people, and we want only nice customers. If you are a mean person, we will be glad to provide you with a list of nurseries that deserve your business......".......due to some unexpected, unwelcome, unpleasant and totally unnecessary medical problems, I've had to CANCEL OUR APRIL 1st OPEN GARDEN - after discussing this problem with Ken Jones, we've decided to try it again in the fall, date TBA..............if you're new to plant collecting, you could be confused by some of the species names the botanists have devised. Heck, you could still be confused after xx years, like I am. Anyway, here are some species name prefix and suffix descriptors which may help us figure out something about the plant. (In the following, a preceding "--" indicates a prefix, a following "-" indicates a suffix). There will be no quiz.

-aceus = resembling
dactyl- = finger
acanth- , acantho- = spiny, thorny
dasy- = shaggy, markedly hairy
--alis = belonging to, resembling
decia- = ten
dia- = separated
--ammo = sand
diplo- = double
dolich- , dolicho- = long
doxa-, doxus- = glory, splendor
--amphi- = around, double, on both sides
doxa-, doxus- = glory, splendor
--anus = belonging to, connected with
--ellus = in color names, a pale tint
--brachy- = short
endo- = within, inside
brachy- = short
ennea- = nine
--brevi- = short
--ensis = indicates origin or place
--calli-, calo- = beautiful
--epi- = upon, over, on top of
calli-, calo- = beautiful
--erem- = desert
calli-, calo- = beautiful
--escens = indicates a process of becoming
exo- = outward, outside
but not complete
--clad-, cladus = branch, shoot
fili- = thread
--clad-, cladus = branch, shoot
fissi- = split
--clad-, cladus = branch, shoot
gal-, gala-, galecto- = milk, milky
glob-, globi- = ball-like
clad-, cladus = branch, shoot
goni-, gonia- = angled, angular
gameto-, gameto- = united
gon- , gonim- = angled, angular
game-, gamo- = united
gonim- = angled, angular
gonim- = angled, angular
grandid- = large, big
gymno- = naked
crypt-, crypto- = covered, hidden
helic- = coiled, spirally twisted
crypt-, crypto- = covered, hidden
humil- = low, dwarf
helic- = coiled, spirally twisted

Ok, that's enough for now - behave yourselves and we'll do some more of this some time soon.......in the meantime enjoy the rain while it lasts..................Ray D.

Cactus Tour of Northern Argentina...

- Interested members of the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society are invited to join a group from the Tucson Cactus & Succulent Society to visit Northern Argentina for a tour of native habitats during the peak blooming season of Argentinean cacti.
- This will be a small group of no more than 16 people.
- Argentina has the second largest flora after Mexico.
- Brochures, with details, are available at the meeting with the contact information on them.

For more information, contact Peter Hubbell at peterhubbell@qwest.net or ask me for a brochure at the next club meeting... Cynthia Robinson
Plant Questions???

Many CACSS members have experience with different kinds of succulent plants. I hope they will add their names to the following list (just call or e-mail Bob Torrest). For now, with the first four, the list is simply alphabetical with principle interests. When more members add their information, the list will also be cross-referenced by topic.

DOUG DAWSON
480-893-1207
doug.dawson@gcmail.maricopa.edu

MIKE GALLAGHER
602-942-8580
gallman@azboss.net

CYNTHIA ROBINSON
602-615-2261
crobin500@msn.com

BOB TORREST
480-994-3868
robertst9114@msn.com

Specialization includes Flora of Namibia, Growing from Seed, Lithops, other Mesembs & Melocactus.

Specialization includes Aloes, Haworthias, Columnar Cacti & Turbinicarpus.

Specialization includes Flora of Madagascar, Growing from Seed, Caudiciform & Pachycaul Succulents, Aloes, Apocynaceae, Burseraceae, Euphorbiaceae, Fouquieria, & Succulent Bonsai.

Specialization includes Desert Landscaping, Unusual (including Rare Fruit) Trees & Shrubs, Aloes, Agaves, Columnar Cacti, Trichocereus & Opuntia.

Who To Contact!!!