January 2014 Meeting
Sunday, January 26
2 p.m. Dorrance Hall
Desert Botanical Garden
Presenter: Tom Gatz

Articles
We Need You! For the 2014 Show & Sale
Nicky Davis: Cactus Cake Maker
Cliff Fielding’s Open Garden

Tom Gatz’s Presentation:
Creating Bonsai with Desert Plants

Tom will go over the basic steps of creating miniature living sculptures using desert-adapted plants with an emphasis on those with succulent qualities including Ficus, Fockea, Bursera, Pachycormus, Portulacaria, Pelargonium, Adenium, and Operculicarya.
Pachycormus discolor, in bloom  
Photo by Tom Gatz

Ficus petiolaris, root-over-rock bonsai style  
Photo by Tom Gatz
February Central Spine Deadline: Feb. 1, 2014

2014 CACSS Officers

President: Wayne Whipple
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Vice-President: Deborah Mulholland
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Secretary: Lois Schneberger
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Treasurer: Tom Rankin
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CACSS Program and Committee Leaders

Archivist/Historian Lois Schneberger
CSSA Affiliate Representative Sue Hakala
Facebook Coordinator Nick Diomede
Finances-Accounting Tom Rankin, Ingrid Swenson
Holiday Party - December 2013 Wendy Barrett
Library Paul Schueneman, Marty Shahan
Membership Beth Kirkpatrick
Members-Keeping-In-Touch Jo Davis
Mailed Newsletter Subscriptions Sue Tyrrel
Newsletter Diana Decker
Nominations for Board Officers, Directors -- Mike Gallagher, Dan Smith, Jackie Vasquez
October Silent Auction Pending
Plant Rescues Open Position
Private Plant Sales at General Meetings- Sue Tyrrel
Programs (Speakers, Workshops, Open Gardens, Special Interest Groups) -- Gard Roper, Doug Dawson, Joe Miracle
Refreshments Katherine Hanna
2014 Show & Sale Co-Chairs-- Lynda Michaelson, Sue Tyrrel
Website Beth Kirkpatrick

Telephone numbers, emails, and addresses can be found in the CACSS Member List emailed periodically to members by Beth Kirkpatrick.

2014 General Meetings

Sunday, February 16
Presenter: Steve Martinez
Title: From Roadkill to Rarity

Sunday, March 30
Presenter: Guillermo Rivera
I hope you had a great holiday season and are now happily looking forward to the New Year.

We are off to a good start for 2014. Programs have been scheduled, committees have been formed, and key volunteers are in place. Speakers have been selected for the first three months of the year, and our annual Show has been scheduled for the first weekend in April. An open garden has been scheduled for February 2.

Our new Program Chair Deborah Mulholland is busy organizing speakers for the year. Tom Gatz will be our kick-off speaker in January. After his excellent presentation last year, I am sure we are all looking forward on how to make bonsai from succulents. Steve Martinez, our immediate past-president, drove around the Baja California peninsula in search for indigenous cacti and other succulents. At our February meeting, I am looking forward to learn what he found on his trip. We welcome back in March Guillermo Rivera who last spoke to us in 2010. Several of us enjoyed a three-week trip to Peru in July 2010, which was organized by Guillermo.

Hold the date February 2nd for Cliff Fielding’s open-garden. His February open-garden is becoming an annual event that we always look forward to. Although we have only one open-garden booked so far, I am sure there will be others.

The Show & Sale Committee has been holding meetings since last November. Lynda Michaelson and Sue Tyrrel are co-chairs this year for the April 4-6 event. It is not too early to start inspecting your plants to determine which ones to show. Although we always look forward to the vendors for the “Sale” part of the event, it is the “Show” that is paramount to us and to the Desert Botanical Garden.

I just received an email from our Membership Chair, Beth Kirkpatrick, letting me know that we started 2014 with a record of 382 members, up by 14% over the previous year. We should be able to reach the 400 mark by next summer, but this means if you haven’t paid your 2014 dues, which were due December 31, 2013, please do so as soon as possible as we don’t want to lose anyone for non-payment.

We serve our members through our programs – knowledgeable speakers, cactus and succulent shows, workshops, trips, the newsletter and lectures. We also serve our members through excellent membership relations by carefully maintaining members’ records, encouraging volunteerism, and recognizing those who contribute immensely to the Society.

Volunteerism should be fun. By sharing our hidden talents, knowledge, and enthusiasm with other members and the general public as well, we will have achieved our purpose as a Society.

For the Society to be a success, we need your help in ways that you believe would be the best to meet the purpose of the Society. Please contact me either through email (w7676@msn.com), by phone (480-460-3623) or in person with your ideas and questions.
WE NEED YOU!!!

By Lynda Michaelson

Mark your calendar for April 2-April 6, 2014—and participate in the annual CACSS Show & Sale.

Whether you’re just getting attached to growing cacti and/or succulents, or you’ve years of dirt under your nails, and a tweezer is more important than your cell phone, you won’t want to miss this annual event.

You can decide if you want to enter plant(s) for judging (and unexpectedly find a ribbon or more next to your plant); or if you prefer a more laid-back approach, you can exhibit your favorite plant in the show without it being judged. Regardless of what you choose, when the show closes on Sunday afternoon, every plant entered is a success, with a story behind it and a grower who loves it.

This is also a great way to connect with other members and make some great memories, not to mention buy some beautiful pots for those new specimens you picked up….See you there!

And if you have time to share, VOLUNTEERS ARE ALWAYS NEEDED.
Please contact Jo Davis at 480-839-3792 for more information.

Welcome To New Members

Ely Michel Ruimy
Kurt Sadler

Membership Chair:
Beth Kirkpatrick

Contact the Central Spine Editor
Diana Decker
dianadec@cox.net (602) 220-9825
for article and photo submissions for the Central Spine.

Please Wear Your Name Tag at Monthly Meetings

Board Member Jo Davis asks members to wear their name tags at monthly meetings and other club events. Members then can more easily spot guests and talk with them about the guest’s interests and CACSS. If you need a lanyard to hang the name tag around your neck, see Jo at the meetings.

Please bring boxes to the meetings so you can carry your new plants home more easily.

Jo Davis
Nicky Davis: Cactus Cake Maker

By Sue Hakala

Nicky Davis created the amazing cactus cake displayed and devoured at the Society’s annual holiday party. “It took about eight hours to make, and was a real labor of love,” Nicky said.

It was not an original idea. “I just googled it and you can’t believe how many different variations came up. I originally made it for my brother Tristan’s birthday (also a CACSS member) and it was a big hit. He suggested that I make the cake for the party.”

“My mom introduced me to cake decorating a long time ago,” Nicky said. “I’ve got three grown kids, and have made and decorated many cakes through the years,” Nicky said. “I’ve perfected my techniques by buying and watching classes from craftsy.com. Once you buy the classes, they are yours forever to watch as many times as you want.”

For the cactus cake, she started with a ball cake pan making two halves put together with raspberry filling. She used a real terra cotta base, and then crushed up vanilla and chocolate sandwich cookies to make the gravel at the base. She then frosted the cake with green frosting and began the real labor intensive part making the spine clusters with buttercream frosting. “I made the white spines with long thin pieces of royal icing piped thin. After it dried, I broke it up and put two in each spine cluster. It takes time, but I’d do it again. I have some ideas for cactus cupcakes for a future party,” Nicky said.

We can’t wait to see your creations!

Nicky Davis holds the delicious Cactus Cake she baked for the annual holiday party.

Nicky was a perennial gardener in Ohio, but quickly adapted to her new desert environment after moving here about 18 months ago. “I grew up in California and wanted to get out of the cold and into the warm,” she said. “Also my brother lives in the Phoenix area and volunteers at the DBG. He helped me transfer my perennial gardening experience into a love of cactus and agaves.” She has an all-desert garden with over 60 Agaves in the ground, and is now discovering Echinopsis. Nicky does project management for a living, working for Origami Aloe, a custom jewelry company in Chandler.
Open Garden

Sunday, February 2, 10:30 am – 3 pm
16819 S. 15th Ave., Phoenix

Cliff Fielding is having his seventh annual open garden and cactus social. There are a bunch of African bulbs, hundreds of seedlings, collector cactus, and a whole mess of mesembs. Most of the plants are seedlings or young plants. Everyone and their guests are welcome to spend a pleasant afternoon in the warm February sun. There will be a few snacks and drinks.

For directions, call Cliff at 480-283-1940.

See you there!

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Many CACSS members have experience with different kinds of succulent plants. I hope they will add their names to the following list. Call or e-mail Diana Decker, *Central Spine* editor. Find contact information on p. 5.

For now, the list is simply alphabetical with principal interests. When more members add their information, the list will be cross-referenced by topic.

**DOUG DAWSON**
480-893-1207
dawsonlithops@hotmail.com
Specializations include Growing from Seed, Flora of Namibia, Lithops, other Mesembs, Melocactus, Miniature Cacti and Succulents of Arizona.

**MIKE GALLAGHER**
602-942-8580
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Specializations include Aloes, Haworthias, Columnar Cacti, and *Turbinicarpus*.

**DEAN PATRICK**
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Specialization in softwood stem-cuttings, plant division and seed starting (rooting cacti, agave and aloe).

**STEVE PLATH**
623-915-7615
revegdude1@juno.com
Specializations include General Propagation and Desert Revegetation, *Ariocarpus, Astrophytum, Cyphostemma, Echinocereus, Fouquieria, Thelocactus*.

**DAN SMITH**
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Specializes in adeniums. raising adeniums from seed, grafting and adenium culture in general

**BOB TORREST**
480-994-3868
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Specializations include Desert Landscaping, Unusual (including Rare Fruit) Trees and Shrubs, Aloes, Agaves, Columnar Cacti, *Trichocereus*, and *Opuntia*. 