

AUGUST 2016

On the Dry Side

Newsletter of the Monterey Bay Cactus & Succulent Society

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President's Message

By Tom Karwin

If you regularly attend the monthly meetings of the Society, you could easily focus on the typically full schedule of activities including the program, raffle, mini-show, and the ever-popular potluck luncheon.

You might miss the undercurrent of development, and opportunities for you to chime in on—and help with—the Society's evolving future.

That future happens in small steps that add up to a living organization that brings interesting and changing experiences for members.

Here are some current initiatives for which your ideas are welcome.

- Installation of a large projection screen. The VFW Hall has offered to share the cost of a new screen, which would be mounted in the ceiling.
- Supplementary lighting system. Possible acquisition of portable LED lights for plant displays at our mini-shows and twice-yearly public shows.
- Guidelines for speakers. A short list of suggestions could help our visiting experts provide consistently effective talks, for everyone's benefit.
- Ventures to interesting places. The Society can organize short trips to California's great public gardens, nurseries and garden centers.
- Partnering with the UCSC Arboretum. The Society will have advance info on the Arb's plan for its succulent collection, and opportunities for input.

There is always a lot going on, and your ideas are always welcome.

Save the Date!

MBCASS Meets

August 21, 2016

Gathering @ 12:00

Potluck lunch @ 12:30

Program @ 1:00

Board Meets

August 21, 2016

Board meets @ 11:00

Members are always
welcome to attend

Future Meetings

Third Sundays

Veterans of Foreign
Wars Post 1716

1960 Freedom Blvd.

Visitors are welcome!

Preview of the August Program

The Country Store

If you have been to our Country Store before, you know that this is one of the most enjoyable events of the season. It is a great occasion for you to share plants and related items with your fellow members.

We encourage every member to bring plants that you think other members would enjoy. We always favor cacti and succulents, but for this event you may bring any nice plant that needs a new home. You might have more of a given plant than you want, or perhaps just need space for a new and different treasure.

In any event, plants should be disease-free and something that at least one other member would want.

Also welcome for the Country Store are plant-related items: pots, garden décor, books, plant labels, etc. Someone always will find value in clean nursery cans and trays, which come in all sizes!

Lastly, please bring desserts, and wrap them individually for convenient handling.

Here is how The Country Store works:

- Volunteers will set up a table for each category: cacti, succulents, garden items, and desserts.
- Each table will have a bucket for tickets.
- Tickets will be available for purchase at the rate of one dollar for six tickets.
- Members may purchase as many tickets as they wish, and write their name on each ticket.
- Members place their tickets in the buckets at the tables that have items they find attractive.
- A volunteer at each table will draw tickets one at a time from the bucket. When your ticket is drawn, you may pick any item on the table.
- Volunteers will continue to draw tickets at each table until all items have been selected.

Members are encouraged to bring boxes, to transport their new treasures.

Mini-Show

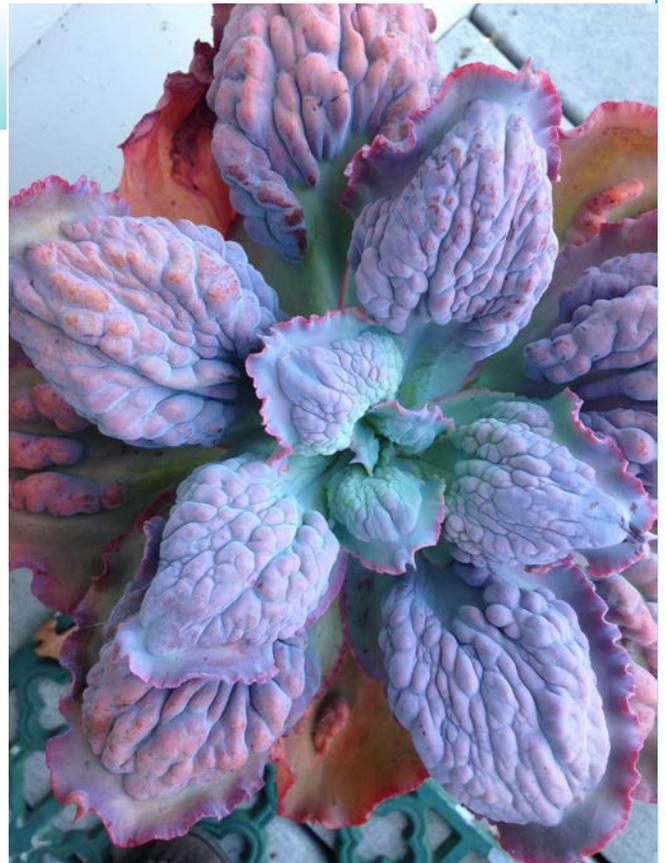
By Jeff Brooks

The Board cancelled the July Mini-show because the meeting was already fully scheduled with guest speaker Gunnar Eisel and the Silent Auction.

That Mini-show was to include the succulents Euphorbia and Stapelia and the cacti Ferrocactus and Blossfeldia. Those entry categories have not been rescheduled.

This cancellation was decided upon after the publication of On the Dry Side. Regular participants in the Mini-show were advised by phone of the cancellation; the Board apologizes to other participants for the inconvenience.

The Mini-show will resume at the September meeting. For that meeting, the Mini-show will feature succulents of the genus Senecio and cacti of the genera Coryphanha and Teohocactus, as already listed in the Calendar.



Minutes of the MBACSS Board Meeting, August, 2016

By Stan Verkler (edited by Tom Karwin)

Attendance: Naomi Bloss, Jeff Brooks, Tom Karwin, Sharon Lucchesi, Ruth Pantry, Gary Stubblefield, Stan Verkler.
Absent: Linda McNally, Manson Waters,

Approval of Minutes: The board approved the minutes of its May 2016 meeting as published.

Treasurer’s Report: Ruth Pantry presented the current financial report. She has renewed the Society’s license to conduct business in San Juan Batista (needed for the fall sale & show). The financial report is available to members upon request.

CSSA Report: Jeff Brooks provided a reminder of the 31st Intercity Show & Sale, August 13-14, Los Angeles County Arboretum, Arcadia.

Program: The July mini-show was cancelled, because the occasion was already fully scheduled for the silent auction and guest speaker. Discussion followed on the need to publish the definition of the County Store, scheduled for the August meeting.

Old Business

- **Fall Show & Sale:** Board members have reviewed several possible new sites, e.g., downtown Santa Cruz, Soquel High School, Capitola Middle School, Pajaro High School. They found no satisfactory alternative to the San Juan Batista site. The board agreed to hold the fall 2016 event in San Juan Batista, and to continue searching for an alternative site for the spring 2017 event. Naomi Bloss reported that the Norcal’s cash registers have been repaired and adjusted, and will work optimally at the next sale. The board also discussed briefly the possible acquisition of supplementary lighting equipment for the show, to compensate for unsatisfactory lighting at many possible locations. (Note: See the commercial info following these minutes.)
- **Projection Screen Upgrade:** The board supported the acquisition of a 15-foot electrically operated screen, which would cost about \$700. Tom Karwin will contact VFW Hall Post Commander David Albriz to discuss the joint purchase and installation of a large projection screen. (Note: The recently appointed new Post Commander is Daniel Magdaleno.)
- **Field Trip Plans:** Stan Verkler indicated a possible trip after Veterans Day to the UC Botanical Garden at Berkeley, with an additional visit to Lone Pine Gardens in Sebastopol. Further discussion of field trips was scheduled for the August meeting.

New Business

- **Revision of Show Rules:** Naomi Bloss will discuss with several vendors revision of judging categories and awards for our spring show. Further discussion of show rules was scheduled for the August board meeting.
- **Sound Amplification of Guest Speakers:** Gary Stubblefield asked if members liked or were disappointed in June’s program by Peter Walkowiak, and if we need audio equipment for future programs. Naomi Bloss will locate the Society’s previously acquired sound system.
- **Appointment of “Sunshine Chairperson:”** Tom Karwin appointed Sharon Lucchesi as the Society’s Sunshine Chairperson, to express the Society’s sympathy for significant health issues and deaths of Society members.
- **Monterey County Fair:** The board declined an invitation to participate in this event.

Adjournment: 12:30



Example of Portable LED Lighting

The Board is studying ways to provide better lighting at our sale and show. This product was found in the Garrett Wade catalog, which we quote for reference.

“A five-series LED Lamp “String-Lamp” is available. Each one of the five (3-1/2 x 1-1/2” lens) Lamps produces 500 lumens (2,500 Total Lumen output) with 10 ft of electrical cord spacing between each lamp. Each comes with a carabineer for easy attaching to pipes or hooks.”

“The area lit by each Lamp easily overlaps the next Lamp, so the overall illumination is very consistent. This is a huge benefit. The 115V cord length is 50 ft. Each five Lamp series can, in fact, be linked in a series with up to 19 others on the same 15 Amp circuit – a total of 1,000 ft. We have examined and tested numerous LED Work Lamp alternatives and we like these the best – hands down.”

MBACSS Calendar for 2016

MONTH	PROGRAM	CACTUS MINI-SHOW	SUCCULENT MINI-SHOW
1/17	Colors and Shapes of Mexican Succulents (Steve McCabe narrated the slide show)	Mammillaria	Aeonium
2/21	Steve McCabe: Growing and Conserving Rare Succulents: Threats to Dudleyas	Baja California: Cochemiea, Ferocactus, Myrtillocactus, Pachycereus, and Stenocereus	Dudleya
3/20	Rob Skillin: Cacti of the Central Andean Cordillera	Ariocarpus, Astrophytum	Aloes in bloom
4/17	Naomi Bloss: Planting, Growing and Showing Succulents	Rebutia, (including Sulcorebutia) Echinopsis (Lobivia)	Mesems, e.g., Lithops, Conophyllum, Cheiridopsis. Pleiospilos
4/23-24	Monterey Bay Cactus & Succulent Society —Spring Show & Sale, San Juan Batista, CA (Set-up on 4/22)		
5/15	Jeff Moore: Under the Spell of Succulents	Echinocereus, Parodia (Notocactus)	Crassula
6/19	Peter Wachowiak Landscaping with Succulents	Mammillaria, Escobaria	Sedum, Sempervivum, Jovibarba
7/17	Gunnar Eisel: Building and Maintaining a Cactus and Succulent Collection'	Ferocactus, Blossfeldia (cancelled)	Euphorbia, Stapelia (cancelled)
→8/21	The Country Store	No mini-show	No mini-show
9/18	TBA	Coryphanha, Tephrocactus	Senecio
10/1-2	Monterey Bay Cactus & Succulent Society —Fall Show & Sale, San Juan Batista, CA (Set-up on 9/30)		
10/16	TBA	Copiapoa, Cephalocereus	AGAVACEAE: Agave, Yucca. Beschorneria, Fucraee, Manfreda, Mangave
11/20	TBA	Opuntia, Rhipsalis, Schlumberger.	Any caudiciform or pachycaul succulent
12/18	Christmas Party	No mini-show	No mini-show

CSS EVENTS ELSEWHERE IN CALIFORNIA

4/2-3	San Jose Cactus & Succulent Society , Show & Sale, Sunnyvale		
4/23-24	Huntington Botanical Gardens —42nd Annual Spring Plant Sale, San Marino (members only 4/23)		
5/14	Santa Barbara Cactus & Succulent Society —Annual Plant Sale, Santa Barbar		
5/28-29	Central Coast Cactus & Succulent Society—Annual Show & Sale, San Luis Obispo		
6/4-5	Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society—Summer Show & Sale, Clovis		
6/11-12	Los Angeles Cactus & Succulent Society Plant Show & Sale, Encino		
6/11-12	San Francisco Succulent & Cactus & Society Show & Sale, San Francisco		
7/1-3	Cactus & Succulent Society of America —51th Annual Show and Sale, Huntington Botanical Gardens, San Marino		
9/2	Huntington Symposium, Huntington Botanical Gardens , San Marino		
8/13-14	31st Intercity Show & Sale , Los Angeles County Arboretum, Arcadia		

Talking About Gardening

by Tom Karwin (Reprinted from Santa Cruz Sentinel/Monterey Herald, July 22, 2016)

A popular activity whenever gardeners get together is for someone to give a talk. This links the speaker's desire to share what he or she knows about gardening and the listener's thirst for learning something—anything—about the enduring mysteries of horticulture. Often, there are pictures.

When a speaker addresses the methods, techniques, or practices of an aspect of gardening, the presentation amounts to teaching. When teaching equals performance in the front of the room, good teaching (according to some studies) requires the teacher to have knowledge of the subject, have a positive attitude toward the subject, and to be prepared.

The same basic criteria apply to talks about gardening.

Being prepared, in particular, means having specific goals for the talk, organizing the information for clarity, and providing a level of detail that is right for the audience.

More is needed, however, for the talk to be successful.

- Speak loudly enough for everyone to hear
- Make eye contact with audience members
- Listen to questions from audience members (and observe their body language)
- Restate and respond to individual questions so the full audience can hear
- Know when to stop

The Internet contains more ideas for effective public speaking. Many recommendations are about the style of presentation, e.g., incorporating humor, adding personal anecdotes, pausing occasionally for dramatic effect, etc.

With many familiar recommendations like those listed here, we might expect generally successful talks about gardening, but really good presentations are actually exceptional.

A recent presentation for the Monterey Bay Area Cactus & Succulent Society exemplified a good talk on gardening. The speaker was Gunnar Eisel, a long-time college professor of music theory and history, a long-time collector of cactus & succulent plants, and general manager of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America.

His experience in public speaking was made evident when he appeared fully equipped with his own computer, digital projector and a sound system of very good quality. Clearly, he had one too many encounters with inadequate technology provided by his hosts.

Gunnar Eisel titled his talk, "From Windowsill to the Poor House: Building and Maintaining a Cactus and Succulent Garden." He organized his information in sections: Why Collect?; Kinds of Collections; Sources of Plants; Right-sizing Your Collection; Visual Tours of Selected Collections; and Culture Recommendations.

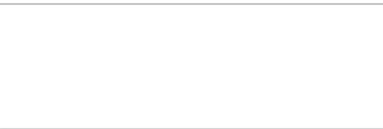
His presentation reflected his deep knowledge of and enthusiasm for his subject, and maintained the rapt attention of his audience for about one hour with good pacing, well-selected images and short video clips, and friendly humor.

Once you've enjoyed a really good talk on gardening, it's tempting to be rough on speakers with less expertise, but this talk has inspired the Society to develop a tip sheet for its future speakers on gardening topics. That is work in progress.

Not every garden group is prepared to bring in outstanding speakers, but expert gardeners who share their expertise with others can refine their presentation skills.

Caring for a Cactus

Part 2 of 3 a three-part series from WikiHow



1. When the first spines show, allow the plant to ventilate. In the weeks after you plant your new cactus seeds, your seedling should begin to germinate. Cacti typically grow fairly slowly, so this can take a month or more.^[5] Eventually, you should be able to see the first tiny emergence of your cactus's spines. When this happens, start giving your cactus a chance to breathe by removing the transparent cover during the day. As the cactus grows, you may leave the cover off for longer periods of time until the plant is well established and no longer needs the cover.

- It's worth noting, however, that this will increase the rate at which water evaporates from the soil. This means that you'll need to start watering. Try to do so cautiously — don't let the soil dry out completely, but don't ever leave standing water in the container from over-watering.
- Note that many tropical cacti won't have spines, so in this case simply remove the cover once the seedling sprouts up through the soil.

2. Repot your cacti when they are well-established. As noted above, cacti grow fairly slowly. Depending on the type of cactus you have, it should take about 6 months to 1 year to grow to roughly the size of a large marble.^[6] At this point, it's a wise idea to repot the cactus in a different container. Like most potted plants, keeping a cactus in a container that's too small for it can cause the plant to become nutrient-starved, inhibiting its growth and even killing it.

- To repot your cactus, use sturdy gloves or a spade to remove the entire plant, roots and all, from its growing medium. Place it in a new, larger container with the same type of soil, pack the soil around the cactus, and water.

3. Allow cacti to recover from repotting in the shade. As the visible, above-ground portion of your cactus grows, its roots will as well. As your cactus becomes larger and larger, which can take years, it may need to be repotted multiple times. However, because the transplantation process can be stressful for plants, it's important that you allow your cactus to "recover" after each time you repot it. Instead of keeping the repotted cactus in a location where it receives a good amount of sunlight, try keeping it in a shaded or partially shaded area until its roots re-establish. Gradually re-introduce the cactus to sun over a period of a month or so.

4. Water infrequently. Established cacti have less vigorous watering requirements than most other potted plants. Though they do require *some* water, their reputation as hardy desert survivors is well earned. Most varieties of desert cactus require little water once they're fully established. (Tropical cacti will accept a little more water.) Though individual species of cactus may differ in the amount of water they require, a good general rule is to let the soil dry out completely before watering. Depending on the temperature, this mean waiting a month or longer between watering.

- Remember that cacti experience slow, gradual growth. Thus, they don't *need* very much water. Watering more frequently than is necessary can lead to problems for the plant, including root disorders that can cause the eventual death of the plant.

5. Fertilize young plants during the growing months. Though, as noted above, cacti grow slowly, their growth can be supplemented during the growing months of spring and summer with the light application of fertilizer or plant food. Cacti generally require less fertilizer than other plants — try using a dilute solution of liquid fertilizer once a month. Mix a small quantity of liquid fertilizer with an equal volume of water, then use this mixture to water your cactus as you normally would.

- The precise amount of fertilizer you should use can vary based on both the species of cactus you are growing and its size. Specific information should be on the fertilizer's packaging.

Officers and Chairpersons, 2016

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT — Tom Karwin
 VICE PRESIDENT — Naomi Bloss
 SECRETARY — Stan Verkler
 TREASURER — Ruth Pantry
 MEMBERSHIP CHAIR — Linda McNally
 AFFILIATE REPRESENTATIVE — Jeff Brooks
 DIRECTORS-AT -LARGE
 — Gary Stubblefield
 — Manson Waters
 — Sharon Lucchesi
 IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT — Stan Verkler

CHAIRPERSONS

LIBRARIAN — Suzy Brooks
 MINI-SHOW — Jeff Brooks
 NEWSLETTER EDITOR— Tom Karwin
 PROGRAMS — Manson Waters
 PUBLICITY — Sharon Lucchesi
 RAFFLES — Gary Stubblefield
 Roster — Ruth Pantry
 SALE — Gary Stubblefield & Lynda Waters
 SHOW—Naomi Bloss & Janet Sparks
 WEBMASTER — Anita Crawley

Members Update

Welcome to New Members

Lise Bixler, Santa Cruz
 Mary Cross, Corralitos
 Roz diNatale, Watsonville
 Joyce Nichols, Salinas (returning)

Sunshine Report

Our well wishes to Membership Chair Linda McNally, who recently had surgery. Here's to a speedy recovery.



Echeveria hassei



On the Dry Side

Monterey Bay Area Cactus & Succulent Society
<http://mbsucculent.org>