



*Gates Cactus
and
Succulent Society*

JANUARY 2009

NEXT MEETING: " WEDNESDAY " JANUARY 7th

AT THE SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY MUSEUM

I- 10 AT CALIFORNIA STREET IN REDLANDS, CA.

PROGRAM

Our speaker for January will be Kelly Griffin. He will discuss his recent trip to Jalisco Mexico along with the going to and return via the Sonoran Desert. He will show us the Agaves and Echeverias of the region. And, of course, he'll be bringing his special plants for sale. Don't miss this, it will be Kelly's only visit with us this year. For our new members, Kelly is one of the real experts in succulent plants. His main specialties include Agaves, Aloes, Dudleyas and Echeverias. He joined our club as a 15 year old and hasn't quit learning about succulent plants.

Buck Hemenway

REALLY!

If you are not killing plants, you are not really stretching yourself as a gardener. --

J. C. Raulston, American horticulturist

SECOND ANNUAL DESERT FORUM

The Huntington Botanical Gardens has invited all members of CSSA and local club affiliates to the second annual Desert Forum. It will be held on Saturday, January 17 beginning at 9:30 AM until 4:30 PM. Lunch at the cafeteria or bring a sack lunch.

For us, The Gates Society, **this is a free event.** All you need to do is show your club badge or CSSA membership card.

The Huntington Staff spends a great deal of time and effort to make this a day to remember: many experts to answer your questions and ALL doors are open. This is the Program of the Year !

Pick up a Program Schedule at the meeting.

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LEADERSHIP TEAM -- 2008

MINI-SHOW AWARDS WERE PRESENTED IN DECEMBER

At our December Christmas party the persons with the highest point totals for the 2008 Mini-Shows received beautiful pots handcrafted **by Joe Wujcik**. It was more fun and more of a surprise to announce the winners at our Christmas party before we published the names in the Open Gates. So, Here, in the following listing are the High Pointers for 2008. Those above the line received pots.

Dennis Kucera



2008 MINI-SHOW POINT TOTALS 35 PARTICIPANTS 15 POTS AWARDED

1. Bob Laughlin	211
2. Carlos Ruiz	210
3. Don and Mary Alice McGrew	209
4. Dennis Kucera	197
5. Michael J. Green	190
6. Kim and Barry Urman	187
7. Tony Marino	183
8. Joella Olson	170
9. Karen and Chris Roholt	167
10. Buck and Yvonne Hemenway	150
11. Judy Horne	135
12. Lynn Marie Thrane	80
13. Greg McKindly	80
14. Ann Reynolds	70
15. Lyn Brooks	65
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16. Bertie Lou Hazel	62
17. Tom Vermillion	50
18. Vivian Nightingale	38
19. Ina Schweitzer	37
20. Karl D. Osborn	32
21. Sims employee	30
22. John O'Kane	25
23. Betty Ann Kent	23
24. Sheldon Lisker	19
25. Greg Bicknell	15
25. Jenni and Darryl Craig	15
26. AmberJones	10
26. Ann Platzer	10
27. Janet Burnham	5

## HAZELLE & DAVIS NEWMAN AWARD.

There was only one nominating letter for the award this year. Maybe because the nominee **Frank Nudge** appeared to be unbeatable.

And during the December evening we didn't have to mark our ballots. You acclaimed **Frank Nudge** to receive the 2008 Award. He joins the long list of previous recipients.. That list was published in the December O/G.

Congratulations to Frank for the many work hours and plants you have donated to our society over the years.

### CONGRATULATIONS FRANK NUDGE

The Award will be presented during the January 2009 Meeting.

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### ALOE WALK 2009

You're all invited to participate in the 9th annual Aloe Walk on Saturday January, 31, 2009 at 9:30 AM. It is Free and usually lasts about 1 1/2 hours. This event is held annually at the Jurupa Mountains Cultural Center 7621 Granite Hill Dr. Glen Avon, CA. Phone 951-685-5818 for directions. The more than 6 acre succulent gardens at the Center are the result of work done by some wonderful people in the late 1960's and early 1970's. The mature specimens of cacti and succulents on the grounds are fantastic. We will tour among the many specimens of blooming aloes and discuss their wide ranging natural habitats and how they survive in our Inland empire climate. We annually have a mix of Master Gardeners, Succulent Society members and other members of local garden clubs. The mix of ideas and points of view always promote interesting conversations.

See you there!

*Buck Hemenway*



**CACTI OF THE MONTH**  
**CEPHALOCEREUS, CLEISTOCACTUS**  
**PILOSOCEREUS** *BY Dennis Kucera*

**CEPHALOCEREUS** is a genus of 3 remaining species that are closely related to *Pilosocereus*.

These tall columnar cacti come from rocky areas of central Mexico. They have ribbed stems with closely set areoles with numerous spines.

*C. senilis*, syn. *Pilosocereus senilis*, is our favorite Old Man Cactus. It has up to 30 ribs hidden under a heavy cover of long white hair like spines. It grows up to 49 feet tall and a trunk over one foot thick. It can branch from the base.

In summer older plants will produce 2 inch long pink flowers that open at night. Grow in very well drained soil in full sun. In the spring and summer growing season water moderately, but deep completely dry in winter.

*C. happenstedtii*, syn. *Haseltonia columna-trajani* is a columnar unbranched cactus to 30 feet high and 1 foot thick. The grayish-green stems have about 16 ribs with very close set areoles with numerous whitish spines. These plants develop a pseudocephalium on one side just below the growing tip where white or pale yellow flowers develop that open at night.

**CLEISTOCACTUS** is a genus of about 50 species from the high mountain areas of Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay and Argentina. These columnar cacti have cylindrical stems with rounded ribs and dense, bristle like spines. Many species branch copiously from the base.

*C. hylacanthus*, syn. *C. jujuyensis*. Is an erect

plant, branching freely from the base. The grayish green stems can grow 3 feet tall and 2 inches thick. The stems are covered with bristle like brownish yellow or yellow white spines. In summer it can have pale red flowers 1 ½ inches long. It is native to Bolivia and N.W. Argentina.

*C. strausii* is the Silver Torch cactus. This freely branching erect cactus has stems up to 3 inches thick and up to 3 feet tall. The light green stems have 25 ribs with dense white spines. In summer it can have 3 inch tubular red flowers. It comes from Bolivia.

**PILOSOCEREUS**, syn. *Pseudopilosocereus azureus* is a columnar plant to 16 feet with light grayish blue branches about 3 inches thick. The stems have 7 to 10 ribs with wide set areoles with short yellow brown spines. In summer it can have cylindrical white flowers opening at night. It comes from Brazil.

*C. rosae* is a tall blue stemmed columnar cactus that branches from the base. It has up to 10 ribs with closely set areoles. The spines are yellowish brown. The funnel shaped flowers are white that open at night in summer. This plant is native to Brazil.



**ALOE**  
**SUCCULENT OF THE MONTH**

*by Dennis Kucera*

The genus *Aloe* is a large variable group of almost 400 species occurring in the wild through out Africa, Madagascar, Canary Islands and Arabia. Botanist G.W. Reynolds researching the many Aloes in the wild traveled over 40,000 miles in 9 years to photograph and study these plants in the field to complete his two books, *Aloes of South Africa* and *Aloes of Tropical Africa and Madagascar*. In 1966 he compiled a list of 324 species known at that time, and described them in his books. More new

species have been discovered since.

Sheila Collonette a botanist with others has discovered over a dozen new species in the mountains of the southern part of the Arabian peninsula in the last 20 years. She had the use of a helicopter to fly up on top of steep inaccessible mountains sometimes over 9,000 feet elevation to discover many of them. These new Aloes are now growing at the Kew Gardens near London. Read about these discoveries in the CSSA Journal; the first 2 issues of 2000.

The Aloes have quite variable growth characteristics; grass like, single stemless rosettes of leaves, ground covers, pendant cliff plants, tall single stems with one rosette of leaves, shrubs and trees are among the species.

*Aloe jucunda* has very small leaves about 1 1/2 inches long, and forms dense low clumps. It is native to northern Somalia. *Aloe bainesii* the largest tree is native to South Africa and Swaziland, and has leaves up to 36" long. It can become a many branched tree 60 feet high with a 3 foot trunk diameter. You can see these trees at the Huntington Gardens and U.C. Riverside Botanic Gardens.

Aloes are members of the lily family and are closely related to Gasterias. Hybrids between the two genera have occurred.

Another closely related genus to Aloe is *Lomatophyllum*, with about 15 species native to Madagascar. The main difference is the fruit are fleshy, juicy fruits for birds and other creatures to eat. Aloes have dry seed capsules with loose seeds.

Aloes have six lobed tubular flowers usually of red orange, or yellow colors depending on the species. These colorful flowers attract the sun birds in Africa who with their long bills reach down to the nectar at the base of the

flower. In the Americas the hummingbirds find the Aloe flowers attractive. In southern California the Anna and Costa hummingbirds find the flowers an important food source of nectar, especially during the winter months when many Aloes bloom and other flowers are scarce.

The Aloe best known by most people is *Aloe vera*, is also known as *Aloe barbadensis*. Linnaeus, the father of modern botany, originally described this plant as a variety, *Aloe perfoliata* var. *vera*. Botanist G. W. Reynolds says in his book that the earliest legitimate name for this Aloe in the new rank of species is *Aloe barbadensis*. Plants of *A. barbadensis* were known in the first century A.D. In 512 A. D., Dioscorides Greek Herbal gave the medical qualities of this Aloe and included a colored illustration of a plant in bud. G. W. Reynolds says it appears that *A. barbadensis* occurred wild on the Cape Verde Islands, the Canary Islands and possibly Madiera. Very probably plants were then introduced by early Spaniards from the Canaries to the new world where the plant widely naturalized. *Aloe arborescens* is a commonly planted species in parks and botanical gardens in California. It forms a dense shrub up to 15' high and has coral red to scarlet flowers December through February. In Africa it is a wide spread species growing in hilly and mountainous country, sea level to 7,000 feet elevation, from the western cape of South Africa, through Natal, Rhodesia and north to Victoria Falls.

There are many excellent miniature Aloes ideal for pot plants. One of the favorites is *Aloe variegata*, the partridge breast or tiger Aloe. It has 5 inch long leaves with green and white bands. This Aloe with loose flower clusters of pink to dull red, flowers intermittently all year. Other easy to grow miniature Aloes are *A. aristata*, *A. brevifolia*, *A. jacksonii*, *A. jucunda*, *A. juvenna*, *A. harlanii*, and *A. rauhii*.

**SOIL**            *It Works for Me*  
                         *Harvey Welton*

*Reprinted article, from 1/08 OG. It is that time again.*

When growing any plant there are several major factors that will have a significant effect on the end product. They are soil or growing media, water, fertilizer and growing environment (light and heat.)

These factors are all equally important to a successful grower. I am most often asked to recommend a soil mix or growing media so I will start there. Once again let me stress if what you are using is giving you the results that you want - DON'T CHANGE!

First a little background so that you can understand why and how I have arrived where I am now. I have seen cacti and succulents successfully grown in everything from the street sweepings of one of our Southern California cities and blown vineyard sand to very specific formulas that included very exact amounts of everything from sand and gravel to humus, fertilizer and micronutrients. I suspect that there are as many soil mixes in use today as there are individuals producing plants either as a commercial enterprise or as a hobbyist. My nursery has used several soil mixes with equal success and when I changed it was for a specific reason.

The first mix that we used was referred to as the UC mix. As you might suspect it was a formula that was provided by the University of California for growing cacti and succulents in a nursery environment. It contained, as near as I can remember, equal parts of washed plaster sand, pea gravel and peat moss.

At the time we were growing in wooden propagation flats that were nailed together and measured 18" square and 2" deep. There were several problems with this situation. First the wooden flats were used over many times. To eliminate the problem of disease contamination they had to be sterilized after each use before new soil and plants could be planted in them. Then the nails that held the flats together rusted from the constant dampness, required to keep the young plants growing. Of course eventually the flat, usually full of stickery plants, would fall apart. Not good! The last problem was weight. Each flat, filled with wet soil and depending on the size and number of plants, would weigh as much as 20 to 30 pounds. Thirty pounds may not be a problem for most men but in

those days, 40 years ago, most of the small commercial growers were or had been hobbyists and were either older folks or women. For them weight was a problem.

Styrofoam flats were invented about the time we moved to Riverside and began growing cacti. The change in flats necessitated a change in the soil mix. The UC mix was so heavy it would often cause the flats to break. So initially we substituted pumice for the pea gravel. That didn't reduce the weight enough so we cut the amount of sand in half and substituted vermiculite for the missing sand. Now the mix was 2 parts pumice, 2 parts peat moss, 1 part sand and 1 part vermiculite. That mix worked well even though we had to provide almost constant fertilizer which resulted in very soft or tender plants that had to be hardened off before we sold them.

A few years later the disposal of old car tires became a problem and it was solved by making them into the propagation flats that we now use. At my nursery my three daughters and wife did the majority of transplanting and wanted the soil mix still lighter. Again we began the substitution process.

The soil mix now became 2 parts commercial seed mix, 2 parts perlite and one part washed plaster sand. I used this basic soil mix for the last 25 years or so. Eventually I added a small amount of balanced slow release fertilizer and a systemic insecticide to control fungus gnats. Recently I began having trouble with an influx of weeds which I determined were coming into the nursery via the sand we were using. So to remedy this problem I changed to 2 parts commercial seed mix and one part pumice and that is what we are presently using. So far it seems to be working well. Only time will tell if we need to modify this formula.

by: Harvey Welton, Mexican Hat Cactus Nursery  
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**Quartzsite Trip,    January 24, 2009.**

We have maximum space for 24 people in two vans. The current list has 22 names on it. We will finalize the list at the meeting on January 7. Please come prepared to pay the \$35.00 for transportation and lunch if you have already signed up. We'll announce whatever openings there are at the meeting.

**This is an e-mail from 'Cactus and Succulent Society of America'**

Dear Succulent Lover-

The cacti are sleeping, mesembs are stirring, and it's membership renewal time here at the Cactus and Succulent Society of America. It's easy to let things slip by during the holidays, but we've made it easy to renew your membership (or sign up for the first time!) online. Drop by the CSSA online store and be done with your membership renewal in just a few minutes.

If you are not currently a member, now is a great time to start receiving Cactus and Succulent Journal, our beautiful and informative full-color magazine, which will arrive to your home six times a year. Or consider buying a gift membership for a friend! It's all possible on the CSSA website.

Renewing now ensures that you will not miss a single issue of the Journal. And now it is easier than ever to pay for membership on our secure website.

Our 2008 yearbook, Haseltonia 14, is hot off the presses. If you did not pre-purchase your copy, you may miss out on this special issue dedicated to Early Cactus Evolution. Due to successful pre-sales, we did not print a large overstock. This special issue may not be available much longer, so buy your copy now.

When you sign up for membership you should also take advantage of our special offer on the next issue of Haseltonia (Volume 15), which will be published in 2009. By bundling the CSSA yearbook with your membership, you will save \$10 off the retail price. To save an additional \$10, you may also sign up for a 3-year term of membership.

Please don't wait! Drop by our online store and pay for your membership, purchase back issues of the Journal and Haseltonia, and pick up our DVDs containing the earliest issues of our journal. Do it now, before you forget!

Thank you for your patronage . and, as always, happy growing!

Russell Wagner,  
Editor, Cactus and Succulent Journal

The website for the CSSA on-line store is.  
[www.shop.cssainc.org](http://www.shop.cssainc.org)

## **OTHER TABLES**

Plant Sales, Discussion, and Refreshments Tables will be reopened for the January 2009 Meeting.

Bring your Show and Tell plants to discuss or to get identified. A good picture will also do!

If you can, bring some 'Goodies' to support our popular Refreshment Table. Here's a special thank you to those who frequently bring the goodies we enjoy so much.

We will need to circulate a list so that you can sign up to be a Hostess/Host for one month this year. If you didn't take a turn last year, why not give it a try this year. You only get to do this every three or four years!

## **Thoughts for New Year Resolutions**

*Most of the stuff people worry about ain't never gonna happen anyway.

* Don't judge folks by their relatives.

* Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.

* Live a good, honorable life. Then when you get older and think back, you'll enjoy it a second time.

* Don't interfere with somethin' that ain't botherin' you none.

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And don't forget the **FREE Cactus Club Day** at the Huntington on January 17th @ 9:30. Get a flyer at the meeting.

Think about it for a minute----- The adult entrance fee for the Huntington is now \$20. But, for cactophiles the day is free, that's right **FREE!** And you could have purchased a Gates Society Name Badge for just \$10. You **do need** a club badge or CSSA Membership Card to get in free.