

Volume 44 Number 5

May 2009

# ***ESPINAS Y FLORES***

The Newsletter of the San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society  
Affiliated with the Cactus & Succulent Society of America



**Program: Andrew Wilson on Northern Argentina**

**A Staging Demonstration Will be Presented  
In Place of Plant of the Month**

**Saturday, May 9, 1:00pm  
Casa Del Prado, Room 101  
Balboa Park**

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

From Tuscon 16 April 2009

Greetings from Tucson! We finished the convention yesterday with the turn over of the gavel to the 2011 Show Chair, Peter Walkowiak. Both Peter and I extended invitations to the attending CSSA members to join us in San Diego in 2011 for the next convention and group seemed to be looking forward to visiting us.

SDCSS members attending the convention included: Carol and Rudy Cesa, Wanda Mallen and Gary Vincent, Candy and Jerry Garner, Kathy and Steve Harris, Judy and Gene Walko-



From the left: Chris Miller, Steve Harris and Kathy Harris enjoying the Tuscon sun

wiak, Peter Walkowiak, Don Hunt, myself, Michael and Joyce Buckner, Kelly and Denise Griffin, Matt Magio and Lisa Kercher, Roberta and Jim Hanna, and Dylan Hannon.

A great time was had by all of us. Lots of plants, books, T-shirts and jewelry are making their way back to San Diego as I write. We definitely gave a boost to Tucson's economy.

The speakers at this years convention were great. There was decided Sonora Desert focus, but there were also talks on South African and Australian Succulents. Some well known names were there as speakers including John Lavranos, John Pilbeam, Rudolf Schults, Attila Kapitany, and Ernst van Jaarsveld.

Most of us have books written by these individuals, if not they are in our library. We also had some great speakers that we have had visiting our organization as speakers, like Brian Kimble, Greg Starr and our own Kelly Griffin. So along with purchased goodies, we all brought back knowledge and new understanding.

I was introduced to Ernst van Jaarsveld who wrote the *Gasteria* book and listened to his lectures. I learned some new things about *Gasterias* such as: More than *G. rawlinsonii* grow on cliff faces and usually on south facing (their north) sides, so the plants do better in shade. *G. croucheri* has longer leaves

On the cover:

*Yavia cryptocarpa*, one of the rarest of all cacti, grows in complete isolation

when it is grown in shade and shorter in sun. Plants growing in the Kouga Dam area receive rainfall all year (so if that is the local listed on a plant, water is good). *G. pilansii* var *halii* (Richtersveld) is fog watered. Defense strategies for *Gasterias* include, growing under nurse plants, leaf propagation, and *G. armstrongii* sinks into the ground in drought and looks like pebbles. *G. glomerat*'s large flowers are an advertisement to help the species continue. So now I have some new theories to play with and that was just the *Gasterias*.

It was a great convention and we have our work cut out for us to dazzle them for the next convention, which will be held in San Diego in late April 2011. Please heed Peter's call for help. He will be holding a meeting at 1200 before the regular meeting in May. It will take all of us to make this event successful and the CSSA national board is ready to work with us.

### **From Santee 23 April 2009**

Special thanks to Pam Badger for stepping in to run the regular April meeting. I have heard that both Stan Yalof and Guillermo Rivera gave great talks and that the meeting ran well with the usual cast giving support. Pam also organized our booth for Earth Day, an event we have supported for several years.

Our next focus needs to be the June Show and Sale. The vendor agreements have been sent out and if you need one please contact me as soon as possible. Susan Hopkins is looking for volunteers. We need to finalize the volunteer list by the May meeting. Volunteers with badges will be the first into the sales area on Saturday morning June 6<sup>th</sup>. If you plan on volunteering notify Susan. Walk in volunteers won't get badges for early entry. There will be a Member's Only shopping time from 9 to 10 on Saturday. Proof of membership will be required. Either a current SDCSS membership card available from Collette Parr or your most recent copy of *Espinas y Flores* mailing label, since it has the membership date on it.

Our May Newsletter has been produced by our new editors Paul and Carol Maker. Steve and Kathy Harris transitioned equipment and information to them before we left for the Convention. Paul has been working on our electronic version of the newsletter and we are very close to going electronic. I'd like to thank Kathy and Steve for all their hard work over the last three years. They have produced a wonderful set of documents for us. They had to figure things out from scratch with no turnover due to the death of our previous editor. So thanks to them for all their service at the meeting.

Last shot is for the June Show. You all have plants that are crying out to be shared with the rest of us. Peter and Don will do a staging presentation at the May meeting. If you have never shown before or have not won 10 blue ribbons, you are in the novice category (green cards). Please consider showing some plants. The competition has been minimal the last few years in this category and it will give you a chance to show off your plants.

Chris Miller



# HIGH AND DRY IN ARGENTINA

Andrew Wilson

No, we were not stranded students without a penny in our pockets! We were high in the Andes of northern Argentina enjoying the magnificent cactus and scenery of that remote area. In November 2007, together with Stan Yalof and Tom Demeritt, I took a trip there. We had each grown *Gymnocalycium*s, *Lobivias* and *Rebutias* for years but this was our first time to see these and many other southern hemisphere cacti in their native ground.



At Quebrada de Toro the redoubted travelers led by Guillermo Rivera (front right) pose before *Trichocereus pasacana*. On the left, Stan takes the pledge or suffers heart spasms. Tom and I stand central to the rear, with heads cov-

Leaving the sixteenth century city of Cordoba we traveled northwards, crossing dry salty flatlands and passing through thorn-thicketed valleys each filled with all types of cacti, and gradually climbed to the eastern slopes of the high Andes. The cacti of the lower regions are numerous but there is so much to cover that we'll limit the talk to those we saw at higher altitudes, mostly above ten thousand feet. The scenery was unlike the cactus landscapes of Arizona or northern Mexico. It was springtime but mountainsides were still dry. The tropical sun was intense but the air was cool. There were no pine trees, no Agaves, no Yuccas nor vegetation of any kind except for great stands of giant cacti and terrestrial bromeliads that appeared over wide areas. In places, many smaller cacti were growing at their feet.

It had not rained for many months but the giant cacti had begun to bloom. There were two *Trichocereus* species, *T. terschecki* and *T. pasacana*, the

former in the more southern and the latter in the more northern portions of our trip. Like many cacti of South America they have been re-named. Right now they are placed under Echinopsis; *T. pasacana* is now *E. atacamensis*, an unfortunate choice as Atacama is on the other side of the Andes! Both grow to thirty feet tall. At its upper elevations above 11,000 feet where we saw many, *T. pasacana* reaches only half that height.



The main stem of *Trichocereus pasacana* is over two feet in diameter.

Set in the backdrop of the Andes the forests of cacti presented a spectacular scene. It was remarkable that almost nothing, other than cacti and a few bromeliads, was growing at these altitudes. With no sign of grasses they emerged from bare mountain scree. At their bases grew specimens of much smaller cacti such as *Gymnocalycium spegazzini*, *Pyrrhocactus umadeave* and *Mahueniopsis boliviana*, the latter related to our Opuntias. Their blooms were attractive but their clearly defined geometries set against glacial stones provided striking images.

Onwards and upwards, our journey continued until we arrived close to the border with Bolivia. The scenery was flatter and less rocky with llama herds tended by Indians becoming more noticeable. Llamas and alpacas live on the short, stubby and sparse grass vegetation that grows in such regions, generally referred to as puna. Eventually, we reached a place of almost complete desolation. At above 12,000 feet, a tiny cactus called Yavia, grows. It was first found about ten years ago and so far, has been found nowhere else. (See Cover illustration.) How amazing for anyone to uncover such a small cactus species in such a vast, remote area! Our trip leader

was upset that since his previous visit there, a significant fraction of the few dozen original plants appeared to have vanished. There were many more



*Mahueniopsis boliviiana* emerging from mountain scree.

special places where we climbed up the mountains, observed the results of geologic upheavals, saw species of *Cleistocactus*, *Rebutia*, *Lobivia*, *Blossfeldia* and *Oreocactus* in bloom and watched condors circle above. We will talk about them and, as time permits, about history, beer and Indian villages.

## APRIL 2009 - BRAG TABLE WINNERS

Judged by Guillermo Rivera

### Cactus

- 1st Place, Phyllis Flechsig - *Acharagma rosei*
- 2nd Place, Phyllis Flechsig - *Copiapoa cinerea*
- 3rd Place, Stan Yalof - *Ferocactys macrodiscus*

### Succulents

- 1st Place, Lee Badger - *Euphorbia cap saintmariensis*
- 2nd Place, Rudy Lime - *Pachypodium succulentum*
- 2nd Place, Phyllis Flechsig - *Aloe porphyrostachys*
- 3rd Place, Elibet Marshall - *Euphorbia millii*
- 3rd Place, Nibby Klinfelter - *Aeonium lindleyi*

Submitted by Pam Badger



## SHOW TIME!

It's time for our biggest event of the year, our Summer Show. This show is the second largest succulent show in the world (to my knowledge) and the largest presented by a single society. If every member where to bring in three plants we could be number one. I showed over 150 last year, three is not that many. Remember there is no limit, but plants must be clean and in good condition. This show is a great tradition for our club, something we can all be very proud of. To make the show work and be a great event we need your participation, volunteers for setup, judging etc., and your beautiful plants. There will be sign up sheets for volunteers at the May meeting - see Susan Hopkins. By volunteering and completing your obligation you have earned credits for the volunteer raffle in December for your chance to win one of three nice show plants. Also, volunteers who sign up get to be involved in the volunteer early shopping spree before anyone else. I will be there all day Friday setting up the show, so if you need help, have questions be free to ask me or Steve Harris. If you need help unloading, don't know the plant name or where it goes, we will help you. To make things easier we will have an 'in' door and an 'out' door for room 101 to avoid traffic snarls. This year as in past years we are giving a handmade pot by



ceramic artist Don Hunt for all trophy winners, golden sweeps (first, second, and third in one category), and enhanced pots for the winners in novice cactus, novice succulent, and best of show to make things a little more exciting. I've had a great time at my previous shows and with your help I think this could be our best show yet.

Peter Walkowiak, Show Chair

Pots to be awarded to Novice Cactus,  
Novice Succulent, Best in Show winners.

## TIME TO GET THOSE PLANTS READY FOR THE SHOW!

Our big annual judged show is now less than a month away, and this is the perfect time to be starting the process of selecting which plants to show. To do this, it's important to think about some of the things judges want to see—or don't—when they're screening the show.

The process should start with grooming your plants. Remove all damaged or dead leaves or other structures. While you're doing this, look for any signs of bugs or other 'travelers', dead or alive. If they're alive, spray them and remove the corpses. A Q-tip with some detergent or rubbing alcohol works in most cases. Also, you want to get out your tweezers and remove any of those volunteer weeds which seem to be thriving after our very wet winter. Spiders have also been very active, so remove all those webs. A small paintbrush works well for this task.

The next thing to look at is your pots. First, they should be clean. Wipe glazed and unglazed pots to remove any dirt or dried salts. For those terra cotta pots, some people use a WD4O solution. For me, a brisk rub with an old washcloth usually suffices.

One last note on watering: this should be completed several days before setup. Leaky pots can really mess up the display area while the show committee is moving the plants around, so please—do your watering well ahead!

Staging is the next consideration. This comprises the choice of pot or other container, along with top-dressing and a rock or piece of wood. Remember that the plant is supposed to be the star of each individual entry. Therefore, the other elements should never upstage the plant. Containers should be the right size and shape. Many growers feel that containers which in some way mimic or reflect the natural habitat of a plant look best. If you're using glazed pots, remember to use color carefully. For example, if you have a euphorbia which has some reddish coloration in the stem or leaves, it's great to use a burgundy pot to add a little "punch". Likewise, top-dressing is best accomplished with a color of material which does not draw attention to itself. This is NOT the time to use that bright turquoise aquarium gravel which has been sitting dry in the old tank at the back of the garage for a couple of decades. Use a neutral color for most plants. If your container is black, though, you can also use black gravel as topdressing.

Okay.....now all your plants are ready. There are a few more things to do, though. First, remove all the tags from your plants, being sure to make a complete list of what you're entering. Of course, you will have picked up your entry tickets at the May meeting and filled them out according to the entry schedule which is mailed out with this issue of the newsletter. That saves you time during setup on Friday evening.

Remember that it's not unusual for plants to shift during transit from your home to the show. It's a good idea to carry a small container of topdressing to fix any spillage. It can't hurt to bring a few paper towels, Q-tips and your favorite cleaning compound for any last-minute touching up.

Finally, it's time to enjoy the show. We've made some changes this year, so be sure to read elsewhere in this issue for details. - Allen Clark



# STAGING DEMONSTRATION

Peter Walkowiak and Don Hunt

Instead of a 'Plant of the Month' there will be a staging demonstration that will require membership participation. Don Hunt will bring in three nice show quality pots - a small, a medium, and a large. We need the membership to bring in a plant, one plant per person, that they would like to be staged for our upcoming show. Don and I will choose the three plants that we feel best suit the pots that were brought in. Before doing the actual staging we will give our reasons for selecting the plants - proportions, form, texture, and other aesthetic reasons. I will also bring in a couple plants for staging with pots that I have chosen for them, together with top dressing and rocks.



Don't miss this opportunity to have your plant staged and to win a great free pot if you are selected. If you have some top dressing or rocks you think would look nice with your plant, please bring them too. I will provide soil and a selection of top dressing for the demonstration. I will provide tips in handling and replanting

Pots to be used in the Staging Demonstration  
cacti and other spiny succulents from my many years of experience.

The staging of your plant is like the frosting on a cake. It should be the final touch to a well grown plant, not a distraction from the plant. Staging is fun and rewarding and can give you great satisfaction in making your plants look the best they can. Things to consider are balance, form, color, proportion, texture, contrast and future growth of the plant.



*Talk to your  
plants of course  
but can you  
also hear what  
they're saying?*

Elibet Marshall

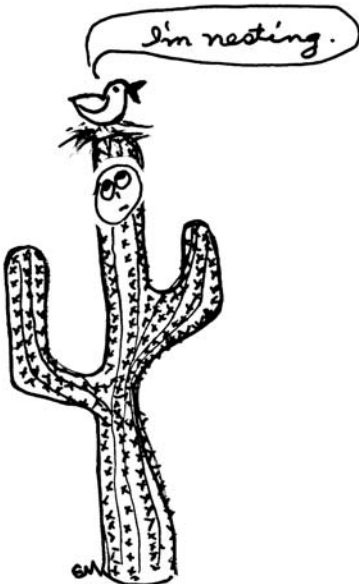
## A SAD NOTE

I received a call this afternoon from Mary Carroll who said that Bill Baker had a fatal heart attack last Saturday and passed away. Bill operated California Gardens for many years and sold at our Bromeliad shows and sales for decades. He was a very knowledgeable about Bromeliads as well as other plant families and was always generous with his knowledge. He will be missed. We have been asked not to call his family as they are dealing with a lot of grief right now. When I hear of any memorial services, I will pass along the information.



Ted Johnson,  
SBBA President  
Apr 13, 2009

*Bill's Agave victoriae-reginae albomarginata*



# NEW LIBRARY BOOKS

Don Hunt, Co-Librarian

**Adenium: Sculptural Elegance, Floral Extravagance** by Mark Dimmitt, Gene Joseph, and David Palzkill (and a credit to Mark Fryer). 2 copies.

**Geophytic Pelargoniums** by Charles Craib a gorgeous book illustrated in watercolors and pencil drawings, range maps, cultivation, the whole deal. If only more of these little beauties were available.

**Bromeliads for the Contemporary Garden** by Andrew Steens.

**Field Guide to Aloes of Malawi** by Stewart Lane. One of those published on South Africa specialties that shed light on the local conditions.

**A Sulco Gallery** by Pilbeam and Hunt. The other Hunt. All pictures, all the time.

**Sulcorebutia 2008** by Ladislav Horacek Not all in English. Habitat pictures, Maps at least partially in English. Sulco fans will still want a look.

**Rebutia** by John Pilbeam. I couldn't believe we didn't already have this one.

**Cool Plants for Hot Gardens** by Greg Starr. In case we want a few non succulents.

**The Genus Echeveria** by John Pilbeam. This one will make you want echevarias if you don't already, and if you do buy your own copy. If that isn't enough, then,

**Echeveria Cultivars** by Schulz and Kapitany All the frilly, ruffley pink and red stuff.

**Melocactus Care and Cultivation** by George Thomson, published by Cactus and Co.

**Socotra: Paradise of Succulent in the Indian Ocean.** Although it has succulents in the title, it is primarily a travelogue. I'm sure the authors are succulenthophiles, and the plants are well presented, but the majority of the book is about getting there and getting around.

**Snacks for the break:** Those with last names beginning with N through Z, please bring a snack to share at the break.

# 2011 CSSA CONVENTION VOLUNTEER MEETING

Peter Walkowiak, Convention Chair

I just returned from Tucson where we had a great time, the speakers, the people, and the location were superb. I am excited about our hosting of the CSSA Convention in April 25 to May 1, 2011 at the Marriott, Mission Valley. I was passed the gavel at the closing banquet, so we are on our way to hosting the best CSSA convention they have ever seen. To make this happen we will need many volunteers on at least five committees to get this accomplished, tours, speakers and schedule, host and hospitality, food and catering, plant and club sales, entertainment and special events, and green event committee for starters.

A volunteer meeting is scheduled for 12 noon on Saturday at the May 9 meeting. The meeting will start with a short talk about the convention - both Tucson and our upcoming event will be discussed. We will have a question and answer session afterwards before breaking into individual committees. Each committee will then select a committee chair and co-chair who will report progress and ideas for their committees. This will be a lot of work but should be very rewarding and fun at the same time. Looking forward to meeting all of you.

## ESPINAS Y FLORES GOING ELECTRONIC!

This month's issue of our newsletter will be available for viewing and download at the Club website, [www.sdcss.com](http://www.sdcss.com). Take a look! As a cost-savings measure, we are urging all members to accept an e-mailed version of the newsletter (the printing costs far outway your annual membership). Be prepared for an announcement about the program which will begin following the June Show and Sale.



*And I'm Struttin'  
My Stuff!*

*Tricholobivia hybrid Red*

Please address correspondence to:  
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P.O. Box 33181  
San Diego, Ca 92136-3181  
Website: [www.sdcss.com](http://www.sdcss.com)



# UPCOMING EVENTS

2009

**May 8-10:** San Diego Zoo Garden Celebration. Between 10:00am and 3:00pm each day there will be water conservation events including crafts, special tours, displays, and entertainment. Info: 619-685-3291 or [www.sandiegozoo.org](http://www.sandiegozoo.org).

**May 9:** Gates Cactus & Succulent Society Show , Sale and Green Faire, 9:00am-4:00pm, Jurupa Mountains Cultural Center, 7621 Granite Hill Drive, Glen Avon.

**May 17:** Huntington Plant Sale, 10:00am-5:00pm, Huntington Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino. Info: 626-405-2160.

**Jun 6&7:** SDCSS Summer Show & Sale.

**June 13&14:** Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society Show and Sale at the Sepulveda Garden Center, 16633 Magnolia Blvd., Encino. For show information call 818-363-3432.

**Jun 26-28:** CSSA Annual Show & Sale, Huntington Gardens, 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA. Info: 626-405-2160 or 2277.

**July 24 thru 26:** Orange County Summer Show and Sale at the Fullerton Arboretum, 1900 Associated Road, Fullerton. Show and Sale open Friday, July 24th, noon to 4pm, Saturday and Sunday 10am to 4pm. For information call 714-870-4887.

**Aug 15&16:** 24th Annual Intercity Show and Sale. L.A. County Arboretum, 301 No. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia. Info: Tom Glavich 626-798-2430 or Barbara Hall 818-368-6914.

**Aug 29:** Huntington Botanical Gardens Succulent Symposium. All Day at the Huntington.

**Sept 27:** Long Beach Cactus Club Annual Plant Auction, 18127 South Alameda St., Rancho Dominguez, CA. 12pm.

**Nov 7&8:** San Gabriel Valley Cactus And Succulent Society Show and Sale. LA County Arboretum. Address above. Info: Manny Rivera, 626-793-6917.

**Dec 5&6:** Orange County Show And Sale At The Fullerton Arboretum, 1900 Associated Road, Fullerton, CA 92831. Show And Sale Open From 10am To 4pm. For info. call 714-870-4887

## FROM THE CSSA TUSCON CONVENTION



Left to right:  
Yvonne  
Hemenway  
Buck Hemenway  
Kelly Griffin



The Big Guys!

Saguaro:  
*Carnegiea  
gigantea*



Lots of pretty  
stuff

# 2009 Cactus and Succulent Show and Sale

Presented by: *The San Diego Cactus And Succulent Society*

## JUNE 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>

At The Casa Del Prado, Room 101 and Patio, Balboa Park

**Strange and exotic plants from the far corners of the world gathered together for your viewing amazement!!**

Courtyard sale of choice specimen plants for the novice and collector as well as handmade stoneware planters and pots!!

Potting service will be available along with cultural information

### SHOW HOURS:

**Saturday, June 6: 10am to 3pm**

**Sunday, June 7: 10am to 4pm**  
(Judging will be after 3pm Saturday)

### SALE HOURS:

**Saturday, June 6: 10am to 5pm**

**Sunday, June 7: 10am to 4pm**

**SDCSS Members only shopping on Saturday from 9 to 10**

**For additional information please visit:**

**[www.sdcss.com](http://www.sdcss.com)**

If you have trouble finding a parking spot use the Balboa Park TRAM. The free tram provides access to Balboa Park's museums and attractions. You can park in the Inspiration Point lot and wait at Tram Central, a shady arbor with benches. The tram will deliver you to into the heart of Balboa Park. Trams pick up from Tram Central every 8-10 minutes. Riders may also board at one of the designated pick-up areas around the Park. The tram operates seven days a week: 8:30am - 6:00pm.

The due date for submission of articles for Plants of the Month, information on the program/speaker, letters, regular columns, brag table winners, and the President's Message will be the 15th of each month preceding the next issue. All submissions are to be made to the Editors. Please email your articles to Paul & Carol Maker at [PDMaker@roadrunner.com](mailto:PDMaker@roadrunner.com).