

CACTUS CORNER NEWS

Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society

Affiliated with the Cactus & Succulent Society of America

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February 2013

**Next Meeting: Thursday, February 7, 2013, 7:00 P.M. (Doors open 6:30 P.M.)
Deaf & Hard of Hearing Service Center (DHHSC), 5340 North Fresno Street, Fresno**

PROGRAM

HOW TO MAKE SHOW QUALITY PLANTS

SPEAKER: BILL GALE



Bill Gale has been very successful in propagating and growing succulents, and last fall his plants were awarded a lot of blue ribbons at the Fresno Fair. His program will range through how he grows his plants, what he looks for in a show plant, and how to get your plants prepared for a show. Bring your questions.



Bill has incredible talents when it comes to succulent plants, so you will not want to miss this opportunity to see hear his presentation!

~ DINNER ~

DiCicco's Italian Restaurant
5251 North Blackstone Avenue
(One block south of Barstow)
Fresno, (559) 447-9058
www.diciccos.com/5251blackstone.htm
Dinner begins at 5:15 p.m.

Contact Charlene Stebles by
February 6th to make reservations.
Phone/message (559) 299-1039
Email: ronandcharlene@comcast.net
Members are welcomed

PRESIDENT'S LETTER –

Hi, all,

As I write this it's another frosty morning. After a wet, relatively mild December, we've finally had a punch of winter. It's a pain to have to cover and uncover sensitive plants every evening and morning, but if we want to keep cold damage to a minimum, it's necessary. I've had some things top-killed by the frost, but the plants are still alive. The experts recommend that you wait until after all chance of freezing temps have passed before cutting back the damaged portions, so I try to abide by that—even though the frozen leaves and stems look awful.

Our next big event is the Fresno Spring Home & Garden Show coming up March 1-3 at the Fairgrounds. This year the plant societies will be located in the Junior Exhibits Building, which is the first building on your right as you enter via the Butler Avenue gate. This will be a nicer venue (a floor, walls, heat, rest rooms) than last year's Greenhouse. Dan Gale is in charge of our effort this year. We will be selling plants, pots and related items. If you would like to be a vendor, get in touch with Dan (559-787-2415). We've also talked of making more of an effort to have a nice plant display, as well. We will need members to sign up to help at the sale table, to assist customers and to sit at the club information table. There will be signup sheets at the meeting.

Janet and Jason presented a really interesting and fun program last month on how they make their hypertufa pots. It was obvious in watching them that they've been doing this for awhile and have learned a lot through trial-and-error. They asked for volunteers to go through the process; Mary Drumheller and David Cook were persuaded to step forward. I hope their pots turned out well. Janet and Jason also generously gave hypertufa kits to everyone in attendance. Thank you!

Carole Grosch is taking over the job of Sunshine chairperson. This is the individual who sends sympathy or get well cards, as well as making occasional calls to see how members are doing. If you know of a member who could use a card or a call, get in touch with Carole or me.

It's high time to renew, if you haven't done so already. We don't want to lose you! Mail the renewal form which appeared in the December and January newsletters, or bring it and your payment to the meeting.

See you in February!

Sue

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## FRESNO CACTUS & SUCCULENT CLUB BOARD MEETING

January 13, 2013

President Sue Haffner called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

**Members Present:** Joyce Quinn, Treasurer; Charlene Stebles, Vice President; Cindy Duwe, Secretary; Madeleine Mitchell, Board Member; Dan Gale, Board Member; Rudy Rulloda, Board Member; Carole Grosch, Board Member; Fred Gaumer, Brag Table.

**Members Absent:** Rosanna Rojas, Board Member, Nell Lemke, Board Member. **Visitors:** Susan Cook

**Officer Reports:** There was no treasurer report. Charlene announced the upcoming speakers for the months of February, March and April. She reminded everyone about the "Touch a Plant Demo" requested for the school children at the Fresno Fair.

**New Business:** Dan Gale announced the upcoming Spring Home & Garden Show will be held on March 1,2,3, 2013. He is procuring vendors, asking for boxes from club members, and will have 50 free passes available.

### Chairmanships:

Annual Show & Sale: Cindy Duwe

Fair Display: Rudy Rulloda

Historian: Sue Haffner

Photographer: Mary Ann Villegas

Librarian: Madeleine Mitchell

Membership: Open

Hospitality: Open

Publicity: Madeleine Mitchell

Raffle: Paul Mitchell

Refreshments: Marian Orvis

Rules & Parliamentarian: Sue Haffner

Webmaster: Vickie Veen

Workshop: Open

Bus Trip: Cindy Duwe

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Duwe, Secretary

**Club access:** President, Sue Haffner, 292-5624, [sueh@csufresno.edu](mailto:sueh@csufresno.edu); Programs, Charlene Stebles, 299-1039, [ronandcharlene@comcast.net](mailto:ronandcharlene@comcast.net); Treasurer, Joyce Quinn, 270-5520, [j\\_quinn@att.net](mailto:j_quinn@att.net); Editor, Sue Haffner, 292-5624, [sueh@csufresno.edu](mailto:sueh@csufresno.edu); Refreshments, Marian Orvis, 226-0145, [mforvet@comcast.net](mailto:mforvet@comcast.net); Librarian, Madeleine Mitchell, 638-2784, [madeleine43@comcast.net](mailto:madeleine43@comcast.net); Webmaster, Vickie Veen, 824-8789, [vickieveen@gmail.com](mailto:vickieveen@gmail.com); Sunshine, Carole Grosch, 322-.8602, [cgg266@comcast.net](mailto:cgg266@comcast.net).



Nick Wilkinson (7<sup>th</sup>); Mary Drumheller, Joyce Yesne (8<sup>th</sup>); Lola Sutherland (10<sup>th</sup>); Paulette Rapisura (14<sup>th</sup>); Pat La Mont (19<sup>th</sup>); Nick Deinhart, Alice Rodriguez (25<sup>th</sup>).

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SAY HELLO TO THESE NEW MEMBERS:

Vic and Joyce Yesne, Fowler

David Cook and Joyce Salazar, Fresno

WELCOME

(Actually, you've probably already said hello to Vic and Joyce, as they've attended most of the meetings for the past year. And some of you recognized David, as he works at Rosenbalm Rockery.)

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We hear that **Herb Thorne** is recovering from a spinal compression fracture. We hope he gets better soon.

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ON THE COVER: Janet Moos and Jason Kabeary are on the cover of the February issue of *Central Valley magazine* which was distributed with the *Fresno Bee* on January 26th, profiled in an article about family businesses. If you did not receive a copy, you can read it online: www.centralvalley.com. You can click the arrow to read all about their store, The Succulent Shack. What great publicity!

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Some other recent articles of interest: the January/February issue of *The American Gardener* has a story (p. 20-25) about hybridizer and plant hunter Kelly Griffin. It recounts his career and has photos of some of his many hybrids. We've been fortunate to have him as a club speaker at times in the past . . . The January/February issue of *Fruit Grower*, the magazine of the California Rare Fruit Growers, has an article (p. 8-16) on the Forestiere Underground Gardens, emphasizing the fruit trees and vines growing there. It's very interesting and lavishly illustrated.

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Bill Poot, of Poot's Cactus Nursery, donated some cuttings to the club, which were retrieved by Paul and Madeleine Mitchell. They will bring some of them to share at this meeting. We thank Bill for the plants.

In case you don't know this nursery, it is outside of Ripon at 17229 E. Hwy 120. It's especially great to visit in the spring when their many echinopsis hybrids are in bloom. It's an amazing sight. Open 9-5, Monday-Saturday; (209) 599-7241.

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If you need some plastic nursery cans, Fred Gaumer has a bunch of extras. Call 642-0021 (not after 8 p.m., please.)

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NO BOARD MEETING THIS MONTH

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**Newsletter submittal deadline: February 22, 2013**

**BIG EVENT THIS MONTH:** Sat., Feb. 9<sup>th</sup>, San Diego C&S Society Winter Show and Sale, Balboa Park, Room 101. For more information: (858) 382-1797.

#### CLUB WORKSHOP

Wednesday, Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>, 6 p.m., at The Succulent Shack, 1322 Wishon. As a tie-in with Bill Gale's program, we will work on a few plants to make them better show specimens. Bring any plants that you think would profit from this. Of course, you can also bring anything that is looking especially good or any plant that you have questions about.

We had a great workshop in January, with a good turnout of enthusiastic members.

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BRAG TABLE: Last month Fred Gaumer brought *Othonna Herrei*, *Turbinicarpus alonsoi*, *Gasteria pillansii ernest-ruschii*, *Argyroderma patens* and *Phyllobolus resurgens*. Veone Gale brought *Dioscorea mexicana*; Mary Ann Villegas brought an amazing crest of *Euphorbia flanaganii*; Bruce Hargreaves displayed *Euphorbia concinna*; Marilyn Carter brought her *Pachypodium namaquanum*. Thanks to all. Don't forget to bring something to show off; we all like to see each others' plants.



Alsterworthia International is the journal of an online plant organization that is devoted to *Haworthia*, *Gasteria*, *Aloe* and related genera, as well as their inter-generic hybrids. It is published 3 times per year. I have duplicates of the 2012 issues and will bring them this month for the raffle table. Sue

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Most of us have some columnar type cacti in our collections. They can be some of the most difficult plants to identify. Bob Ressler is a grower who has specialized in the columnars for years and he has a website with a lot of photos: [www.flickr.com/photos/wwwcolumnarcactus.com](http://www.flickr.com/photos/wwwcolumnarcactus.com)

## Getting to Know You...

### BILL GALE

“I can’t believe I was so lucky!” was how Bill Gale described his success at this year’s Fresno Fair. “The competition was really tough.”

Twenty-one of his plants placed in the first three categories: nine won First Place (among them an unusual variegated adenium), seven won Second Place and five won Third Place.

Not bad for a first try.

A FCSS member for over four years, Gale joined the club when he saw his mother, Veone, and brother, Dan, going to shows. “I didn’t want to miss out on trips, so I started collecting plants,” he said. “I jumped in with both feet.” He purchased a 10’x12’ greenhouse, which quickly filled up, so he doubled the size by purchasing another, combining the two and utilizing a single heat source. Bill prefers to grow from seed, so his greenhouse is home to a variety of cacti and succulent seedlings on thermostat controlled heating mats that operate year round. Growing Pachypodiums is a particular favorite pastime.



“They come in a lot of different shapes,” he says, “and are native to Madagascar. They don’t look like

anything else you see; they’re so unusual-looking.” Examples range from *Pachypodium geayi* or Madagascar palm, which is one of the largest of the Madagascar species, to bonsai varieties like the *Pachypodium brevicaule*.

Born in Utah, Bill moved to Dinuba with his family, in 1972, his senior year of high school. Later, he worked as a tile setter. “I love being a craftsman and working with beautiful materials like marble and glass tiles,” explained Gale when talking about his thirty-five years in the construction field. His work took him to Las Vegas for five years and Phoenix for ten years, where he especially enjoyed the beauty of the Sonoran Desert.

“I loved Phoenix... with the awesome plants and beautiful mountains,” he said. “I also like to hunt and fish. Work was good there – every day was something different. Tile is very popular in the desert climate because of its cooler features.”

Bill is the father to three children and now makes his home in Sanger.

Though he still enjoys fly fishing and practices the “catch and release” philosophy to enable more people to enjoy the entertainment fishing brings, Bill finds he spends much of his time in his greenhouse and caring for plants.

“We all have different ways of growing,” he says of his mom and brother, both prolific and successful growers. “I like to water, for example; each person just has to find what works for them. I love growing from seed; it gives me something to get up for in the morning.”

Fortunately, we will have the opportunity to learn about what works for Bill and his award-winning plants at the next FCSS meeting.



Carole Grosch

## JASON'S AND JANET'S HYPERTUFA:

They use a 1-1-1 mix of Portland cement, peat moss and perlite, with a 2-quart container as a measure. The dry ingredients should be thoroughly mixed before you add the water (which should be half the amount of the dry material.)

Janet and Jason use dust masks, safety goggles and disposable gloves in the process. You can mix by hand but for large batches Jason uses a cement-mixing tub, incorporating the ingredients with a hoe. You should continue until the mix has the texture of cottage cheese.

Pot molds can be any size and shape, with a smaller container nested inside a larger one. Make sure both are coated with a mold release agent or that the inside one is wrapped in a plastic bag so it can be removed easily.

Pack the tufa mix tightly into the space between the inner and outer containers. Wrap the pot with a plastic bag for at least 24 hours, then remove the inner mold. Return the pot to the plastic bag. After about 36 hours remove the outer piece of the mold, wrap the pot back in plastic and let it cure for a few weeks.

The Succulent Shack has tufa kits for sale with complete instructions.

*Sue*





(Photo: "Agaves", by Greg Starr (2012

## THE TINIEST AGAVE

The tiniest of all agaves is *A. toumeyana* subspecies *bella*. Rarely over six inches tall and wide, this Arizona native has dark green leaves marked with dense white bud printing. It is found between 2600 and 5600 feet elevation in the Sierra Ancha, New River Mountains, Mazatzal Mountains, Bradshaw Mountains, and the Wet Beaver Creek drainage in Central Arizona. It is an offsetting species and can form large, dense colonies. Some of the clusters, with age, can form fairy rings as the central rosettes die out. The narrow leaves are straight or slightly curved or saber-shaped. The leaves have prominent white bud printing on both surfaces and lack marginal teeth, instead having thin, white fibers along the edge, while the terminal spine is less than an inch long. Two other species, *A. parviflora* and *polianthiflora* are very similar to *toumeyana bella*, indistinguishable except for the flowers. The species is slow growing and hardy to zero degrees.

## CSSA CORNER:

**The 35th Biennial Convention of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America will be held in Austin TX, from June 15 - 20, 2013. All members of the Society are invited to join in the gathering which will feature world renowned authors and experts in the field of Cacti & Succulents. The web site for the Convention is located at <http://cssa2013.com>.**

Following is a synopsis from editor Tim Harvey of the CSSA Journal which will be mailed in the next week. Remember, one of the main benefits of membership in the CSSA is the receipt of all members of this very professional journal 6 times per year.



Volume 85 begins with an account of exploration in Mexico by Julia Etter and Martin Kristen. So far, two new species (an *Echeveria* and a *Sedum*) have been described as a result of their work, named in honor of the authors in the recently-published *Haseltonia 18*. Here they tell us more about the extremely challenging terrain around the Rio Piaxtla as well as other plants seen in the area, several of which still await better understanding. Socotra is once again difficult to travel to, after a short period when tourists could visit relatively freely. Despite the current difficulties, the intrepid Alain Rzepecky managed to find a new arborescent *Euphorbia* species, described here and accompanied by spectacular habitat images. The second new species described in this issue is a member of the genus *Eriospermum* from near the Orange River area in Southern Africa. Graham Williamson provides some beautiful drawings to illustrate the finer points of this plant. *Euphorbia schoenlandii* and a Kelly Griffin hybrid *Aloe* 'Red Ridge' feature in Duke Benadom's Superb Succulents article. Jeff Chemnick provides an in-depth guide to the cycad genus *Dioon* as it occurs in Oaxaca, in an article held over from the Special Edition on the CSSA tour to that state, which came out in 2012. Finally, Elton Roberts' article on the genus *Micropuntia* is sure to be the first encounter for many with this fascinating group of plants, and again he provides an alternative and informed view of current taxonomy.