

CACTUS CORNER NEWS

Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society

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Affiliated with the Cactus & Succulent Society of America

October 2016

**NEXT MEETING: Thursday, October 6, 7:00 pm. (Doors open 6:30 p.m.)
Deaf & Hard of Hearing Service Center (DHHSC), 5340 North Fresno Street, Fresno**

PROGRAM

Beauty Lies in the Details – Colors and Shapes of Mexican Succulents

"Beauty lies in the details -- colors and shapes of Mexican succulents" -- a DVD of pictures and music put together by Julia Etter and Martin Kristen, Europeans who have lived and explored in Mexico for several decades. Credit for the photograph of Etter and Kristen goes to the 2015 CSSA Convention website.



~ DINNER ~

Begins promptly at 5:00 p.m.
Reservation under Fresno Cactus Club.
Members are invited to attend.

Sal's Mexican Restaurant
7476 North Fresno Street
Fresno (559) 438-3030

<http://salsmexicanrestaurants.com/general-menu/>

Contact Rosanna Rojas by
Wednesday, October 5,
to make reservations.

Phone: (559) 999-0017

Email: rfrojas96@gmail.com

FROM THE PREZ ...

Hi, all,

Well, we've had a few cool days that have given us a tantalizing taste of autumn. Our winter-growing succulents are pushing into growth: pelargoniums, haemanthus, velthemia, tylecodon, oxalis and many others. The southern hemisphere bulbs in my yard are waking up. If you haven't closely examined your collection lately, you may be surprised at what you will see.

This is the month for the Big Fresno Fair. We need to have as many of you as can to sign up to monitor the cactus and succulent display. You can get a gate pass and parking pass from Rudy for a couple hours of duty; then you are free to tour the rest of the Fair. If you want to put in more than four hours, you will need a photo I.D. badge which will get you through the entry gate at any time during the run of the Fair. See Rudy for details. The Fair display is always a good advertisement for our club, and it's certainly valuable to have our members there to hand out information, answer questions, etc.

The Member's Sale night last month went very well. Even with a record number of vendors the room was very well organized. Thanks to Rob Scott who went by the DHHSC in the afternoon to set up tables. The club table took in over \$350.00, and we sold every plant we had. Thanks to Vickie Veen for helping, and to her and Ann Bierbower who stayed to clean up the room. It was much appreciated.

The Nominating Committee, Rosanna Rojas, Chair, has a slate of candidates for 2017 offices, which she will announce at this meeting. The official ballot will be in the November newsletter, with voting at the November club meeting.

Saturday, October 15th, the Clovis Botanical Garden will hold its Water-Wise Plant Sale & Fair; 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. We have reserved a table and two chairs to represent our club. I've been preparing small plants to give away, along with information about our club. You should attend this and pick up appropriate water-thrifty plants for your yard.

Our program this month is something a bit different: gorgeous photography of Mexican succulents with a musical accompaniment. It's a DVD produced by a couple who have lived and botanized in Mexico for several decades. We need to have a laptop that plays DVDs. If you have one, could you please bring it? We don't know if the laptop the DHHSC has will play DVDs.

See you at the meeting! **Sue**

**FRESNO FAIR**

The Big Fresno Fair is finally here. It will run from October 5-16. For exhibitors, cacti and succulents will be received at The Greenhouse on Oct. 1st (Saturday) and 2nd (Sunday). Judging will be on the 3rd. We still need volunteers as plant monitors (at least 2 hours a shift). Tasks are keeping the public from touching the plants; answering questions about them (you need not be an expert on the plants); and handing out information about our club.

For those wishing to participate, and if your shifts exceed 4 hours total, you need to have an ID photo taken for a badge. This can be obtained at the Fairground administrative office. The badge takes the place of an entry pass; thus you will just need a parking permit. For those who signed up before the club meeting, I will mail passes (if you signed up for less than 4 hours) and a parking pass. I will bring the passes and permits to the club meeting, Oct. 6th. An incentive for participating is that after your shift you can enjoy the rest of the time at the Fair.

Rudy Rulloda, Chair

FRESNO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY BOARD MEETING
SEPTEMBER 12, 2016

President Sue Haffner called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Attendance: Robert Scott, Treasurer; Cindy Duwe, Secretary; Polly Dunklin, Board Member; Mary Drumheller, Board Member; Tom Meyer, Board Member, Fred Gaumer, CSAA Board Representative; Carole Grosch, Board Member; Karen Willoughby, Board Member

Absent: Rosanna Rojas, Ann Bierbower **Visitors:** Doris Hooton, Dom Ortiz

Officer Reports:

Sue informed the Board that she paid the \$55.00 web hosting bill.

Sue proposed that the club make a donation in the amount of \$50.00 to the Master Gardeners in memory of Herb Thorne.

Sue told the Board that the club has some old German cactus books. Sue reminded the Board that someone needs to set up a laptop for the October meeting to play the DVD.

Robert Scott informed the Board that the club has \$8,845.35 in the bank.

Old Business:

The Member Sale Night was deemed a success.

Rosanna will chair the Nominating Committee.

Karl Church agreed to accept the responsibilities of Raffle Chairman.

Sue reminded the Board that some of the Standing Rules need revising.

New Business:

Polly has the 2016 club handouts revised and printed.

The Clovis Botanical Garden Water-wise Plant Sale and Fair will take place Saturday, October 15, 2016 from 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Sue and another member will have a table with our handouts available.

Sue informed the Board that Chuck Staples, CSSA historian has requested a club history.

Robert mentioned Manchester Mall as a possible venue for the 2017 Show and Sale. He also proposed having a judged show.

Work Shop:

The Work Shop will be held Wednesday, September 21, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at the home of Doris Hooton and Tom Meyer.

Respectfully submitted,
Cindy Duwe, Secretary



BOARD MEETING

The October board meeting will be Monday, Oct. 10th, 6 p.m., at 3733 N. Sierra Vista, Fresno. This is the annual budget meeting, so those board members responsible for expenditures need to present projections for 2017. Any club members are welcome.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY:**

*Karl Church (2nd); Anne Vanderslice,
Paul Mitchell (9th); Marian Orvis (20th)*

SAY HELLO TO THESE NEW MEMBERS:

Gloria Rodriguez, Dinuba,
Richard Goldstone, Selma

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A get well card was sent to Ann Vanderslice.

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NEW IN THE CLUB LIBRARY: "Small Opuntias" by John Pilbeam. It will be available for checkout this month.

Other book stuff: we have several German language books on cacti. If you can read German, or know someone who does, you are welcome to them. They are some of the books that came to the club from the estates of Karen Nichols and Sigmund Schanderl:

Barthelot, Wilhelm. "Kakteen", c1977.
Cullmann, Willy. "Kakteen", c1975.
Cullmann, Willy. "Kakteen unser Hobby", c1963.
Ritter, Friedrich. "Kakteen in Südamerika", v. 1-2 (of 4), c1979.

They will be available at this meeting. Or otherwise get in touch with Sue.

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A green platter was left on the refreshment table last month. Sue Haffner has it.

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COMING EVENTS

October 5-16: Big Fresno Fair

October 6, club meeting

October 8-9, Bakersfield C&SS Show and Sale, St Paul's Church, 2216 17th St (between 17th & B St.); hours: Sat, 10-5; Sun. 11-3.

October 8-9, San Jose C&SS Show and Sale, Peterson Middle School, 1380 Rosalia Way, Sunnyvale; hours: Sat, 9-5; Sun. 10-4.

October 15, Clovis Botanical Garden Water Wise Plant Sale & Fair; hours: 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

CLUB WORKSHOP: We had a lively workshop in September. We looked at O and P plants: *Obregonia, Opuntia, Operculicaria, Othonna, Pachypodium, Pelargonium, Puna, Pyrocactus, Pygmaeocereus*. In addition, Dennis Anderson—since he missed the previous workshop—brought a bunch of nice mammillarias to talk about. Others contributing plants for discussion were Vickie Veen, Bill Gale, Eddie Etheridge, Jack Fleming, Tom Meyer, Mary Drumheller and Dan Gale, who brought a flat of succulents from new member Ryan Whited. Thanks to all.

The October workshop will be Wednesday, Oct. 19th, 6 p.m., at 3733 N. Sierra Vista. Plants to study will be those in genera starting with Q, R or S. Discussion topic will be winter growers. All members are welcome.

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**PLANT SALE THIS MONTH:** We will be selling some of the plants—all cacti—that we 'rescued' from the grower up in Coarsgold. There will also be some pots for sale. All the items are priced to sell, as we would like to disperse them as widely as possible. Bear in mind that the plants were all neglected for a period of time, so they're not perfect.

Thanks to Ann Bierbower and Carole Grosch for warehousing and pricing the plants, and Don Winton for hauling them to the meeting.



Photographs by  
Ann Bierbower



## HERB THORNE

We lost our esteemed member Herb Thorne on September 1<sup>st</sup>. He was 88, and hadn't been able to get to a meeting for some time. He and his late wife Sue joined FC&SS in 2002; both were Master Gardeners. Herb served on the board of directors and was our Parliamentarian. He was that invaluable member: the person who knew the rules—how to run elections, how the Bylaws should be structured, what we could and couldn't do. "He kept us straight," as Polly Dunklin says. (And I think "Thorne" is a great name for someone interested in cacti.) You can read Herb's obituary, composed by his daughter, on our website. There is also a tribute from Bruce Hargreaves, as Herb was a founder of the organization that became the Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society.



I first met Herb and Sue many years before they joined the club. Back probably in the 1980s I was asked by our then-President to drive to Sanger to pick up cactus and succulent journals some people wanted to donate to the club. The address was out on the river at Wildwood Island. It was a beautiful location and I noted the impressive stand of *Agave parryi* plants in the front garden. There I met a cheerful red-haired lady and her husband, whose most notable feature was his bristly mustache that curled up at the ends. (Later, after I learned of Herb's long and distinguished career with the State of California as a labor negotiator and mediator, I wondered if he initially cultivated that 'stache as part of what might appear to be a gruff and intimidating demeanor.)

Those who spent time with Herb knew how much fun he could be. Fred Gaumer and I drove with Herb to several CSSA conventions (Scottsdale and Seattle). Tom Meyer and I drove with him to the 2009 Convention in Tucson. In Scottsdale, his room became "party central" one night, with all sorts of conventioners barging in to drink up all the gin. He had a lot of interesting stories to tell relating to his work for the state, especially those from when he was involved in Workman's Comp enforcement.

Health issues led Herb to sell his home and move to Fairwinds in 2013, but first he had to distribute his large plant collection. He donated his large in-ground cacti and succulents to the Clovis Botanical Garden where they still form the spine of the cactus garden there. His many potted plants were put into a silent auction with the proceeds going to the club. Even though he couldn't get to our meetings, he remained interested in club business. I saw him last at the memorial service for Don La Mont in 2015. Herb was besieged on that occasion by droves of people who were so glad to see him.

Several club members joined family and friends to say good-bye to Herb on September 10<sup>th</sup> at his daughter's home. Many people were there representing the various dimensions of his well-lived life. It was really a party. If Herb could have been there, he would have been behind the bar mixing margaritas for everyone.

The club has donated \$50 to the Master Gardener program in Herb's memory, as per his family's wishes.

**Sue**



*Beaucarnea recurvate*,  
Ponytail Palm donated  
by Herb to the Clovis  
Botanical Garden.

## EUPHORBIA FRANCOISII

*Euphorbia francoisii* is one of the most decorative and cultivated of the dwarf euphorbias, highly prized by succulent growers. It is native to southwestern Madagascar, growing under bushes on the sandy floor of the coastal forest near Tolanaro (formerly known as Fort Dauphin). It was discovered in the 1940s. The species produces a geophytic caudex from which radiate flat, ground-hugging leaf rosettes at the ends of subterranean stems. These stems sprawl in a random fashion, making each plant unique. It's possible to amass a collection of *E. francoisii* specimens, each one different.

While the stem architecture of each plant can vary, it is the leaves that make *E. francoisii* distinctive. They exhibit an amazing range of colors, shapes and sizes—even on the same plant. All the leaves have relatively long petioles and are usually narrow, linear, often with wavy or scalloped edges. However, they can also be ovate, heart-shaped or even lyre-shaped. The veins are visible on the upper side only. The color can range from dull dark green, silver gray, or with a wash of red, pink or white markings.

A few years ago, at one of the CSSA Conventions in Southern California, a group was able to tour the propagating greenhouses at Grigsby's in Vista. They had flat after flat of *E. francoisii*—plants from seeds and cuttings displaying a luscious array of colors and shapes. They weren't for sale then, but plants are more readily available now.

Werner Rauh, in v. 10 of *Euphorbia journal*, describes several varieties of *F. francoisii*: *francoisii* v. *francoisii*, which has thin stems and is the more "typical form"; *francoisii* v. *crassicaulis*, chiefly lanceolate, with wavy edges and conspicuous white veins; and *francoisii* v. *crassicaulis* forma *rubrifolia*, which has reddish leaves with pink veins.

Culture is not especially difficult: protection from direct sunlight and from frost in winter. Ask Jack Fleming about how he grows this plant. He has brought several great specimens to the workshops and the Brag Table.

The illustrations below are from Dr Rauh's book ""Succulent and xerophytic plants of Madagascar", v.2.

**Sue**





## ECHINOCEREUS (=WILCOXIA) SCHMOLLII



This is an unusual cactus, formerly called *Wilcoxia schmollii*, but now a part of *Echinocereus*. It has tuberous roots which produce short, finger-like, branching stems densely covered with whitish wool. (One author calls the stems “strokable.”) The flowers are nearly 1 ½” wide, purple-rose in color.

The plant was first collected in 1931 by F. Schmolli in SE Querétaro, Mexico, near El Infiernillo. It has been found only in this localized area of the southern phase of the Chihuahuan Desert, at higher altitudes.

John Pilbeam describes the habitat in his book “Echinocereus”: “The plants were pointed out to us by local resident Manuel Rivas, else we would not even have suspected their presence, on a gently sloping

meadow-like stretch of ground, except that there was little grass growing there. The stems were confined to the current year’s growth, having shriveled back to the tuberous root in the dry season, and sheltering beneath a kindly nurse shrub. So in cultivation I have found that cutting back at the end of the rest period to a few centimeters is beneficial to encourage new stems to grow vigorously and flower more readily.”

The large, turnip-like roots generally call for a large pot. Aside from that, culture isn’t difficult. My plant has withstood a lot of mistreatment for many years. Propagation is from stem cuttings or seeds.

*Wilcoxia* was discussed online recently. Monica from Texas wrote: “I root them in one inch pots in pure Turface. They can be slow but reliable to root. As soon as they have roots, they start making big tubers, so they go straight into 4 or 5” pots. The pots I use are as deep as they are wide. It’s strange to put a spiny stick thinner than a pencil in a pot that big, but the roots will fill the pot in a single summer ... They also don’t like full sun since they grow inside bushes in the wild. They clamber up between shelves in my greenhouse and spend the winter dry.”

*Sue*

(Illus: Anderson, M. “Ultimate book of cacti and succulents”)

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