

**Volume 43 Number 10**

**November 2008**

# *ESPINAS Y FLORES*

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

**CACTI, AGAVES,  
AND YUCCAS**  
of California and Nevada



Stephen Ingram

**Program**

**Stephen Ingram:**

**"Cacti, Agaves, and  
Yuccas of California  
and Nevada"**

**Succulent of the Month**

**Mark Fryer: Succulents in the Landscape**

**Cactus of the Month**

**Ed DeLollis: Cacti in the Landscape**

**Saturday, November 8, 1:00pm**

**Casa Del Prado, Room 101**

**Balboa Park**

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## Greetings!

I keep thinking last month's meeting was a real "meat and potatoes" kind of an event. Really solid and interesting plant of the month talks followed by an excellent and exotic travelogue- who could ask for more? There was such a nice selection of plants for sale and library is so nicely organized and well stocked. It's like thinking that meal was so tasty and well-balanced and then out comes the homemade desert and it's every bit as delicious and nutritious as the main course! Thanks to everyone for attending and participating with our fun little group, it was a great day.



Mark's *Astrophytum* "Onzuka" variety, grown from seed.

Kudos and thanks to both Andrew Wilson for his compelling topic of Nerine for his choice of succulent bulb for the month, and Peter Walkowiak for a thorough selection of *Ariocarpus*, both of you brought so much more than the awesome collections of plants of your topics, you brought your insight and enthusiasm, and that's so appreciated and enjoyable!

Rob Skillen's program on Namibia was excellent- and I thought it made for an interesting juxtaposition to Steve Hammer's presentation on that same area earlier in the year. It never ceases to amaze me how the focus of different people can reveal such different perspectives. That *Cyphostemma* on the cover of last month's EYF was really a sight to behold. Rob's presentations are always succinct and well spoken. For those of you who are CSSA members, Rob is also soon to be on the board of directors for the national society, a benefit to all of us.

I would be remiss to not mention the many thanks to some specific individuals from last month: Allen Clark we hope your shoulder and arm get better quickly! Thanks to Steve and Kathy Harris for filling in on the librarian duties. Terry and Collette Parr for all the work they did (and do) on the benefit plant drawing, next time pick some of MY ticket numbers! Rudy Lime, as always, stalwart at the coffee maker, refreshments, and cleaning up afterwards, you are a SAINT! Joe Kraatz and Lynne Elliot rock the house with their dutiful cashier routine, always there and always smiling, give yourselves a big raise! Chris Miller, oy! Tom and Laura DeMerritt, whew, slow down and take a breath already! We love you guys! Pam Badger, George Plaisted, Bill and Jean O'Daniel, everyone who goes the extra mile in the background to keep this club happening- THANK YOU!!! The SDCSS is an incredible organization and has an exciting future ahead of itself thanks to all the hard-work and dedication you all exhibit in everything you do!!



Mark's *Astrophytum* "Superkabuto" variety, also grown from seed.

This month we'll be hearing from Stephen Ingram presenting on his new book "Cacti, Agaves, and Yuccas of California and Nevada". I know a few of us have already had the pleasure of Stephen's presentations, but I doubt this will dissuade anyone from hearing and seeing them again. In fact, if you have friends who are interested in photography, they will want to see this gentleman's work, just for the sale of his composition and captures. Ed DeLollis and I will be giving brief talks on our perspectives of cacti and succulents in the landscape, Ed will cover cacti and I'll try and offer some ideas for succulents in general.

Today we've been soaking up the sun and heat for what must be one of the last really warm weekends of the year. So far a few little wildfires have ignited and burned around L.A., but nothing nearly as traumatic in San Diego as last year. Hopefully now that the county is better prepared we won't have to be, but that doesn't seem very likely.

I hope everyone reading this has had a great Halloween!

Sincerely,

Mark Fryer  
October 17th, 2008

*October Meeting Photo: Collette Parr*

# Program Notes

## "Cacti, Agaves, and Yuccas of California and Nevada"

Stephen Ingram's multimedia presentation explores some of the unique attributes of the cacti, agaves, and yuccas and highlights what makes them such intriguing components of our native plant communities. With stunning images of their colorful blossoms and unusual growth forms, this program showcases a number of species and varieties that occur in California's deserts and coastal areas. The main slideshow-talk will be approximately 40 minutes, with time for questions. A second 10-minute show set to music illustrates the beauty of these remarkable succulents. Following the presentation, Stephen will sign copies of his new book from Cachuma Press, "Cacti, Agaves, and Yuccas of California and Nevada."



Stephen Ingram

### About the Book:

California and Nevada are known for their astonishing array of plant life, and few components of this diverse flora are more intriguing than the cacti, agaves, and yuccas. These spiny succulents -- which share many of the same arid habitats -- have long been a source of fascination for explorers, naturalists, and scientists. "Cacti, Agaves, and Yuccas of California and Nevada" features more than 60 species with a detailed text that is accompanied by 262 color photographs, 16 botanical watercolors, and 52 range maps. Much more than a field guide, this book examines the natural history of California's and Nevada's cacti, agaves, and yuccas, including their origins, ecology, and conservation. It also provides practical horticultural advice for their cultivation and describes some of the best places to see these remarkable succulents in the wild.

Botanist, writer, and photographer Stephen Ingram traveled more than 30,000 miles -- much of it on remote backroads -- to search out, study, and photograph the cacti, agaves, and yuccas of California and Nevada. He also delved into the scientific literature, visited numerous herbaria, and interviewed our region's leading experts on Cactaceae and Agavaceae. The result is a detailed, highly readable, and beautifully illustrated natural history and field guide. "Cacti, Agaves, and Yuccas of California and Nevada" is an engaging and substantive reference book that can be enjoyed by novice and expert alike.

#### About the Author:

Stephen Ingram is a native Californian with a long-time interest in plants and plant ecology. He received a B.S. degree in Biology from Lewis and Clark College, and an M.A. degree in Botany from the University of California, Santa Barbara. Following graduate school, Stephen was employed as part of the Research Department at Selby Botanical Gardens in Sarasota, Florida, managing the herbarium and working on an epiphyte flora of Monteverde, Costa Rica. He has also worked as a botanical consultant doing rare plant surveys in the Eastern Sierra and the Mojave Desert. Stephen is past president of the Bristlecone Chapter of the California Native Plant Society. His photos have been used in numerous books, magazines, and calendars.

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## Please Don't Drink The Water

By Roy Paramore - Published in *Kaktos Komments*,  
Houston Cactus and Succulent Society

The three species of *Ferocactus*, usually called "barrel cactus," that occur in the Southwest are best known for having an interior so juicy that they can provide a dying human with a life-saving drink of water. Both Indian and non-Indian have told and retold this myth many times. This is NOT true and is actually dangerous.

Chemical analysis of the liquid from *Ferocactus* indicates that it is too alkaline to aid a human and that a person would be worse off after drinking the liquid. Add to this the water lost through perspiration as a dehydrated person struggles to open the cactus and the story begins to crumble.

The Seri Indians of the Sonoran Desert were aware that eating the pulp of the barrel cactus did not provide life giving moisture. They knew that the juice of *Ferocactus covillei* caused headaches and the juice from *Ferocactus wislizenii* caused extreme diarrhea and pain to the body.

Although the barrel cacti did not provide water, they did provide food. All products of the plant's reproductive cycle were consumed and, for this reason, the harvest lasted several months. Women collected the buds in early spring, the flowers in late spring and the fruits in early summer. These parts were parboiled to remove bitterness then eaten or dried in the sun for storage. The cooked fruit tastes like artichoke and the flowers taste like brussels sprouts.

Sometimes a slice of the cactus, with the spines removed, was roasted, wrapped in cloth and applied to sore places for the relief of pain.

#### Reference:

Indian Uses of Desert Plants, James Cornett (Curator of Natural Science, Palm Springs Desert Museum)

*From the CSSA archive*

# FYI

## (FOR YOUR INFORMATION)

### Notes on Nerines from Andrew Wilson:

Nerines - answers to questions from the October talk:

1. Source of name - from the Greek name Nereis for the sea-nymph. The story goes that a boatload of bulbs of *Nerine sarniensis* was washed up off the isle of Guernsey (Sarnia in Latin) around 1650 . This gave rise to both the name of the genus and of the species - the other 22 species have more ordinary names. In fact, the shipwreck at this date has not been recorded. The story was evidently made up by Royalists in England to cover up the fact that a Crowellian general and keen gardener, John Lambert, had imported them to that island from France. People really valued their bulbs and plants in those days. Rightly or wrongly, the name has stuck.

2. Sources of bulbs. The following nurseries sell various species. More expensive than they used to be. But, what isn't these days?

Bulbmeister

10846 Hodge Lane

Gravette, AR 72736

<http://shop.bulbmeister.com/nursery/nursery.html>

Telos Rare Bulbs

P. O. Box 1067

Ferndale, CA 95536

<http://www.telosrarebulbs.com/HaemanthusMoraeaNerine.html>

Two other nurseries normally stock them but not right now, it seems.

Odyssey Bulbs

Box308, Berrian Springs

MI 49103

<http://www.odysseybulbs.com>

Flowerbulbs

503 815 Kilchis River Road

Tilamook

OR 97141

<http://sales@flowerbulbs.com>



*Nerine bowdenii* "Pink Triumph"  
Image: bulbmeister.com.

**San Diego Plant Atlas Updated:** I just though I'd mention that the UT reported that the San Diego Plant Atlas (<http://sdplantatlas.org>) web site has been re-vamped. Since Jon Rebman spoke to us recently, I thought the members might be interested in seeing the new site. Janet Svoboda

**Plant Community Website:** I would like to invite you and the members of the San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society to participate in the open beta for a new social network community for gardening enthusiasts, [plantfanatics.com](http://plantfanatics.com). We have created this community in an effort to provide a place where people can go to share photos and stories, participate in groups, and meet other people who share their love of plants.

**Snacks for the Break:** Last names ending in A - M, please bring a snack to share at the break.

## OCTOBER 2008 BRAG TABLE WINNERS

Judged by Andrew Wilson

### Cactus

- 1st Place, Jurgen Mentzel - *Ariocarpus retusus* v. *pectinatus*
- 2nd Place, Peter Walowiak - *Rhipsalis grandiflora*
- 2nd Place, Peter Walowiak - *Ariocarpus fissuratus* v. *loydii*
- 3rd Place, Peter Walowiak - *Ariocarpus retusus*, 2 forms, single & clump

### Succulents

- 1st Place, Peter Walowiak - *Adenium swazicum*
- 2nd Place, Alison Baldwin - *Conophytum minutum*
- 2rd Place, Rudy Lime - *Euphorbia cylindrifolis* v. *tuberifera*
- 3rd Place, Rudy Lime - *Euphorbia gorgonis*
- 3rd Place, Peter Walowiak - *Pachypodium sanndersii*

The due date for submission of article (Plants of the Month) and information on the program/speaker will be the meeting preceding the intended issue (approximately one month ahead of time). The due date for letters, regular columns, brag table winners, and the President's Message will be one week later. All submissions are to be made to the Editors.

# Succulents in the Landscape

By Mark Fryer

The topic of succulents in the landscape has become almost as much a matter of functionality as one of design, and is likely to become increasingly pragmatic in terms of lower water usage and tolerance to drought. I have now had the pleasure of growing succulent plants in two completely different environments, in a variety of settings, for a good number of years. I'm happy to say I have more questions than answers, and I'm still inspired by the myriad of new succulent forms available to the avid gardener. It's almost amusing to think that just a few years ago I'd

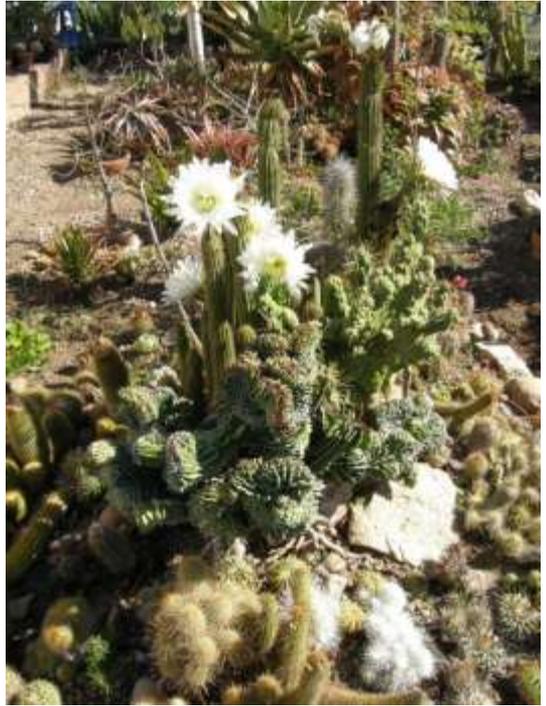


Crested Euphorbia taking over a small mound  
in my tiny garden

have to qualify that statement as "succulent" gardening, as opposed to just gardening, today the latter almost insists we incorporate a few succulents into our pallet. The challenge with all of this is the paucity of decent information on how the plants will develop both in terms of size, how they behave once they're established, and to set some reasonable expectations as to their overall performance.

Focusing on the choices available to us in the San Diego area and trying to list them all would be mind-boggling and probably out of date as soon as it was written sort of a task. Just visit your local garden center twice a month and notice how many different things are showing up. New cultivars of Echeverias, Mesembs, Agaves, Aloes, Cactus, Euphorbias, and other fringe drought-tolerant families arrive every couple weeks and disappear as fast as they arrive. Inspiration for design is all around us, all one needs to do these days is take a walk around their neighborhood to see some of the best choices in action, and extrapolate from there as to what might grow well in your own landscape. If you need more than this, there are copious lists available from the SDCSS, the Flora Association, the Horticulture Society, the Mediterranean Gardening Society, and various Parks (Quail, Balboa) and nurseries. Societies like the SDCSS are a wealth of materials and experience, use it! I know there are a number of our membership who've grown copious amounts of borderline appropriate species for the succulent landscape, and are willing to exchange and experiment.

Drought has played an interesting role with regards to the history of succulent planting choices. In southern California specifically, there have been countless entrepreneurs who've sought to create some kind of a lawn-substitute that will stay green and be comfortable to humans and pets without guzzling water like an alcoholic after a day of restraint. We have some of the most beautiful margins on our highways, and I'm always curious and interested to see the intermingling different colors of bullet-proof mesembs growing along our roadways. In the residential sense we can see mirrors of this with various and sundry creepers, vines, and clumpettes. Bearing in mind the cost of running irrigation back at the turn of the century, and you can see why Eucalyptus and other Australian non-natives ran wild shortly after their introduction. In many ways they were excellent choices, but in other ways they quickly became dangerous liabilities in some environments. The east bay area of Oakland and Berkley quickly come to mind as an example of dangerous over-vegetation of these non-natives. There were a good number of landscape designers who utilized Agaves, Cacti, Aloes, Euphorbias, and many other succulents in situations where the vast majority of irrigation would be dependent on occasional winter rains, and scant little else. Examples of these kinds of gardens can be seen all around Balboa Park and older historic neighborhoods in San Diego proper. Carpobrotus as ground cover, *Agave attenuata* as a punctuation, *Euphorbia ingens* as a tree, and never does the little plot need a drop of water (except from rain).



Overview of the small mound the crested Euphorbia is living on

Add a little irrigation into this equation and the design options extend massively. Theme gardens, heirloom gardens, blue gardens, white gardens, dry gardens, cactus gardens, rosette gardens, and whatever your heart desires can be achieved with the sculpted look of these plants. Undersea themes have popped up all over the place thanks to our friend Jeff Moore of Solana Succulents. Dry creek xeriscapes are becoming popular and seem to invite native fauna into homeowner's yards. Landscapers and plants-people who have gotten well familiarized with these plants can create everything from a tropical hideaway to a desert look, and with a drastic reduction in water and other resources.

My yard is a huge happy accident to me, loads of different plants vying for space with each other, some intentionally planted, some left to their own devices, and others that have hitchhiked in on other plants. Some people have referred to it as a botanical train-wreck, which would actually be kind of a neat theme if I ever got that organized! I'm an avid composter, so seedlings pop up all over the place, sometimes good sometimes bad, but always inspiring, even if it's just a little cantaloupe that can't possibly survive the drought in the summer-dry corner. Fix nitrogen and die if you must!

Besides having that unique 'Elfin Forest' perspective, our native California chaparral is home to a number of native succulents, and equally hosts succulents one would be hard-pressed to grow successfully anywhere else in the United States. The true Mediterranean zones of the world are few and far between, and we happen to live in one of them. This zone allows a baseline growing condition favorable to an extensive range of succulent plants. With minor adjustments to soil and exposure one can create enough zonal difference to allow an even wider range of growables. I often wonder at the possibilities of adding some of the more extreme measures we used to undertake up north to grow borderline tender plants in otherwise inhospitable situations. I know a good number of folks who are quite content with a simple native succulent garden, but it's fun to have options!

The lesson is simple: Succulent gardens take a small percentage of water resources compared to traditional 'sod and roses' landscapes and in addition require much less resources in terms of annual maintenance! I'll try and have something quick and easy to follow at the November meeting, possibly some examples to show you. Please bring your questions and we'll try and get them answered!

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Andrew Wilson judges the Bragg Table during the October meeting

*Photo: Collette Parr*

# Global warming, green jobs and a healthy economy

By Art Cooley

Global warming has created some skeptics; some base their skepticism on the belief that the science is uncertain; while some are members of carbon based energy companies and don't want to change. Others are just possibly uncertain.

In the past, many have made enormous amounts of money from Internet Technology; many others have reaped financial benefits from the housing market; but, what might the next big market be? Clean energy? Green jobs? Let's see what Thomas Friedman, three-time Pulitzer Prize winner and columnist for the New York Times, says in his latest book.

In a chapter entitled, "The Stone Age Didn't End Because We Ran Out Of Stones", Thomas Friedman in, *Hot, Flat, and Crowded* tells of traveling to China in 2007 and advising the Chinese on what their business plan, relative to global warming, should be. He says:

*"Every year I come to China and young Chinese tell me, 'Mr. Friedman, you Americans got to grow dirty for 150 years — you got to have your Industrial Revolution based on coal and oil — now it is our turn.' Well, on behalf of all Americans, I am here today to tell you that you're right. It's your turn. Please, take your time, grow as dirty as you like for as long as you like. Take your time! Please! Because I think my country needs only five years to invent all the clean power and energy efficiency tools that you, China, will need to avoid choking pollution and then we are going to come over and sell them all to you. We will get at least a five-year jump on you in the next great global industry: clean power and energy efficiency. We will totally dominate you in those industries. So please, don't rush, grow as dirty as you like for as long as you want. If you want to do it for five more years, that's great. If you want to give us a ten-year lead on the next great global industry, that would be even better. Please take your time.*

*At first I could see a lot of these grizzled Chinese car guys adjusting their ear-pieces to make sure that they were hearing me right? "What the hell did he just say? America is going to clean our clocks in the next great global industry? What industry is that?" But as I went on I could see some heads nodding and some wry smiles of recognition from those who got my point. Clean power is going to be the global standard over the next decade, and clean power tools are going to be the next great global industry, and the countries who make more of them and sell more of them will have a competitive advantage. Those countries will have both the cleanest air and the fastest-growing businesses -- not a bad combination."*

Continued → 10

Here is our chance to be thoughtfully creative, to invest in one of the largest markets of the future—the clean energy market—and to bolster our economy. We will create green jobs, we will spur venture capitalists and we will strike a note of optimism in time when it is badly needed. If we can go to the moon, 'invent' the industrial revolution, we can surely invent a clean energy world and in the process, reduce global warming.

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## CACTUS RECIPE OF THE MONTH

### Prickly Pear Juice and Prickly Pear Muffins

By Sue Haffner - Published in Cactus Corner News - Fresno, CA

**Prickly Pear Juice:** There are various methods of obtaining prickly pear juice, and all should be done wearing gloves. Experts from the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix suggest placing the unpeeled, washed fruit in a kettle with about a half-inch of water. Simmer until soft, then press out the juice with a potato masher. Strain the juice through cheesecloth or a fine sieve to remove all the spines. The University of Arizona Cooperative Extension suggests simply slicing the washed raw fruit and pureeing it in a blender. Then strain the juice through cheesecloth and allow to settle.



### Prickly Pear Muffins

- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup oil
- 1 cup prickly pear juice
- 1-3/4 cup self-rising flour
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 cup diced prickly pear fruit (optional)
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts (optional)



Mix together egg, oil and prickly pear juice. Stir flour and sugar together. Add liquid ingredients and stir just to moisten batter. Fold in prickly pear fruit and nuts. Fill greased or lined tins 2/3 full with batter. Bake at 425degF for 20 minutes. Makes 1 dozen. - Desert Botanical Garden.

*From the CSSA Archives*

*START PLANNING NOW  
TO JOIN US FOR*

*THE 2008 SDCSS HOLIDAY  
PARTY*

*SATURDAY, DEC 13*

MENU:

TOSSED GREEN GARDEN SALAD WITH  
RANCH OR BALSALMIC VINAIGRETTE  
CAESAR SALAD  
BAKED HAM  
STUFFED CHICKEN BREAST  
GARLIC POTATOES  
AU GRATIN POTATOES  
GREEN BEAN & BABY CARROT  
ALMONDINE  
OATMEAL MOLASSES BREAD LOAVES

COST

MEMBERS \$20.00

NON-MEMBERS \$25.00

  
**Happy Holidays**

The editors received this note from Linda Hunt:

"I am under orders from several SDCSS members who were at the picnic to send you the recipe for the banana pudding Don and I brought to share. They would like to have it published in the newsletter so they know how to make it."

### **Not Yo' Mama's Banana Pudding**

Paula Deen, FoodNetwork.com

2 bags Pepperidge Farm Chessmen cookies

6 to 8 bananas, sliced

2 cups milk

1 (5-ounce) box instant French vanilla pudding (or 2 (3-ounce) boxes)

1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened

1 (14-ounce) can sweetened condensed milk

1 (12-ounce) container Cool Whip, thawed, or equal amount sweetened whipped cream

Line the bottom of a 13 by 9 by 2 inch dish with 1 bag of cookies and layer bananas on top. In a bowl, combine the milk and pudding mix and blend well using a handheld electric mixer. In another bowl, combine the cream cheese and condensed milk together and mix until smooth. Fold the whipped topping into the cream cheese mixture. Add the cream cheese mixture to the pudding mixture and stir until well blended. Spread the mixture over the cookies and bananas and cover with the remaining cookies. Refrigerate until ready to serve, preferably overnight. The recipe can be cut in half for a smaller serving size.



"A true cactophile isn't bothered in the least by prickly pears!" One of the herd that make their home in the vicinity of John Durham and Susan Wunderlich's new homestead, former members of the San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society now residing in Tucson, AZ.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## 2008

**Nov 8&9:** San Gabriel Valley Cactus and Succulent Society Show and Sale, LA County Arboretum, 301 No. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia.

**Dec 6&7:** Orange County Show & Sale at the Fullerton Arboretum, 1900 Associated Road, Fullerton, 10:00am-4:00pm. Info: 714-870-4887.

**Dec 13:** SDCSS Christmas Luncheon, 12:00pm.

## 2009

**Feb 14:** SDCSS Winter Show & Sale, 9:00am-4:00pm, Rm 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park.

**Apr 10-15:** The Cactus & Succulent Society of America's Biennial Convention, at the Westin La Paloma Resort and Spa, Tucson, AZ.

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

**Jun 25-28:** CSSA Annual Show & Sale, Huntington Gardens, 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA.



Another of Mark's *Astrophytum*  
"Onzuka" variety, grown from seed.

Please address correspondence to:  
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San Diego, Ca 92136-3181

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

# San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society

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## Standing Committees & Sub Committees

### Education, Conservation & Exhibits

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Brag Table: Candy Garner

Plants of the Month: Ric & Marilyn Newcomer

Summer Show: Tom Knapik

Winter Show: Terry Parr

Historian: Terry Parr

Library: Allen Clark, Chris Miller, Don Hunt, Jeanette Dutton, Steve Harris

Exchange Plants & Seeds: Michelle Heckathorn & Sara Schell

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Monthly Plant Sales: Joe Kraatz & Lynn Elliott

Monthly Supply Sales: George & Jerry Plaisted

Benefit Drawing Table: Collette & Terry Parr

Publicity: Tom DeMerritt & Joe Kraatz

Programs: Mark Fryer

Reception: Susan Hopkins & Judy Walkowiak

Monthly Regalement: Rudy Lime, Susie White

Picnic Regalement: Laura & Tom DeMerritt

Hospitality: Sara Schell

### Liaison

Balboa Park Desert Garden: Susan Hopkins

CSSA Affiliate Rep: Peter Walkowiak

Quail Botanical Gardens: Phyllis Flechsig

SD Botanical Garden Foundation: George Plaisted

SD Floral Association: Elizabeth Glover

SD Wild Animal Park Baja & Old World Gardens: Chris Miller

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