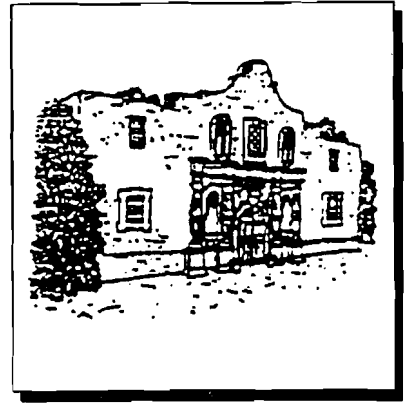




# SACXS FACTS



A MONTHLY PUBLICATION

DEDICATED TO THE ADMIRATION, STUDY, AND PROLIFERATION OF CACTI AND SUCCULENTS

Our Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month except  
April, June and December,  
At the San Antonio Garden Center at Funston and New Braunfels Avenue,  
Doors are open at 6:30 P.M., reception at 7:00, Meeting/program at 7:30.

Meeting – Wednesday, February 18 2004

## Presidents Message

Hi Everyone!

As it is early February, we are all anxiously asking the weatherman- will it freeze tonight? I know most of you have had some light or even heavy freezes this winter. Should I tempt fate by saying- so far I haven't had a freeze yet at my place? I know there is still time, and maybe tonight, but so far, so good. I used to worry much more about my plants' cold, wet roots. I've learned to live with the fear. I do what I can, and just hope for the best. I bring in most plants for the duration of winter. Others I bring in and out when it heats up for several days in a row. We've had lots of mild weather this winter. It leads me to wonder- What if it doesn't freeze at all? So far, I haven't ever been through a winter without a few light freezes. I bet you all have had some lucky years, and some very unlucky ones. Let me know about them. Share your hints on what you do with the new club members. **Al Lindner and Claude Townsend** helped me out last year. And probably others. Thanks to all. So far I haven't lost anything, only a set back in guess what... an ice plant! I freeze to 26 degrees froze back the tender foliage, but it came back in the Spring.

There is a lot on the horizon. **The Garden Center sale is March 11,12,and 13th.** Call me if you are willing to help out at our club table. We need two people AM and PM. We are flexible on scheduling. It's fun and easy.

We are looking for volunteers for our **SHOW AND SALE, APRIL 21 (SET UP), 22, 23 AND 24TH.** Call **Lucile Lively 655-0971** or **Scott Busby 860-9533.**

Again, it's fun and easy work! That's all for now... I've got to cover my plants.

**Ann 531-0463**

**SACXS General Meeting Minutes – January 22, 2004**

Anne Dickey called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm by welcoming everyone back and wishing everyone successful New Year. Ann passed out the new member packets that contain information about the club history, the membership directory and a copy of the bylaws.

Joann reported that the treasury currently contains \$8,226.11; Ann reminded the members that some of these funds are already designated for future projects. Ann announced that the Garden sale will take place on March 11, 12, and 13; sign-up sheet for workers will be passed at the next meeting.

A detailed discussion about the April Show and Sale followed. Lucile Lively reviewed the rules for showing plants and challenged new members to submit plants to the amateur category. She also displayed the Succulent Resource Book and requested members to recruit advertisers for the book. Set up date for the show will be on Wed. April 21. Ann introduced Scott Busby, as the show chairman.

Claude Townsend offered to help new members repot and prepare their plants for entry into the judging.

Ann recognized member Antonio Garcia as the youngest member of the club and awarded him with a book on Cacti and Succulents.

Ann Dickey gave the five-minute talk; her topic was the cactus genus *Consolea* or "Road Kill Cactus."

Susan Tracy, speaker for the evening, gave an excellent presentation on Ferns and Fern Allies with a focus on xeric ferns. She had many interesting photos of native ferns and also showed live fern specimens and ferns that she has propagated.

Barbara Shultz asked for members to bring native Texas species to the next meeting for donation to the Botanical Center xeric garden that the club is sponsoring.

The plant auction and raffle followed. The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.

--Ann Black

**ANNOUNCING!!!**

**PAUL'S DESERT 10TH ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE**

!!!fun!!! NEW PLANTS LARGE SELECTION COLD HARDY

!!!fun!!! DISCOUNTS !!!fun!!! DOOR PRIZES

**LOTS OF FREE FOOD COME HUNGRY**

!!!fun!!! SUNDAY 21 MARCH 2004 12:00 - TILL DARK

200 SCHERTZ PARKWAY SCHERTZ TEXAS 78154

210.658.7561 !!!fun!!! EMAIL [paulsdesert@ev1.net](mailto:paulsdesert@ev1.net)

**PROGRAM: "Landscaping With Cacti" By Larry Fagarason**

Larry is a retired surgeon who has been a long time cactus enthusiast and hobbyist. He is the recognized Agave expert in the area, growing dozens of the species. He also operates a small landscaping firm called Western Hills Landscaping, specializing in native xeric gardens. His landscapes are easily recognizable in Kerrville because of the beautiful agaves, yuccas and cacti used in his unique hill country designs. He is past president of TACSS.

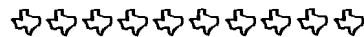
**FEBRUARY****REFRESHMENTS:**

\*Richard & Carol Blocker - 829-0585  
Ann & Jimmy Black – 830-336-2075  
Bill Bauta & Mary Bos  
Dawn & Chris Braune- 654-4594  
Scott Busby & Carol Duke - 860-9533

**AUCTION PLANTS**

\* Ernie Akers – 521-5772  
Joanne Anderson - 830-438-3347  
Steve Bailey – 227-5867  
Sara Baker – 653-1491  
Bar-Yadin – 289-3310 cell

Any Questions? Call Norma Tindall 695-8090. \* denotes Chairman – Who will call committee members to coordinate. The committee for refreshments brings the punch & snacks. SACXS furnishes everything else. Besides bringing refreshments, chairman & committee should see that the kitchen is left in the clean condition it was found in & garbage placed in containers outside the back door.  
**Proceeds from the raffle & auction plants help pay the rent.**

**Coming Events:**

March 11 – 13 > San Antonio Garden Center  
March 21 > Paul's Desert open house 12:00 noon til dark, 200 Schertz Pkwy  
March 27 – 28 > Zilker Garden Festival, Zilker Park, Austin  
April 3-4 > Austin Cactus & Succulent Soc. Show and sale at Zilker Park, Austin  
April 22 – 24 > San Antonio C & S Society show and sale, San Antonio Garden center  
May 22 > K.T.S.A. Festival of Flowers, Alzafar Shrine Temple, 901 N. Loop 1604  
September 4-6 > Austin C & S soc show & Sale, Zilker Park, Austin  
October 4 – 31 > Paul's Desert 3<sup>rd</sup> annual clearance sale nursery > 210-658-7561

**SACXS IS HOSTING THE TEXAS STATE SHOW AND SALE April 22, 23 & 24, 2004.**

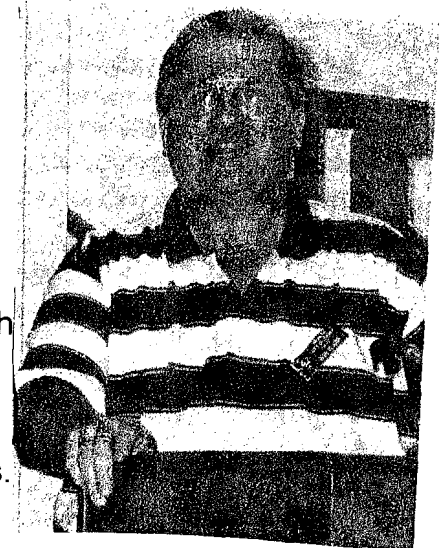
There is much work to be done and many hands are needed. It doesn't take much talent, just willingness and a desire to participate in the most important function of SACXS for the year. We want the quality of our show to continue to be the best. Those members that have never entered a plant in the show have a special category, **NOVICE AWARD**. You may enter in this division for two years but you must enter five plants. The first place award is \$30. Second place award is \$20. and third place award is \$10.00. However, you can enter 1 to 20 plants in Division I and II. I challenge you to enter at least one plant as the saying goes (just to get your feet wet). The first time is a little scary and believe me we all felt the same way and that is why we are willing to help you choose, prepare and fill in the paperwork. Bring plants to the Feb. meeting and ask for help. You can call me anytime at 210-655-0971 and I will be happy to answer questions and help you. Lucile Lively

## MEET A MEMBER

**Donald Clark**, who served as president of SACXS for two years, was born in Shreveport, Louisiana and grew up in Shreveport, Beaumont and San Antonio. He attended the U.T. at Austin and is now the Corporate Controller for Sanitors, Inc.

Don is married to Jeannie who is a housewife/caregiver and a cacti nursery owner. They have four children, Jason, 29; Stephanie, 19; Ashley, 16 and John aged 14. He became interested in cacti through his wife and friends, Paul and Lisa Kibler.

His favorite cacti is the golden barrel and favorite succulent – the desert rose. Don's non-cacti related pastime is raising farm animals.



## Desert Rose



The **Adenium obesum**, (desert rose) is native to arid areas of Africa, especially to Madagascar. A "must own" plant. Desert Rose is excellent in pots especially for folks who 'kill everything' as it thrives with little care and will take major neglect.

Your Desert Rose will become larger, more interesting and more valuable every year. No two are alike from seed. Those you see in stores are often from cuttings and never develop classic character shapes.

Large specimens can run \$1 - \$2,000 for older plants with huge bases and a multitude of branches. More branches mean more flowers which are very attractive. Flowers are best during the warm months, but some flowering can occur any month of the year.

Desert rose is a succulent bush with thick fleshy branches. The 'obesum' name refers to the large fat base of the plant. Plants from seed have by far the best character. Many growers use branch cuttings for propagation which results in a greatly inferior plant because the base never develops properly (FAT), so don't be fooled.

It produces bean-like seed pods very similar to its cousin, the Madagascar palm's pods, but much thinner.

Desert Rose is very long lived, they may reach 200 years old or more, so your Desert rose may be in your family for many generations to come.

Extracted from [www.mgolinestore.com](http://www.mgolinestore.com)

## Healthy Roots and Watering

by Mary Parisi (Pacifica, Ca.)

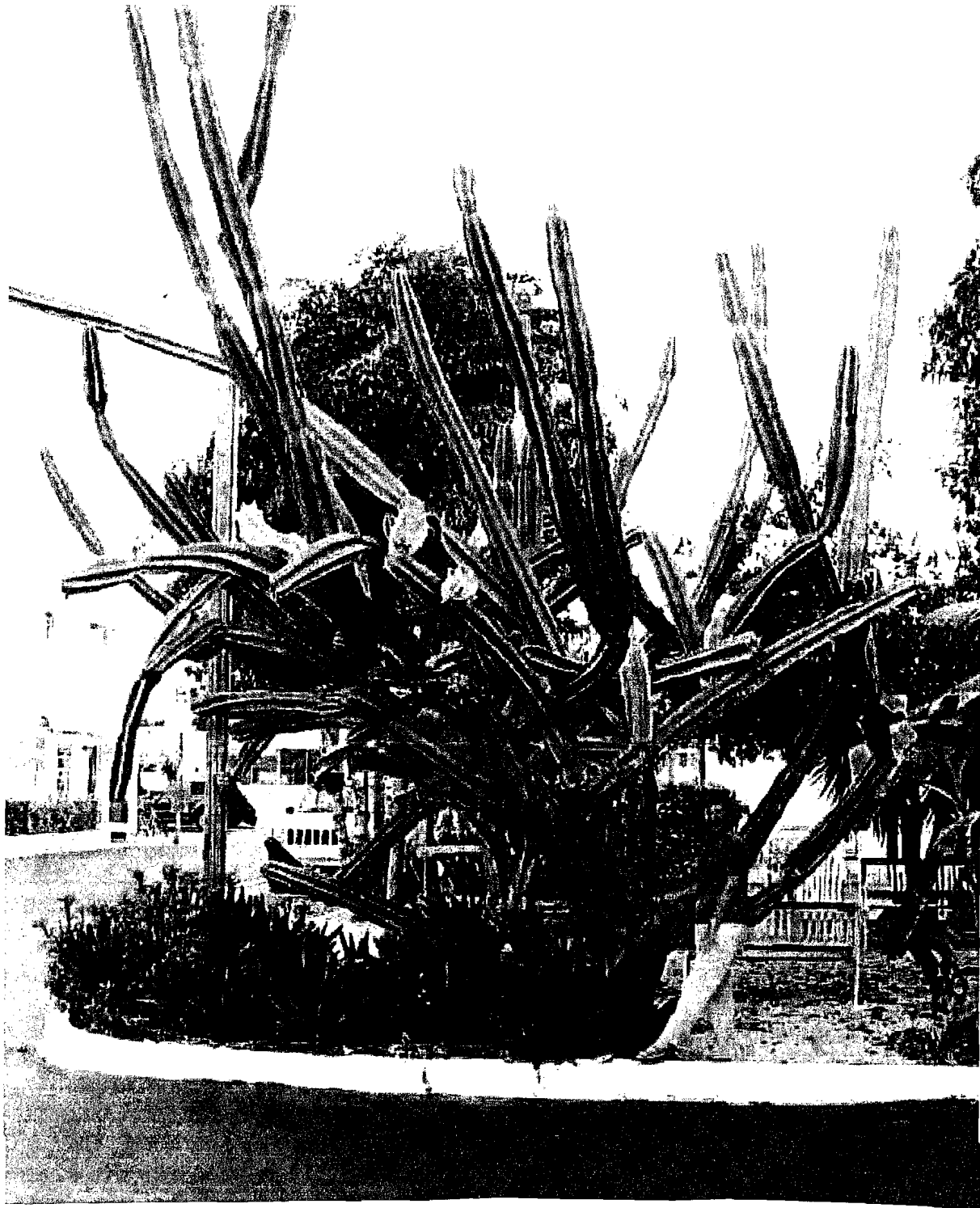
When a plant's growing media stays bone dry for long periods of time, a plant can lose its feeder roots. These handicapped plants have trouble absorbing water and nutrients and sit in wet soil with the threat of rotting. To make matters worse, plants grown in very small pots dry out very quickly putting feeder roots in jeopardy. I am always trying out new soils and currently testing a heavy soil made up of loam, sand and large gravel. This is very different from the 50%pumice 50% potting soil that I generally use. Many wild plants in nature are often found growing in fine soil combined with small stones. I believe that the stones are the key to success since they can open up the soil to allow for drainage and healthier roots. With heavy soils, it is very important to water lightly and to choose appropriately sized pots. To keep feeder roots healthy in heavy soil lightly water allowing soils to gently dry out in between waterings.

When a plant loses its feeder roots, I place the rootless victim(s) under my indoor grow lights and apply frequent but light watering (sometimes a spray twice a day). The warmth from the lights seems to encourage root development. Plants in habitat do not lose roots the way cultivated plants do, instead, roots die and re-grow just like some leaves do. In the field, many plants develop an underground stalk that doesn't rot out. In pot culture, an underground stalk can be a site for rot when a plant is overwatered. I also put ailing plants (plants which have lost all roots) in open pumice soils (or even pure pumice) after they have dried for a few days. Repotting can also traumatize fine roots and I tend to mist the repotted plants daily to aid water transport until the roots regrow. I still like small pots but only when a heavier soil is used. I like to use a pot that fits the root structure. Many succulents respond well to frequent light waterings. There are many variables that have to be taken into consideration: soil to pot size, pot type (plastic, high-fired clay, low fired clay...), weather, health, air temperature, humidity and root structure. Many succulents fare well when small amounts of moisture remain inside the pot while the surface of the soil is dried after a day or two. If the plant sits in wet soil for a long period then something is usually wrong with the whole plant-soil-pot combination. The plant may have lost its root structure or is dormant. In this situation, misting should be used to keep water contact light. As plants respond favorably to good watering practices, the roots will thrive giving the plant vigor and size. The stems thicken and roots age.

The old roots eventually die and decay furnishing another source of nutrition for the growing plant. I have seen Haworthia in the field that exhibit thick stalks growing deep into the ground--characteristic of old plants. These plants had many sets of roots and slowly lost them to regenerate new ones that continue to anchor the plant to the soil. Root loss is probably a normal part of the life cycle, much like the way some leaves die and are replaced by new ones. The problem occurs when the moisture balance is disrupted by partial or complete root loss or when root rot makes its way up a stem. Although it is interesting to consider how plants grow in nature, one must not forget that rot also occurs in nature. A grower friend once pointed out to me that when light colored gravel or pumice on the surface of his soil became darkish brown in color, this was an indication of problems beneath the soil: root loss and or rot. After hearing this, I tested this theory by selecting out plants for repotting (those with the most discoloration in top dressing) and I found that it was true. In almost every case there was evidence of root loss. Most of the plants were OK, but some had rot in the stem and required emergency surgery.

\*\*\*\*\*

from CSSA Archives



**Wouldn't you like to have this little cereus in your yard?**

**Claude Townsend took this picture of Eula in Marathon Keys, Florida.**

Happy Birthday!!

JOANNE ANDERSON 5<sup>TH</sup>, BOB BARTH - 10<sup>TH</sup>, LUCILLE POLAN - 12<sup>TH</sup>  
LUCILE LIVELY - 20<sup>TH</sup>, PAUL KIBLER 24<sup>TH</sup>, LISA KIBLER - 28<sup>TH</sup>

**Welcome two New Members!!!! Lee Miller & Samuel Rodgers**



**RECEIVED BY E-MAIL**

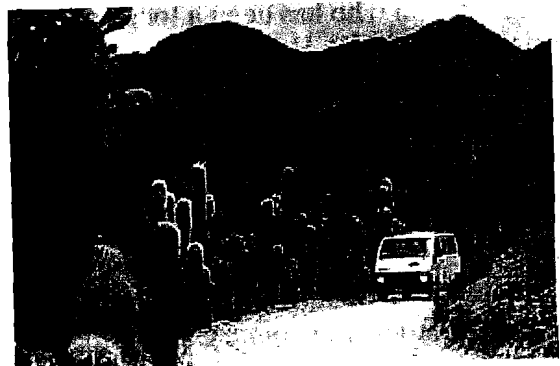
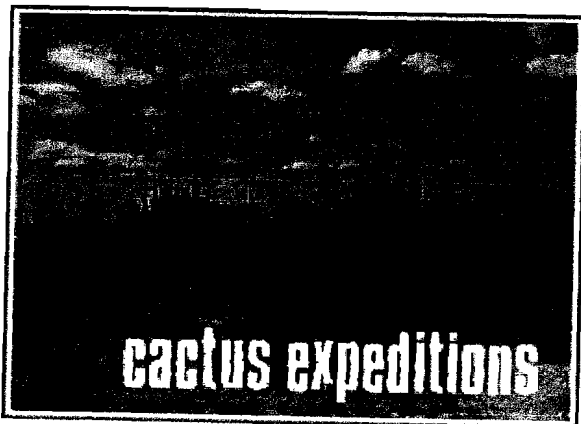
My name is Guillermo Rivera, I am from Cordoba Argentina, and organize trips and expeditions in northern Argentina to see cactus in their habitat.

More than 100 species of cactus were seen in our last tour in October 2003. Sixteen people, (Americans and French), participated in our last expedition.

Twelve days, all inclusive 925 Euros (ground transportation, hotels, park fees, all meals included),. Please visit [www.cactusexpeditions.com.ar](http://www.cactusexpeditions.com.ar) for additional information, itinerary, list of species and dates. You can contact me directly at [rivera@intecar.com.ar](mailto:rivera@intecar.com.ar)

Thank you

Guillermo Rivera  
South America Cactus Expeditions



A Monthly Publication Dedicated to the Admiration, Study and Proliferation of Cacti & Succulents  
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"Diplomacy is the art of letting other people have your way" from Words To Live By

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