

SACXS Facts

Newsletter for the San Antonio Cactus and Xerophyte Society

February 2009

Visit us at www.sacxs.org

Volume 21, Number 2

"The San Antonio Cactus and Xerophyte Society was organized in 1977 to promote the study, propagation, conservation and public awareness of cacti and other succulent plants."

President's Message

If you weren't there, you missed it!!



We had another wonderful program in January with a great turnout of 43 members and guests. Richard Blocker demonstrated his signature methods on how to make one plant turn into 100. Richard has years of experience propagating plants from seeds, cuttings, and grafts. There were many questions and lots of interest in this special topic. Thanks Richard for a wonderful program!

There are several important club events scheduled for the next two months. At the February meeting we will have an interactive program on how to prepare your plants for the Show and Sale in April. Experienced club members will be demonstrating how to get your plants ready to be shown and judged. Remember, that the number of plants required to be eligible for the sweepstakes contest this year has been reduced from 20 to 15. Also, there is now no show plant entry fee. So get involved and show your plants. Also at the February meeting we will talk about the "SACXS Show Guides". This concept was introduced at the January meeting. The SACXS Show Guides will be club members assigned to various duties during the Show & Sale including answering questions from the general public about xerophytes and providing information about the club. We will have buttons that say "SACXS Show Guide". Keep in mind that the Show and Sale is the annual club event used to promote interest in cacti and succulents for the San Antonio community and to spur interest in the club. We also use this as our main fundraiser, so everyone needs to become involved. There will be more about this at the meeting.

I'll also be looking for volunteers to help with the March program. If you have not heard, we will have book author and columnist Debra Lee Baldwin as a guest speaker. We are inviting the other Garden Center horticultural societies and the general public. As a result, we are expecting a much larger crowd than normal. Ms. Baldwin will be signing her book "Designing with Succulents", and the book will be available at a reduced cost. The March meeting social time will start at 6:30pm in order to accommodate this extra special event. The general meeting will start at 7:30pm as always. We will need volunteers for the March meeting to help with the plant raffle and to serve as hosts and hostesses.

Finally, I'll also be naming a nomination committee chairman at this meeting and will hope to have the committee hard at work seeking officers for next year.

Thanks *again* for your ongoing support and participation at club events. See you at the meeting on the 18th.

Jimmy

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Meeting Notes

**Next meeting:
Wednesday, February 18, at 7pm
At the San Antonio Garden Center
3310 N. New Braunfels Ave.**

**SACXS members Barbara Schulze & Paul Kibler will present:
“SACXS Show Prep: Getting Ready for the April Show and Sale”**

They will discuss:

- ✓ What makes a Show Plant a “show-able”
- ✓ How to Repot and Stage your Show Plants
- ✓ Completing Show Plant Entry Forms
- ✓ The Show Rules
- ✓ We’ll also be enrolling members as SACXS Show Guides
- ✓ Pick up your Fiesta Medals from Claude and Eula to sell for the club



Member Matters



February Refreshments

Cal Eichler 210-828-0833
Doug Coates 210-659-7279
Lucy Golla 210-661-2051
Jon & Debbie Kirk 830-980-5474
Al & Mary Eisenmenger 830-632-5447

February Auction

Bill Bauta 210-497-1362
Gerald & Sidney Yarbrough 210-435-7057
Pedro & Sonya Lozano 210-541-9521
Ernie Akers 210-521-5772 210-738-9200
Paul Kibler 210-658-7561

Welcome new SACXS members! Please contact me if you are not receiving the newsletter or would like back issues of SACXS FACTS:

Ann Black
annblack@gvtc.com

Mark Your Calendars

February 18, 2009—General SACXS Meeting
“Show Prep., Getting Ready for the April Show and Sale”

S.A. Garden Center Plant Sale—Friday & Saturday March 13-14. 9am-4pm

March 18, 2009—General SACXS Meeting-Open to the Public
“Designing with Succulents”; Speaker: Debra Lee Baldwin

April 23- 25, 2009—SACXS Show and Sale

May 20, 2009—General SACXS Meeting -“Agaves, Yuccas & Related
Plants”; Speaker: Mary Irish

You Are Invited to a Special Occasion...

**The San Antonio Cactus and Xerophyte Society’s
Spring Meeting**

Wednesday, March 21, 2009

At the San Antonio Garden Center

3310 N. New Braunfels Ave.

***Guest Speaker:* Debra Lee Baldwin**

***Topic:* “Using Succulents in Your Home & Garden Landscapes”**



Award-winning garden photojournalist Debra Lee Baldwin is a renowned expert on succulents and drought-resistant landscape design. Debra writes monthly garden columns for *San Diego Home/Garden* magazine, and is a regular contributor to the *Los Angeles Times*, the *San Diego Union Tribune*, *Sunset* magazine and other publications. Her book, *Designing with Succulents* -- which is in its third printing, spent 19 straight weeks on Amazon's list of the top ten bestselling gardening books. It is Amazon's Editor's Choice Best Book of 2007 in the Home & Garden category. Mrs. Baldwin will show gorgeous photos of creative design ideas, and explain how these easy-care, sculptural plants -- which store water in fleshy leaves to withstand drought -- are perfect for Texas gardens, in applications that range from firewise landscapes to patio containers. Her presentation will be followed by Q&A.

Social time and Book signing begin at 6:30pm

Presentation begins at 7:30 PM

If you would like to volunteer to help at the meeting contact

Ann Black

830-336-4471

annblack@gvtc.com

CACTUS RECIPES

Adapted from the CSSA Cactus Cook Book,
Published in 1971

The fruit of opuntias are called "tunas" and can be used to make delicious jelly, syrup and wine. Tunas can be added to salads and deserts, but must be carefully prepared. Singe or scrub off stickers on fruit with a brush. Wash the fruit well and cut into halves.



No Sugar Cactus Jelly

1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon unflavored gelatin
1 teaspoon cornstarch
Dash of salt (optional)
1 cup PRICKLY PEAR CACTUS JUICE
2 cups granulated sugar substitute

In a small saucepan, mix together the first four ingredients until smooth. Stir cactus juice. Stirring constantly, heat to a full boil and boil for two minutes. Remove from heat, stir in granulated sugar substitute. Store in refrigerator in sterilized jar. Makes one cup of jelly.

Joshua Punch

One CACTUS PEAR
3 ounces Vodka
3 ounces grapefruit juice
Squeeze of lime
Dash of grenadine
1cup finely cracked ice
Pinch of sugar (optional)



Cut up peeled prickly pear and place in blender with the remaining ingredients; cover and blend on high speed for 10 seconds. Pour into glasses, strained or unstrained as desired. Makes two drinks.

Cactus Pear Sorbet (recipe from epicurious.com)

8 cactus pears (about 3 pounds total)
3 cups sugar and 3 cups water
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice, or to taste

In a saucepan bring sugar and water to a boil, stirring, and boil until sugar is completely dissolved. Cool syrup. (Syrup may be made 1 week ahead and chilled, covered.) Line a baking sheet with plastic wrap. Wearing rubber gloves, wash cactus pears and with paper towels rub off any prickly fuzz left on skin. Halve cactus pears lengthwise and with a spoon carefully scoop flesh with seeds into a blender, leaving thick shells intact. Add syrup and lime juice to blender and purée until smooth. Pour cactus-pear purée through a fine sieve into a bowl and discard seeds. Put cactus shells on baking sheet and freeze while making sorbet. Freeze purée in an ice-cream maker. Scoop sorbet into frozen shells, smoothing surfaces so they are level. Freeze filled cactus shells at least 6 hours, or until frozen hard. Frozen sorbets in shells may be wrapped individually in plastic wrap and kept in freezer 1 week.



FUN FACT:

Calibanus hookeri is named after Shakespeare's monster Caliban in "The Tempest". *Calibanus hookeri* is also known as the "Mexican Boulder". *Calibanus hookeri* can be grown as a specimen caudiciform or it can be used as a landscape plant. *Calibanus hookeri* is native to the mountains of Northern Mexico. The Mexican Boulder is hardy when temperatures dip into the single digits. *Calibanus hookeri* flowers rarely, the male and female flowers appear on different plants. The flowers are insignificant and are buried in the foliage. *Calibanus hookeri* is related to the Agave and Dasylirion and is in the *Nolinaceae* family. (Sources: californiagardens.com and Wickipedia)

Please send your photos, announcements and other items of interest to the
SACXS Facts Newsletter editor: Ann Black, annblack@gvtc.com

Cactus & Succulent Society of America

2009 CSSA Convention in TUCSON

April 10 - 15, 2009

The official host of the 2009 CSSA Convention is the Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society. TCSS will be celebrating its 50th anniversary as an organization in 2009, and for their Golden anniversary they have a special present for all guests at the convention. The convention schedule is awesome and so are the field trips.

<http://2009.tucsoncactus.org>

THE BACK PAGE

Announcements, requests and other club stuff.



**Wanted: Old 2005 SACXS fiesta medals. Will pay cash.
Contact Claude 210-655-8959 ctownsend@satx.rr.com**

Paul's Desert is having our 15th Annual Open House on Sunday, March 22, 2009, from 12:00 until dark. There will be a 20% discount on most plants. We will also be discounting prices on our collection of Native American Art. Food will be served, including Lisa's famous spaghetti dinner, appetizers, and special homemade desserts, so come hungry!!! This is a great opportunity to meet with old friends and make new ones. If you have not been to one of our open house events, we encourage you to do so...you will not be disappointed. We have more inventory now than in the past. We hope to see you! R.S.V.P. requested, but not required. Thank you, Paul & Elisa
Paul's Desert

**200 Schertz Parkway
Schertz, Texas 78154
210-658-7561**

info@paulsdesert.com

www.paulsdesert.com

**Jimmy and Ann Black will be exhibitors at the
San Antonio Home and Garden Show
Friday February 27 2pm to 10-m
Saturday February 28, 10am to 8pm
Sunday March 1, 11am to 6pm**

For details and a discount coupon visit

<http://www.sanantoniohomeshows.com/>

**Or see Jimmy and Ann for more details
...and YES—we *will* be selling xerophytes!!**

Please send your photos, announcements and other items of interest to the
SACXS Facts Newsletter editor: Ann Black, annblack@gytc.com