



The Spine

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE MIDWEST CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY



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CSSA News

Following the December election, the Board welcomed William Wilk, Peter Walkowiak and Vince Basta as new directors.

CSSA is pleased to announce that the July 2019 convention will be held in San Luis Obispo with the enthusiastic support of the Central Coast Cactus and Succulent Society. The dates and other details will be announced as soon as contracts are confirmed.

CSSA Journal Editor Tim Harvey has compiled a compendium of articles on aloes that will be sold at the CSSA online shop soon. If well received, this will be followed by compendia of Journal articles on other popular succulent families.

2018 Plant Show and Sale Details

It's time once again for the annual MWCSS plant show and sale! Dates and times for the show and sale are **Saturday, March 24, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, March 25, from noon to 5 p.m.** Note that everyone working the show must arrive earlier than the advertised start time both days. Please see today's email from Karen for specific information. Setup is Friday, March 23.

It will once again be held at the Cleveland Botanical Garden (CBG), but this year is different than in years past because our club event will not be in conjunction with the Big Spring event; rather, we have our own designated weekend and have most of the Garden to utilize, which also means a different layout for this year. Member vendors will be set up in Clark Hall and non-member vendors will be set up in Woodland Hall. Note that Woodland Hall vendors are responsible for collecting their own money.

Show details were discussed during the club's February regular meeting. Those not in attendance, or even those who were, can reference information that Karen recently sent out via email (an email was sent out on 3/12, and then there is additional information contained in today's email attachment).

This year, Club President Bill Hendricks will present "Succulents are Sexy" at 2:30 p.m. both days in the Duncan Room on the second floor.

Regarding parking, it is preferred that members do not park in the CBG parking garage; rather, free parking is available at The Cleveland Museum of Art garage or on the street. Note: The Cleveland Museum of Natural History garage is charging a fee.

Everyone's participation is critical for making this year's Spring Show and Sale the biggest and best one yet! The club's Facebook page alone indicates that more than 4,5000 guests are interested in attending, so all hands need to be on deck!

As a reminder, boxes are requested (for customers to carry out their plants), so please be sure to stock some away and bring them with you.

If any club members have questions regarding the show and sale, please reach out to Karen Snell at kdsnell@roadrunner.com.

Thank you to all club members participating this year (selling plants, having your personal collection plants on display, helping out the day[s] of the event, etc.). This event would not be possible without you.

Club Member Spotlight:

Jeff Havel



By: Melissa Mezgec

You could say gardening has always been in his blood. It might sound cliché, but as a third-generation grower/seller, it literally has been.

From the time he was little, Jeff Havel of Havel's Flowers and Greenhouse in Mentor always knew he wanted to be in the horticultural industry. He would help out around his grandparents' greenhouse and business, whether it was labeling Hostas or assisting with floral items. "My grandparents were very hard workers, being at the greenhouse/store 24/7." Both their strong work ethic and love for plants inspired him (as do his parents' hard work and dedication to the family business).

Around the age of six or seven, he received a cactus garden from his aunt with a decorative figurine. This garden contained Haworthias, and this plant struck an interest in Jeff. "I like that they are forgiving if you don't take care of them as much as you should. There are also a wide variety to choose from, and they multiply quickly," he said. Still today, Haworthias are Jeff's favorite (not only succulent plant but favorite overall plant).

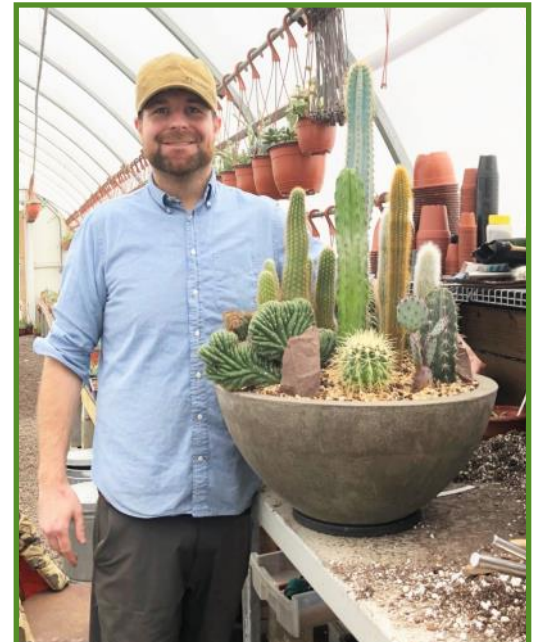
Other plants that catch Jeff's eye (both indoor and outdoor) are variegated types. "They are a little harder to find, and they are more unique."

Jeff has been in the club for four years and enjoys many aspects of it. "I enjoy networking, meeting new members and seeing what they collect and are into," he said. "I enjoy listening to how others care for their plants. It has helped shape what I do with my family business and has changed the way I grow my plants."

He enjoys partaking in the club's trips—most notably his trip to Tempe, AZ last summer for the Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA) biennial convention. "I liked going on the private garden tours and seeing what collectors in Arizona had in their collections." He said the event's show and sale was notable as well, as there were a great variety of plants and pots that were for sale (10-15 vendors). He also enjoyed the trip to Stan Hywet Hall and Gardens.

When his hands aren't in the dirt planting, he enjoys collecting antique items, such as locks (padlocks), miniature souvenir buildings (such as the Cleveland Terminal Tower), glass toy marbles, pocket knives, oil cans and various miniature collectibles. He has a curio cabinet displaying these items.

When it comes to helping to run his family business, Jeff loves working outdoors and inside the green-



Jeff Havel

house, and even more so helping customers pick and design plants for their garden or landscaping. "I enjoy watching customers get excited about plants."

For this month's show and sale, Jeff will have thousands of plants to sell, which will be his biggest sales event to date. Please see photo spread on the following page for a sampling (a large one at that) of those plants that Jeff will be selling. Note that cacti, succulents and hundreds of other plant varieties are always available for sale at his family's store—Havel's Flowers and Greenhouses (which has been in operation since 1936), at 9294 Mentor Ave. in Mentor.

Jeff was recently featured on New Day Cleveland. Check out his segment [here](#) on how he describes the many wonderfully colorful varieties of cacti and succulents, as well as promoting the show and sale.

Connect with Jeff on Instagram at [Hfg_succulents](#).

Club Member Spotlight (con't.) - Jeff Havel

Photos by Melissa Mezgec



Consider These Sansevierias

By Beverly Dahms

Everyone is familiar with the ubiquitous and resilient *Sansevieria trifasciata* var. *Laurentii* with its three-to-four-foot-long sword-shaped leaves and yellow margins. The genus *Sansevieria* includes multiple more-compact varieties deserving to be in your collection. Some of them are relatively small or have a habit so unlike *S. tri. var. Laurentii* that at first they may not be recognizable as *Sansevierias*. The following, with one exception, share the same undemanding care requirements we associate with the genus. All are slow growing and can be kept in a four-to-six-inch pot, with the exception of *Mason Congo*.

Sansevierias are tropical plants and more sensitive to cold than many of the other succulents we grow. They will not thrive in temperatures much below 50 degrees Fahrenheit. *Sansevieria Hahnii* hybrids are susceptible to rot if kept below 65 degrees Fahrenheit, particularly if the soil is kept too moist. No *Sansevieria* should be kept near a cold window during Cleveland winters.

S. PINGUICULA (Fig. 1) resembles an agave at first glance. Its attractive rosettes have short, thick grayish leaves, each bearing a fierce terminal spine. Offset rosettes form an inch or more from the parent plant, connected to it by an above-ground fibrous cord. As the slowly forming thick aerial roots develop, the offset rosette appears to walk on stilts.

S. KIRKII VAR. *PULCHRA* (Fig. 2) has semi-horizontal flat leaves with a distinctive mottled appearance. The background color of the leaves is dark green, which contrasts with prominent white or grayish blotches. One cultivar, var. 'Coppertone' has pink-tan mottling under good light. Mottling is found in other *Sansevierias* but is not as well defined.

S. HALLII (Fig. 3) is commonly known as "Baseball Bat" since its one-to-two-foot-long vertical leaves are distinctly thick, rigid and so hard they feel almost woody. The leaf shape is round like a baseball bat except for a broad, shallow channel extending the entire length of the leaf. An unexpectedly long, graceful and sweetly scented flower forms under ideal conditions and makes a stark contrast to the burly leaves.

S. TRIFASCIATA 'FUTURA' varieties (Fig. 4) are easily recognized as more compact relatives of *S. tri. var. Laurentii* and probably originated as a sport of that plant. Leaves are flat, wider than the more-common plant and usually only 10 or 12 inches long. Hybridizers have produced varieties with several prominent and wide yellow vertical stripes.

S. MASONIANA, AKA *MASON CONGO* (Fig. 5) slowly grows very large leaves up to four-feet tall and six-inches wide. Leaves are flat, very hard and slightly mottled. It is included here because a mature plant makes an architectural statement in the corner of a room and is even less demanding of care than *S. tri. var. Laurentii*.

The first *Trifasciata Hahnii* (Fig. 6), a.k.a. bird's nest *Sansevieria*, arose as a dwarf green sport of *S. tri. var. Laurentii* in the 1940s and has been extensively hybridized ever since. The attractive three-to-six-inch-tall rosettes of the commonly found plant have a spiral arrangement of soft, flat spineless leaves with faint gray crossbanding. Numerous more colorful (and expensive!) hybridized varieties are available: several 'Silver *Hahnii*' (gray), with and without stripes, and many vertically striped varieties with yellow or white margins including *Hahnii Marginated*, *Hahnii Variegated*, *Golden Hahnii*, *Lime Dwarf*, *Jade Marginated*, *Crosby's Marginated*, *Streaker* and on and on. The variegated forms are not as robust and long lived as most *Sansevierias*. As noted above, they are particularly sensitive to chill and susceptible to rot if overwatered or not given enough light. However, they are so attractive that collecting them may become addictive. Photo credit for figure six: Google



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6

NE Ohio Outdoor Spring Events to Visit



March 31

Adult Gardening 2-3 p.m.

Lehman's

Dalton, OH

<https://www.lehmans.com/>

April 21

Kids' Gardening 2-3 p.m.

Lehman's

Dalton, OH

<https://www.lehmans.com/>

April 28-29

Wayne County Home and Garden Show 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

www.woosterchamber.com

May 25-28

Strawberry Festival

Main St., Norwalk, OH

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1952917151621807/>

Other Venues

There are always events happening at the Cleveland Botanical Garden, as well as the Holden Arboretum. Check out the below websites for ongoing spring events:

<https://www.cb garden.org/calendar-of-events.aspx>

www.holdenarb.org/visit/



In Memoriam...

Recently, our club lost two members who have been with the club for eight years.

Gordon Beals

On 11/25/17, Gordon Beals of Dalton passed away on his way home from the November club meeting.

Gordon was a retired Akron-area high school teacher and biology professor at WVU in Ripley.

He grew up in Barberton, OH and is survived by his 90-year-old sister from West Virginia.



Gordon Beals

Gordon was a very friendly and caring person, especially to the Amish, to whom he was close. He always had a smile on his face. His absence is definitely felt in our club; he is greatly missed. ❤️

Bob Olekson

On 1/24/18, Bob Olekson of Parma passed away after a lengthy stay in the hospital.

Bob was a member of several-area horticultural clubs. He not only had a great collection of cacti and succulents, but he also was an avid book collector (having a couple of hundred!). Needless to say, he enjoyed reading.



Bob Olekson

Bob was also into handwriting analysis and belonged to a coin club.

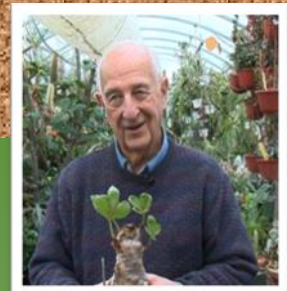
Bob traveled to many Eurasian countries and knew their basic languages. Closer to home, he worked for the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections.

Bob was a great asset to the club. He enjoyed working the club's yearly Show and Sale event, and he will be with us in spirit next week. ❤️

Got Content?

Got an idea for a newsletter article? Have some fabulous plants from your home collection that you'd like to showcase in the newsletter? Contact Melissa Mezgec at Melissa415@hotmail.com to get your content/photos in the next quarterly newsletter!

From the President's Desk...



Bill Hendricks, club president

The past year has gone by very quickly and once again we are only days away from our annual show and sale at CBG. It takes a lot of cooperation to make this event a success. It was exciting for me at last year's show to be surrounded by so many enthusiastic people willing to help. Did everything happen as planned? Not exactly. We met obstacles and adjusted.

Mike and the committee have put a great effort into the planning for this show and had great communication and response from Pat Roberts and the staff at CBG. Will everything go as planned? We hope so. It is likely that there will be challenges that we will face, as every show and every audience is different. The committee has done a great job of planning. Kathy has once again gotten the message out through Facebook and Karen continues to keep all of us informed and taking care of many of the small details needed in preparation to make the show a success.

If we are prepared to make adjustments to our plans as needed for the show and work together as we did last year, we will have the best and most-exciting show ever!

In this issue, Beverly talks about Sansevieria, and many of these plants will be available at this year's show. Sansevieria make great houseplants thriving in lower-light situations. Beverly has shown her expert-growing ability with great specimens that she grows in her home along with some of the best Haworthias I have ever seen.

Remember to groom your best plants and display them with pride on the show tables. With the expanded areas provided by the botanical garden there will be plenty of room to exhibit. We want to show the public the diversity of plants that are grown by our members.

Bring your extra plants for the sale. I have heard from members of the Michigan, Connecticut and Columbus clubs that are planning on attending our show and especially looking forward to the 1000s of plants that will be available at the sales tables.

Cacti and succulents are extremely popular and I have given two talks this month to other groups about them. I was asked to talk about growing hardy cacti and succulents at a Sustainability Conference at Holden Arboretum for landscape and design professionals and also to master gardeners at Lakeland Community College where they annually get more than 200 people attending their day-long program. These were great opportunities to promote our annual show and sale and invite them to join our club.

I look forward to seeing all of you in a few days at CBG to share our passion for the plants we grow!



Book Nook—*Spring Edition*

Spring is here, and what better time of year to start transitioning your plants from the indoors to the great outdoors? Most plant lovers enjoy having the exterior of their home, or even apartment, adorned with beautiful plants. It not only makes them feel happy, but it is very welcoming for guests as well. If you are looking for some fresh ideas, check out "Designing with Succulents" by Debra Lee Baldwin. This book explains how to select, care for and combine hundreds of varieties of succulent and companion plants into eye-catching and easy-to-care-for gardens, both large and small.

Want more information about transplanting your plants in the spring? Be sure to read this online article titled "[Caring for your Succulents in the Spring.](#)" It provides great detail on propagation and other valuable content (with video and photos).

Mid-States Cactus & Succulent CONFERENCE



**June 21-24,
2018**

**St. Louis,
Missouri**

REGISTER NOW!

See Full Event Information at
www.hscactus.org/mid-states

Displays & Sales • Programs • Tours

JOIN US IN ST. LOUIS!

Henry Shaw Cactus & Succulent Society invites you to attend the 16th Biennial Mid-States Cactus & Succulent Conference in St. Louis. Expect diverse presentations, plenty of plants and a bit of local flavor.

SPEAKERS

The Mid-States Conference will feature an entertaining and informative mix of program content featuring:

- Chuck Hanson
- Dan Mahr
- Woody Minnich
- Judy Pigue
- Rob Wallace
- Neal Bohlman
- Joe Merkelbach
- Pam Schnebelen
- Tracy Vymola

FIELD TRIPS

Tour Missouri Botanical Garden's famous herbarium, library and select research greenhouses in several rotating groups. Plan to visit some of St. Louis' other exciting attractions, too.

VENDORS

Enjoy a wide selection of plants, pots and more from:

- Cactus Data Plants – New Mexico
- Chaos Cactus – Oklahoma
- J & J Cactus and Succulents – Oklahoma
- Drummond Nursery – Missouri
- Carol Wichern Ceramics – Missouri

CONFERENCE HOTEL

The conference will be held at the Drury Inn & Suites near world-famous Forest Park. Special conference rates include free hot breakfast, 5:30 Kickback® and Wi-Fi. Use conference code #2299339 and save when you contact Drury Inn at www.druryhotels.com or 800-325-0720.

REGISTER NOW

Visit www.hscactus.org/mid-states or contact HSCSS President Mike Hellmann at 618-444-7860 or cactus1803@yahoo.com for further information.

Quarterly Calendar of Events



March 2018

MWCSS Show and Sale Event

- Friday, March 23 — Setup
- Saturday, March 24 — 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- Sunday, March 25 — Noon - 5 p.m.

April 2018

April 15; 1 p.m. at Cleveland Botanical Garden

Program: Hypertufas by Kathy Smith; also, a recap of the show and sale

*****No May meeting, see below*****

June 2018

June 3; 1 p.m. at Kim Stehli's in Broadview Heights—see forthcoming information from Karen Snell for further detail/directions. **NOTE:** This is a joint meeting with the Indoor Gardening Society — Cleveland Chapter

Program: Pests and Diseases by Tim Malinich

MWCSS Mission:

Cactus and succulent collectors and hobbyists helping each other succeed.

New Membership Information:

Contact Karen Snell at kdsnell@roadrunner.com for new membership info.

Other Club Resources:

www.mwcss.com—Fresh content is always needed for the club's website. Email Tim at timj@hearthstonefarm.net.

<https://www.facebook.com/mwcss/>—Fresh content is always needed for the club's Facebook page. Email Kathy at kesmith913@gmail.com.

MWCSS Club Officers:

Bill Hendricks—Club president

Tim Malinich—Club vice president/webmaster

Karen Snell—Club secretary/treasurer

Melissa Mezgec—Club newsletter writer/editor/designer

Kathy Smith—Club publicity (Facebook page)/CBG affiliate

General Club Meeting Information

The MWCSS generally meets the third Sunday of each month at 1 p.m. at the Cleveland Botanical Gardens (CBG) in the Smith Classroom (unless otherwise noted). Directions are below.

For exact monthly meeting information, see Karen Snell's email she sends out monthly.

CBG Directions

11030 East Blvd.,
Cleveland, OH 44106

CBG is in the University Circle/Wade Park area of Cleveland, five miles east of downtown.

From I-90 Lakeshore Memorial Freeway: Exit at Martin Luther King Drive and go south on MLK.

Cross E. 105th and take right curve. Turn left on Jephtha (at art museum) to Wade Oval.

CBG is across the park and at the end of East Blvd.

