



The Spine



A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE MIDWEST CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Fall 2018

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Summer Event Recaps

Although there were no club meetings during the summer months, there were a few events in which some club members partook. See the below event recap, as well as one on the following page.

Mid-States Cactus & Succulent Conference

Club member Jeff Havel attended the Mid-States Cactus & Succulent Conference (hosted by the Henry Shaw Cactus & Succulent Society) in Saint Louis, MO this past June. The multi-day event featured guest speaker presentations, plant displays and sales, and a field trip to the Missouri Botanical Garden. Below are some photos from the conference.



CSSA Website Re-Design

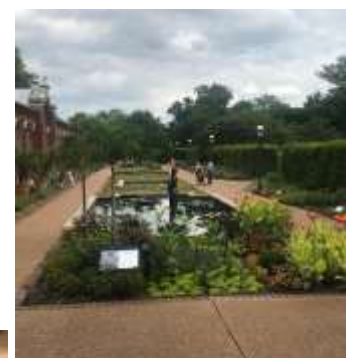
Recently, the Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA) did an overhaul of its website.

Click [here](#) to check out the sleek, new and-improved look.

While you're at it, take a moment to subscribe or renew your membership.

Also, see the last page of this newsletter for more CSSA content, including information on the 2019 Biennial Convention (to be held in July).

Got content? Contact Melissa at Melissa415@hotmail.com for inclusion in the next newsletter issue.



NE Ohio Outdoor Fall Events to Visit



Holden Arboretum

Continuous fall events—Please check out the calendar of events below:

<http://www.holdenarb.org/visit/calendar/>

Cleveland Botanical Garden

Continuous fall events—Please check out the calendar of events below:

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

Ocktoberfest at the Wolf Creek Grist Mill in Mohican—Sept. 29

<https://www.ohiotraveler.com/oktoberfest-at-the-mill/>

Old West Pumpkin Fest at Rockin' R Ranch in Columbia Station—Weekends In October

<https://www.ohiotraveler.com/old-west-pumpkin-fest-rockin-r-ranch/>

Medina Candlelight Walk— Medina—Nov. 16—18

<https://www.ohiotraveler.com/medina-candlelight-walk/>



Summer Event Recaps (Con't.)

Groovy Plants Ranch Trip

On June 23, club members carpoled to Groovy Plants Ranch in Marengo, OH to partake in the ranch's big Summer Solstice Succulent Celebration. A great variety of plants were available, and guest speakers gave interesting presentations. One of the featured speakers was our very own Club President Bill Hendricks.

After an awesome day of shopping and learning, club members ate dinner at the Der Dutchman in Bellville. This trip is becoming an annual event favorite!



Club Member Spotlight(s): Mike and Christie Briggs

Article and Photos by Kathy Smith (Taken from the club's Facebook page)



This time we stopped by the home of club members Christie Briggs and Michael Briggs to check out their greenhouse (almost one year old) and their unique collection of cacti and succulents.

They have been members of the club for about six years, but their interest in succulents goes much longer than that. Christie's favorites are the interesting, and sometimes odd-looking, Euphorbia species.

The couple has traveled to Arizona and California in search of rare and unusual varieties... that can be a challenge to grow at times (but that's half the fun).

Their collection started like most succulent growers do, growing the plants in every available sunny window. When they outgrew that, the next step was a greenhouse. Christie has resisted the urge to fill it up all at once...but as we know, it's hard to pass up a plant to add to the collection. There is a beautiful and diverse variety of succulents and cacti in her collection.

Tip of the Day: Christie puts chop sticks in her pots to monitor the moisture level of the soil... when you pull the stick out you can see if it is wet or dry, and then water accordingly.

They have also done a beautiful job decorating their back yard with succulents, both in the ground and in containers (hardy and tender). Christie also has a nice collection of carnivorous plants; check out the large *Nepenthes* 'Miranda'!

Be sure to follow her Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/briggsgreenhouse/> where she posts pics of her collection.



Club members Mike and Christie Briggs inside their greenhouse.

Enjoy the photos of their collection below, and then continued on the following pages.



Photos: Top: A welcome sign greets visitors to their greenhouse. **Right:** Christie proudly shows off her *Nepenthes Miranda*.



Club Member Spotlight(s) (Continued): Mike and Christie Briggs



Club Member Spotlight(s) (Continued): Mike and Christie Briggs



Competition Winner: Shawn Murdock

A big “congratulations” goes out to club member Shawn Murdock in winning several ribbons for his cacti and succulents at the Cuyahoga Fair 2018 Plant Exhibit over the summer. His results were as follows (per category):

- Opuntia – First place
- Mammillaria – First place
- Cactus garden – First place
- Cactus, any species – First place
- Notocactus – First place
- Echinocactus – First place
- Euphorbia – Second place

From the stunning photo to the right, it is no wonder that Shawn’s plants won! Congratulations, Shawn!



Bloomin’ Beautiful Night-Blooming Cereus

This past June, club member Jim Bell’s Night-Blooming Cereus put on a beautiful display. Check out the photos to the left: there were about 20 flower buds on the plant and eight of them bloomed.

He’s had the plant well over 10 years and says this is the most blooms he’s ever seen on this one!

Do you have an impressive plant to share with fellow club members? Send your photos to Melissa415@hotmail.com. Be sure to include the plant name, how long you have had it and where you purchased/received it!



How to Make Succulent Pumpkins



By Kathy Smith

Looking for a fall project that costs very little and will give you fabulous results? Try these succulent pumpkins!

I've done these for a couple years now and the best part is, you can find most of the supplies in your own back yard and craft stash. NO pumpkin carving required, which keeps your design fresh for several weeks.

Here are some items you will need:

1. Find a firm pumpkin, but be sure NOT to get one that has any soft spots, as it will rot faster. I look for 'mini pumpkins' that are three-to-five-inches across. Cut off the stem as low as you can without damaging the pumpkin.
2. Collect a variety of succulents. You can use tender succulent cuttings OR hardy succulents. Cut the stems close to the rosette OR use trailing plants for some added drama.
3. Other items needed: Spanish Moss (as a base for your design), other natural decor like twigs, pine cones, wheat, colorful moss, leaves, etc.
4. You'll need a hot glue gun; I use a low-temperature hot glue (on the LOW setting). Low-temp hot glue DOES NOT harm the plants.



Assembling the succulent pumpkin:

1. Take a small amount of Spanish Moss and form it into a loose disc shape (it's good if it hangs over the pumpkin a little); using the hot glue, glue it to the top of the pumpkin.
2. Glue your succulents to the moss by putting a dollop of hot glue on the bottom/center of each succulent. The glue sticks to the moss very quickly, so don't try to move things around or you'll pull off the moss. Depending on your design, you can choose larger rosettes, then fill in with other small succulents OR do a cluster of similar-sized plants.

Design Note: If you use sticks or wheat (or something taller), glue those on before adding any plants. It's too hard to add those after all the plants have been attached. Also, DO NOT stick anything into the pumpkin, as this will cause it to rot faster.

It's all about having fun with what you can find around your own home. I created these pumpkins (shown in the photo above) with plants and decor I already had, so all I had to purchase were the pumpkins. They will need some water to stay looking good; I spritz them with the plants once a week (don't drench them). Your succulent pumpkin should look good for up to eight weeks (or longer). When the pumpkin starts to rot, you can lift off the entire cluster of plants and place them in soil or pull off the individual plants to root and grow.

Once you start making these it's hard to stop...the good thing is that they make great gifts!

From the President's Desk...



Bill Hendricks, club president

Another summer has quickly come to an end. Plants that I moved into the garden for the summer did exceptionally well. One success was *Calandrina spectabilis* that I planted in the ground for the summer. I got a cutting from a plant growing in a landscape in Mendocino, CA a couple of years ago. The cutting rooted and grew well in the greenhouse but never bloomed. This year I planted it in the garden for the summer. The plant exploded into growth and by mid June it started to send up long stems with bud and flowers. The hot - pink flowers have continued all summer and are still sending buds on long stems that rise above the blue-green foliage. Another plant left in the greenhouse has grown well but again failed to bloom. The full-sun exposure brought out the flowers and also more-intense color in the foliage.

Moving plants out for the summer can bring color to succulent foliage impossible to get when they are left indoors. When planted in the garden they also grow more quickly, oftentimes becoming specimen-quality in a short period of time. Plants left in pots also benefit from an outdoor summer vacation. I will leave my plants outside at least until the middle of October and some even later. The cool nights will help set flower buds on many of the plants. I find Jade plants left outside until mid October set bud much better than plants left in the greenhouse all summer (they benefit from the cool night temperatures). The cool nights of October will also help set buds on many of the cacti next spring.



Sedum adolphii 'Firestorm'

If you have put plants out for the summer you have probably experienced some of this strong growth and color in your succulents. Kathy's article on making succulent pumpkins might be one way to use some of the extra plants and cuttings with vibrant colors for fall decorations. The book mentioned in the below Book Nook section, titled, "Succulents: The Ultimate Guide to Choosing, Designing and Growing 200 Easy Care Plants" (Sunset) by

Robin Stockwell, has other clever ideas and DIY projects.

In the greenhouse, the *Conophytums* and other winter growers are waking up and flowering while the summer growers are preparing for their winter rest. The summer jobs of transplanting and propagating are slowing and being replaced with transplanting the fall growers like *Haworthia* and *Adromischus*. Leaves of a very good but slow-growing form of *Adromischus marianae* fa. *herrei* that I removed for propagation last spring sat all summer, and in the last couple of weeks have rooted and burst into growth. Keep an eye on your plants—there is always something new going on and new things to learn. Happy Growing!



Book Nook — *Succulent Fall Harvest*

Fall is the perfect time of year for bonfires, hay rides and apple cider. It is also a fun time of year to create festive succulent decorations! Check out this website for some awesome ideas! <https://www.gardendesign.com/succulents/fall-for-succulents.html>

While on the subject of succulents, be sure to read up on them with "[Succulents: The Ultimate Guide to Choosing, Designing and Growing 200 Easy Care Plants](#)" by Robin Stockwell. This handbook highlights 200 of the easiest, most-useful and gorgeous plants, and provides advice on care and cultivation. Get inspired with new ways to use succulents in striking garden designs, containers, vertical walls and indoor arrangements (projects such as bouquets and terrarium ornaments included).

2018 Quarterly Calendar of Events



September

When: Sunday, Sept. 16

Time: 1 p.m.

Where: Klyn Nursery—3322 S. Ridge Road, Perry, OH 44081

What: Fall kickoff meeting—joint meeting—all local plant clubs and visitors are invited. Please arrive early and bring a side dish or dessert to share

Presentation: Club history by Bill Hendricks

Plant of the Month: Aloe

October

When: Sunday, Oct. 21

Time: 1 p.m.

Where: Cleveland Botanical Garden

What: Regular club meeting

Presentation: Proper watering techniques by Zoltan Onutz

Plant of the Month: Globose cactus (Halloween/pumpkin-shaped cactus)

November

When: Sunday, Nov. 18

Time: 1 p.m.

Where: Cleveland Botanical Garden

What: Regular club meeting

Presentation: Winter flowering succulents by TBA

Plant of the Month: Winter growers

Cactus and Succulent Society (CSSA) News

Membership Renewal

Have you renewed your membership lately to the Cactus and Succulent Society (CSSA)? It is easy and convenient to complete online. Visit the [CSSA website](#) and select the Membership tab. Follow the instructions from there.

2019 Biennial Convention

Mark your calendars to attend the CSSA 39th Biennial Convention, to be held July 17-20, 2019 in downtown San Luis Obispo, CA.

The main convention venue is the historic Veteran's Memorial Hall, which offers a relaxed, comfortable environment. This is right across the street from the Kinney Hotel (formerly the Holiday Inn Express), where convention attendees will stay.

Tours begin on the first day (July 17), and optional field trips will be offered July 21. There will be great speakers, plant and pottery vendors, live auction and silent auction, local sales area, an opening reception, and a Santa Maria-style barbecue banquet.

With its temperate weather and cool breezes, the Central California coast is a vacation wonderland, so you may want to extend your visit, as the hotel rates are extended and there are so many interesting things to do and see! Click [here](#) for further details.

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 kessmith913@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.

