



# DESERT BREEZE

NEWSLETTER OF THE TUCSON CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

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## MONTHLY MEETING PROGRAM

A BOTANICAL MYSTERY AND A JOURNEY THROUGH MEXICO

PRESENTED BY: TRISTAN J. DAVIS

In 2022, I was working on a research project about a newly discovered agave species—*Agave cryptica*—with my colleague, Greg Starr. It was an exciting find, tucked away in the mountains of northeastern Mexico. But as we studied the plant and its environment, something unusual popped up in the data—something that didn't quite make sense. Curious, we started digging deeper.

What began as a small question turned into a three-year journey across the rugged and beautiful landscapes of Mexico. As we explored, we uncovered even more surprising plant life and started piecing together a larger story—one that led to an unexpected and exciting discovery.

In my upcoming presentation, I'll share the full adventure—how we followed the clues, what we discovered, and the unforgettable places we visited along the way. The talk will include lots of photos from our fieldwork, highlighting the stunning plants and scenery we encountered.





# MEET THE PRESENTER

## MEET TRISTAN – EXPLORER, BOTANIST, AND DESERT ENTHUSIAST



Born into an adventurous, outdoors-loving family, Tristan developed a love for nature early on. His fascination began with South American birds, and his academic path—first at Louisiana State University and later the University of Kansas—opened the door to global expeditions. From the cloud forests of Ecuador to the arid plains of western China, Tristan has chased botanical wonders across continents, with stops in the Philippines, Liberia, and Equatorial Guinea.

It didn't take long to realize he had a clear preference for dry, wide-open spaces—think the pampas of Argentina or the deserts of western Peru. That passion for arid environments eventually led him to Arizona in 2001, where he's been happily cactus-bound ever since.

Today, Tristan's research focuses on South American cacti and ocotillos (*Fouquieria* spp.), and he continues to participate in field expeditions in search of desert treasures.

He currently lives in Chandler, AZ, and serves as an Adjunct Researcher with the **Biodiversity Institute at the University of Kansas**. He's also an **Honorary Lifetime Member of the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society (CACSS)**, where he's worn many hats—Board Member, Propagation Education Group (PEG) lead, and manager of the Seed Depot. He also donates his time to the **Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix**.



# Reminder!

## MEETING REFRESHMENTS

Please share and socialize with your fellow members at our monthly meetings by bringing some type of finger food for the refreshment table. For the **MAY MEETING** we are asking members whose last names begin with **"G" through "N"** to bring something that would serve 10-12 people.

THIS IS THE LAST PRESENTATION  
AT SKY ISLAND PUBLIC HIGH  
SCHOOL

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## IMPORTANT



The “MONSOONS” haven’t started, yet we are facing the perfect storms. We were recently notified that our use of Sky Island Public High School ends on May 30, 2025. Their administration has ended our contract and we must leave the facility. This means we need to pack up our library, technology, tables (not chairs), our boutique, and all the rest and be out of there by May 30<sup>th</sup>. At present we have no place to go. We need to rent, lease or purchase a home for our library, monthly meetings and all the other activities.

As a possible solution, we are in discussions with TUSD on the use of a portion of Nan Lyons School. The entire property has been sold but it will take about 22 months for it to be finalized. We have been in discussions to utilize a couple of classrooms for the next 22 months but that will only start about July 1<sup>st</sup>. There will be substantial costs including repairing some of the damage caused by vandals, installing security systems, purchasing heating and cooling units, liability insurance, internet, rent etc. Also, it is not suitable for our monthly meetings as is, and would require a substantial investment to utilize. Then in 22 months we are back to square one.

Our Amphi facility is now also in question. The request to install the recently acquired greenhouse at Amphi is waiting for the results of their board which maybe planning to expand the facilities that we are now leasing. We haven’t heard a final decision but this could mean finding a new area for our rescue plants, sales and the 3 cube storage units. This is more than a 2 acre facility that we would need to replace. Currently, Amphi doesn’t provide us with library space, classroom(s), propagation, seed storage, monthly meeting and permanence. Additionally, our contract with Pima County for Pima Prickly Park is entering its last year and needs to be renegotiated. We are also looking at spending a substantial sum of money for the new water storage system that we have promised to participate in.

Currently, we do not have the facilities or financial resources to solve all these issues. We also have a national convention coming about this time in 2027. These are our perfect storms.

You need to be aware that your Board of Directors is working on all these issue. If you have any information on potential facilities, funding sources or are just available to help pack and move when necessary please contact any board member or officer.

Dick Wiedhopf, President



# THANK YOU



TCSS President, Dick Wiedhopf presented Karen Keller with a Lifetime Membership Award for her 17 years of volunteer service as the TCSS Newsletter Editor.

*Thank you!*

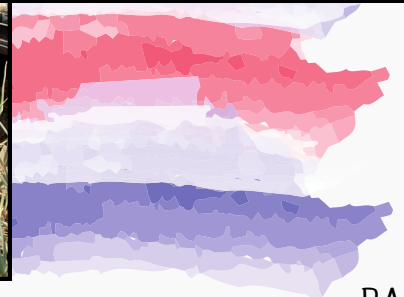
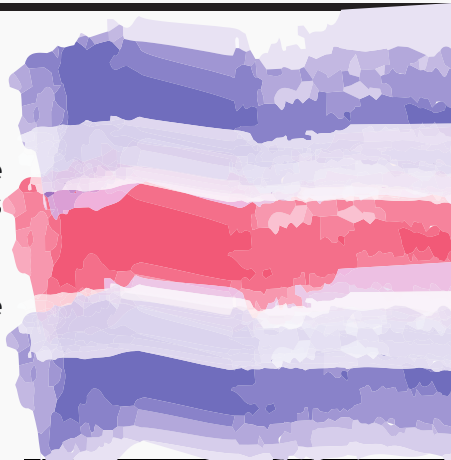
## ARID OASIS

**Bruce and Marsha Weber, Owners**

For the past 13 + years Bruce and Marsha have been growing and selling extraordinary cactus and succulents growing them mostly from seed. They have closed their nursery and are moving to Costa Rica. Bruce and Marsha have been great supporters of our society and participated in many of our sales as vendors.

After selling a lot of their stock they have donated the rest to us. There were 2 large greenhouse and 2 shade structures filled with wonderful plants. We have removed the remaining plants as well as the benches, pots and a more. We were able to purchase one of their greenhouses. It is 20 X 50 ft hoop house structure which we plan to install and use to revive our propagation activities.

Bruce and Marsha: We are indebted to your generosity and hope that your move goes well. **THANK YOU** from all your friends in TCSS.





# ANNOUNCEMENTS & PICS



Photo By: Thomas Staudt

LATE FLOWERING ARIZONA  
ENDEMIC ECHINOMASTUS  
ERECTOCENTRUS.

YOUR  
PHOTO HERE



WE WOULD LOVE TO SEE WHAT IS  
BLOOMING IN YOUR YARD!

TCSS Desert Garden Tour

POP-UP

ADDRESS FOR THE TOUR WILL BE EMAILED TO MEMBERS THE WEEK BEFORE THE TOUR

**We are excited to announce our first Pop-Up Garden Tour for May!** Please read below for the details of the tour.

If you would like to consider having your garden on tour, please fill out the application on our website by clicking on this link [popup\\_tour\\_application.pdf](#)





# CYNDI'S & DWIGHT'S DESERT OASIS

Saturday, May 10th

8am to 12pm

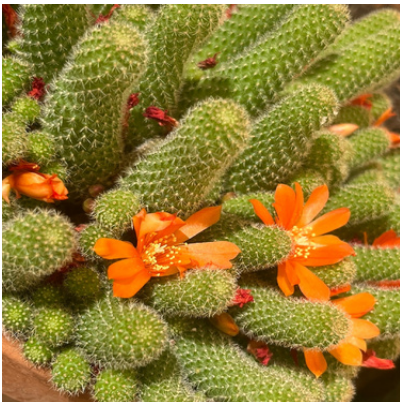
When Cyndi purchased this property in 1999 the landscape consisted of bulldozed creosote, upside down barrel cactus and one old mesquite tree. The first four years it was open range and the cows would eat anything she planted. Once they were fenced out, she got busy and brought in several loads of Catalina boulders and started planting what is now a very lush landscape that shows no resemblance to it's empty beginnings. Their home is now hidden

behind hundreds of cactus, succulents, and native specimens that are thriving under Cyndi's expert care.

She says she is still learning about native plants of all sorts . Her favorite plants are the very tall *Trichocereus terscheckii* and the 7' *Aloe dichotoma* that hopefully will start branching soon.

She uses Kellogs Raised Garden potting mix for her potted plants and a mix of potting soil, compost and native soil for in ground planting. She has two shade houses in the back yard brimming with many special varieties of cactus and succulents along with a desert tortoise habitat for Pancho and Lefty. She is in the process of removing a pond that has aged out of being easy to maintain.

Her most recent large project to improve the garden was the labyrinth she has formed in the back half of her property. Hope you can take time to enjoy the labyrinth and all of the creative landscaping in this very special desert oasis.





# NATIVE & URBAN RESCUES

## NATIVE RESCUE

Fourteen members of the Cactus Rescue crew salvaged 61 native desert plants at a homesite development project near Vail on April 26. We rescued yuccas, barrels, small ocotillos, hedgehogs, and a queen.

Many of these plants will be available at our upcoming sales in May.



(People in the photo, L-R: Nancy Lawson, Randy Hellwig, Steve Watts)



# K-12 EDUCATION

**The K-12 Education Outreach** volunteers kept busy at several STEM events during April. Edie Campbell, Adora-Marie Higgins and Janine Malkin taught classes at Carrillo K-5 Magnet, Donaldson Elementary, Hollinger K-8, Kellond Elementary, St. Mark's Preschool, Senita Valley Elementary and Sierra K-8.



In addition, Edie provided her expertise to **Civano Community School**. With Edie's advice, the school applied for and was granted a **TCSS school grant for their outdoor gardens**. In April, she participated in their family planting day which was a huge success. Thank you to Edie and all of our volunteers.





# K-12 EDUCATION



This is a picture of some of the new plants at the Civano Community School. -doesn't really do their work justice.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### THIS MONTH

**MAY 2**  
FRIDAY

PCC  
NORTHWEST  
CAMPUS  
STEAM FAMILY  
AND RESEARCH  
SYMPOSIUM  
NIGHT

**MAY 5**  
MONDAY

SENITA VALLEY  
ELEMENTARY  
1<sup>ST</sup> GRADE STEM

**MAY 6**  
TUESDAY

SENITA VALLEY  
ELEMENTARY  
1<sup>ST</sup> GRADE STEM

**MAY 7**  
WEDNESDAY

SENITA VALLEY  
ELEMENTARY  
1<sup>ST</sup> GRADE STEM

LINEWEAVER  
ELEMENTARY  
SAGUARO  
TERRARIUMS-  
TRANSPLANTING

**MAY 8**  
THURSDAY

SENITA VALLEY  
ELEMENTARY  
1<sup>ST</sup> GRADE STEM

KELLOND  
ELEMENTARY  
STEAM ADN  
FINE ART NIGHT





# TCSS DIRECTORY

## TCSS OFFICERS

Terms expire December 31, 2026

**PRESIDENT:** Dick Wiedhopf

• [president@Tucsoncactus.org](mailto:president@Tucsoncactus.org)

**VICE PRESIDENT:** Vonn Watkins

• [vp@Tucsoncactus.org](mailto:vp@Tucsoncactus.org)

**SECRETARY:** Barbara Watts

• [secretary@Tucsoncactus.org](mailto:secretary@Tucsoncactus.org)

**TREASURER:** Mark Dworschak

• [treasurer@Tucsoncactus.org](mailto:treasurer@Tucsoncactus.org)



Photo By: Dick Wiedhopf



Photo by: Dick Wiedhopf

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Terms expire December 31 of year indicated

RAY FISHER (2027)

DONNA ELLIS (2026)

BRIAN VANDERVOET (2025)

RANDY HELLWIG (2027)

KRIS THOMPSON (2026)

BRAD HAECKEL (2025)

AMY PEARSE (2027)

EDIE CAMPBELL (2026)

JOEL FONTAINE (2025)

CLARKE STEPHENS (2027)

JULIE SHULICK (2026)

STEVE WATTS (2025)

CSSA AFFILIATE REP: MICHEL PILLET (2025)



# PROGRAM CONTACTS

**Cactus Rescue:** Donna Ellis & Steve Watts • [cactus@tucsoncactus.org](mailto:cactus@tucsoncactus.org)

**Urban Rescues:** Julie Shulick • [desertrat@shulick.com](mailto:desertrat@shulick.com)

**Education:** Kris Thompson • [education@tucsoncactus.org](mailto:education@tucsoncactus.org)

**Free Plants:** Mark Stubbs • [plants@tucsoncactus.org](mailto:plants@tucsoncactus.org)

**Florilegium:** Joyce Peters • [art@tucsoncactus.org](mailto:art@tucsoncactus.org)

**Garden Tours:** Patsy Frannea • [tours@tucsoncactus.org](mailto:tours@tucsoncactus.org)

**Librarian:** Brad Haeckel • [librarian@tucsoncactus.org](mailto:librarian@tucsoncactus.org)

**Prickly Park:** Linda Heisley • [park@tucsoncactus.org](mailto:park@tucsoncactus.org)

**Programs:** Vonn Watkins • [programs@tucsoncactus.org](mailto:programs@tucsoncactus.org)

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**Refreshments:** Patsy Frannea • [refreshments@tucsoncactus.org](mailto:refreshments@tucsoncactus.org)

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**Research:** Doug Rowsell • [research@tucsoncactus.org](mailto:research@tucsoncactus.org)

**Field Trips/Tours:** Open

**Vendor Coordinator:** Dale Johnson • [vendors@tucsoncactus.org](mailto:vendors@tucsoncactus.org)

**Plant Sales:** Open

**Field Guide Sales:** Susan Durham & John Durham • [books@tucsoncactus.org](mailto:books@tucsoncactus.org)

**Conservation:** Michiel Pillet • [conservation@tucsoncactus.org](mailto:conservation@tucsoncactus.org)

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**Webmaster:** Barb Watts • [webmaster@tucsoncactus.org](mailto:webmaster@tucsoncactus.org)

**Deadline for newsletter text or photos: Tuesday, May 20 by 4:00pm**

TCSS Web Page: [www.tucsoncactus.org](http://www.tucsoncactus.org)



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS 2025

ANONYMOUS  
EDIE CAMPBELL  
DALE & DAVID BIRCHLER  
RION BOWERS  
CHERYL & DOUG CHANG  
NAN COURSEY  
BRENDA McKINNEY  
NICOLE SCOTT & BEN RATHBONE

DONATIONS AS OF APRIL  
25<sup>TH</sup>, 2025



# MAY

2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Monthly Meeting 7:00pm	2	3
4	5	6 Board Meeting 7:00pm	7	8	9	10 Pop-Up Garden Tour
11 Mother's Day Sale	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 Mother's Day Sale Part 2	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

## MONTHLY MEETING PROGRAM INFORMATION

### LOCATION



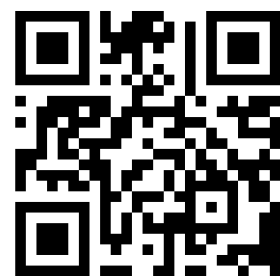
Sky Islands Public High School • 6000 E. 14th St.

ZOOM  
[Click Here](#) or  
scan to join the  
Meeting



### BOARD MEETING

[Click Here](#) or  
scan to join the  
Meeting



### FRIENDLY REMINDERS

- If you are not feeling well, **PLEASE** stay home and join us on Zoom.
- Plant Giveaways (only in person, not shown on Zoom).
- Refreshments provided by TCSS Volunteers
- Free Plants offered by TCSS

Having trouble  
logging on?  
[Click Here](#) for  
some helpful tips



## MOTHER'S DAY SALE

### AMPHI SITE

Everyone is welcome! There will be several other vendors selling plants, pots, etc.

**When:** Sunday, May 11

**Time:** 9:00am-11:00am

**Where:** 4342 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Ave,

## MOTHER'S DAY SALE PART 2

### AMPHI SITE

Everyone is welcome! There will be several other vendors selling plants, pots, etc.

**When:** Sunday, May 18

**Time:** 9:00am-11:00am

**Where:** 4342 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Ave,





@ THE HUNTINGTON  
1151 OXFORD RD, SAN MARINO, CA

CSSASHOW.COM + @CSSASHOW



CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY OF AMERICA  
58th ANNUAL SHOW AND SALE  
AT THE HUNTINGTON

Dates: Friday, Saturday & Sunday, June 27th – 29th, 2025

Location: The Huntington: 1151 Oxford Drive, San Marino, CA  
The Botanical Center. Contact 626-405-3571

Sale and Show: Friday, Saturday & Sunday 10:00am – 5:00pm

Show set-up: Wednesday, June 25th 9:00 am – 1:00pm

Enter plants: Wednesday, June 25th 1:00pm – 6:00pm & Thursday, June 26th  
9:00am – 4:00pm. Judging starts at 5:00pm Thursday

Dinner: Saturday, June 28th at 6:00pm, \$35 dinner. Menu: Mediterranean-style  
buffet provided by Bon Appétit. Contact Barbara Hall by cell phone 818-429-6914  
or email lbcjhall@aol.com for reservation information. Reservations must be  
made by June 20th.

Auction: Saturday, June 28th at 7:00pm. Items need to be registered by 2:00pm.

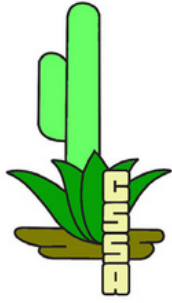
There will be a Silent Auction during dinner and a Live Auction (35 items max.)  
after dinner. Auctioneers will decide placement of items: 2 items per  
person/business marked as donation or split (70/30)

Tear down: Sunday, June 29th 5:00pm

- CSSA Club Affiliates need to pass this information on to their club members. Show Schedules & Indexes will be available online through your Club newsletter or website & [www.cssashow.com](http://www.cssashow.com). Entry tags will be available at many of the local clubs & at the show. I can mail entry tags upon request.
- All Vendors, Volunteers or Show participants need to wear their club badges (if you have one) and a HBG wrist band each day they participate. These will be distributed by the Show Chair each day. Please go directly to the Botanical Center and not through the front entrance.
- For those NOT participating, special passes for this event will no longer be distributed ahead of time. Information regarding complimentary entry for CSSA & CSS Club Members will be forthcoming in May or June. At this time, entry to the HBG is by advance online reservation on Fridays and weekends, no walk-ins. Stay tuned for updates!
- There are opportunities to participate/volunteer in this year's show, in the showroom or sales areas, information table, holding area, welcome table at the HBG entry and for setup/teardown. All participants receive a show T-Shirt as a thank you. See you at the Show!

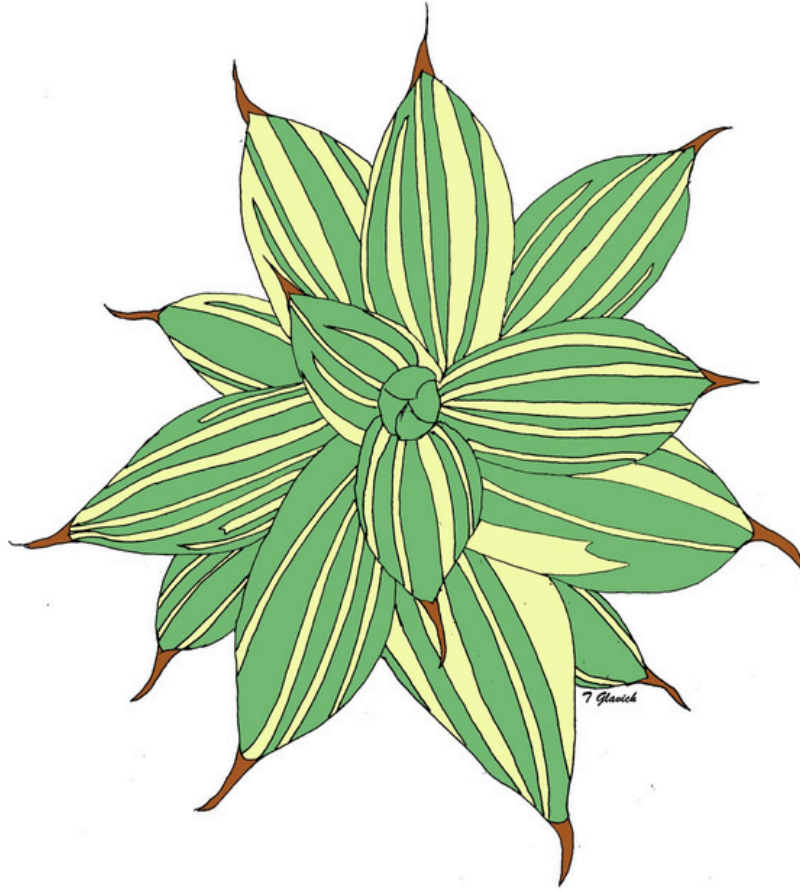
Nick Renteria Phone: 323-428-2215 (cell)  
CSSA Annual Show Chair Email: [Nick\\_Renteria@yahoo.com](mailto:Nick_Renteria@yahoo.com)





# CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY OF AMERICA

## 58th Annual Show and Sale



**SHOW & SALE: Friday, Saturday & Sunday  
June 27th -29th 2025 10 am to 5 pm  
at**

**THE HUNTINGTON**

1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA  
626.405.3571

[www.cssashow.com](http://www.cssashow.com)

**For the complete Show Booklet  
Please [click here](#)**

**For the complete Indices  
Please [click here](#)**