



DESERT BREEZE

NEWSLETTER OF THE TUCSON CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY

MONTHLY MEETING PROGRAM

EXPLORING THE FLORA OF BAJA CALIFORNIA: A FIELD EXPEDITION

PRESENTED BY: CAMERON SANDOVAL

This presentation highlights the diverse plant communities and floral treasures documented during an extensive field expedition through Baja California—primarily in Baja Norte, with a brief foray into Baja Sur. The journey was planned around observing boojum trees (*Fouquieria columnaris*) in their natural habitat and exploring the unique ecosystems they share with other species. Many of the plants encountered along the way are familiar in cultivation around Tucson, but experiencing them in their native settings provided new insights into their adaptations and ecological roles. The expedition was both inspiring and full of surprises, as plant communities shifted dramatically from one region to another. Our route took us from San Felipe to Santa Rosalía, successfully fulfilling all our botanical objectives—until an unexpected challenge arose on a rugged return road...

Everyone is welcome to come and join us for this special in person presentation. This meeting will also be a Zoom program and will be an important educational and informational event you must see. Excellent plant give aways will take place at the in person meeting but that portion of the program, because of the recording, will not appear on Zoom. When leaving the live in person meeting, please enjoy great refreshments provided by our member volunteers and also, everyone can get a special free plant offered to you by the TCSS.



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 **OCTOBER MEETING** we are asking members whose last names begin with **"A" through "G"** to bring something that would serve 10-12 people.

MEET THE PRESENTER

MEET CAMERON- NATURALIST, PHOTOGRAPHER & HORTICULTURIST



Cameron Sandoval is a young naturalist with a deep appreciation for the flora and fauna of the American Southwest. Raised in Las Cruces, New Mexico, he developed an early affinity for the Chihuahuan Desert and its remarkable diversity of plants and animals. His passion for botany grew while working at a local plant nursery, where he gained hands-on experience and expanded his knowledge. Later, Cameron moved to Tucson to pursue his interest in Sonoran Desert plants, working with several respected nurseries before joining the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum as a horticulturist. Cameron's dedication to the ecology of the Southwest has taken him on field expeditions ranging from the mountains of southern Sonora to the deserts of Baja California.

He is the founder of Bajada Restorations, a local LLC focused on habitat restoration, native plant sales, and community-based projects that celebrate regional biodiversity. He also serves as chairman of the TCSS Seed Repository, a project established to build a substantial seed bank of cactus and succulent species.

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➤NEXT➤ MONTH

Thursday, November 6, 2025

David Dettman

Manager of the University of Arizona

Environmental Isotope Laboratory

"Saguaro and Columnar Cacti Isotope Research"

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

October is here! That means it's time to start preparing your plants for possible very cold temperatures. The rule of thumb that used to be accurate before climate change was that the first frost in Tucson was November 15 and the last frost was March 15 so prepare your plants for those dates. I think it is a good idea to have those dates in mind so you can cut off watering or prepare areas where tender plants will be wintered. Check our website about Adeniums and other frost sensitive plants.



I want to thank all the volunteers who supported the silent auction. For many of you, it was your first silent auction and your efforts made it one of the best! We had 192 items in the auction and they sold for more than \$5,800. There 81 bidders. We also had numerous pre-priced and rescue plants which accounted for an additional \$4,600+ in sales. Of course the best part was the ice cream, topping and cookies. A lot of volunteers were involved in setting up and taking down the shade covers, tents, tables and chairs and moving plants so the sale would be safe and fun. This was the first time we were rained on at this sale which made it a real challenge. Thank you for your efforts to make this event special. The silent auction has been a part of this society since its beginnings.

There is still a lot going on for the rest of the year.

- **Home tours** are in **October**. Take advantage of perfect temperatures for these special activities.
- We are experiencing an increase in native plant rescues which means we will be having another **Rescue Sale soon**. Please check your emails, our Facebook page or other social networks for these sales.
- **November 9 is our 65th birthday** and we will be celebrating it at Pima Prickly Park. Of course there will be cake and ice cream.
- **December 6 is the annual meeting, Holiday Party**, election results and awards. This year we will be at St Phillips in the Foothills where we have been having our monthly meetings. You will receive a mailing about membership renewal, Holiday Party reservations and a ballot in early November.
- We will try to squeeze in an **open house at our new Nan Lyons Facilities**.

Thank you for your support.
Dick Wiedhopf, President

Dick Wiedhopf, President
Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society, Inc.

SILENT AUCTION

Snapsshots

FREE ITEMS!



Auction Tables



Ice Cream!



BUILDING STRONGER CONNECTIONS WITH THE NEW TCSS MEMBERSHIP DATABASE



The Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society has been developing a new, custom membership database designed to support our many activities and strengthen communication across the Society. This powerful system will make it easier for committee chairs, activity leaders, and members to share information, coordinate events, and work together more effectively.

With this tool, TCSS gains a central hub that opens doors for better coordination and cooperation. Whether it's organizing a plant rescue, planning a sale, recruiting volunteers, or keeping in touch with members, this system ensures that all of our activities are better connected.

To help everyone take advantage of these new opportunities, TCSS will be hosting a **monthly Zoom Tech Support and Training session**. These sessions are designed for committee chairs, activity leaders, and any member who wants to learn how to use and adapt the system for their work.

- **When:** The **fourth Tuesday of every month**
- **Where:** Online via Zoom

We encourage all members to join in—whether you lead a program, help on a committee, or simply want to understand the tools that are supporting TCSS's growth. Together, we'll learn how to use this system to make our work smoother, our communication stronger, and our Society even more effective.

K-12 EDUCATION

The K-12 Education Outreach: In September, we met the Cavett Elementary School Garden Club and introduced the students to cactus and critters in the Sonoran Desert. They were so engaged, and invited us to return.

Former Esmond Station K-8 students, who are now sophomores at Empire High School, helped us at a camp held during the Vail USD semester break. They taught our curriculum to students/campers at Esmond Station and volunteered to help at the STEAM Night in November. Their enthusiasm was contagious, and the kiddos really responded to the presentation. We were very grateful for their help and our volunteers, Edie Campbell and Chris Robie.

K-12 Education Outreach November Calendar

5 - DeGrazia Elementary
STEM Night 5:30-7:00

7 - Esmond Station K-8
STEAM Night 6:00-8:00

12 - Senita Valley Elementary
Family STEM Night 5:30-7:30

13 - Mansfeld Middle Magnet
STEM+ Family Night 5:30-7 00

18 - Erickson Elementary
Math & Science Night 5:00-6:30

18 - Banks Elementary
STEM Night 5:00-6:30

21 - SARSEF
STEMazing 9:00a-1:00



TCSS EXPANDS SONORAN XERISCAPE PROGRAM



The Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society is proud to announce the **formal expansion of the Sonoran Xeriscape Program**. Over the past year, we have been running this initiative on a temporary, learning basis with several local HOAs and at one high school. The results have been exciting, and now it's time to grow.

What is Sonoran Xeriscape?

At its heart, Sonoran xeriscape is the art of recognizing that the desert's harsh environment is made up of countless small microclimates, each influencing what life can thrive there. Our program teaches how to adapt plant choices and management practices to these microclimates, ensuring water-efficient, resilient, and beautiful landscapes.

What the Program Offers

- A seminar series with practical training on Sonoran-specific xeriscape techniques.
- Hands-on landscaping projects in HOA common areas, schools, and individual home landscapes.
- Access to reduced-cost plants through TCSS rescue programs, propagation efforts, and partner nurseries.

Why This Matters

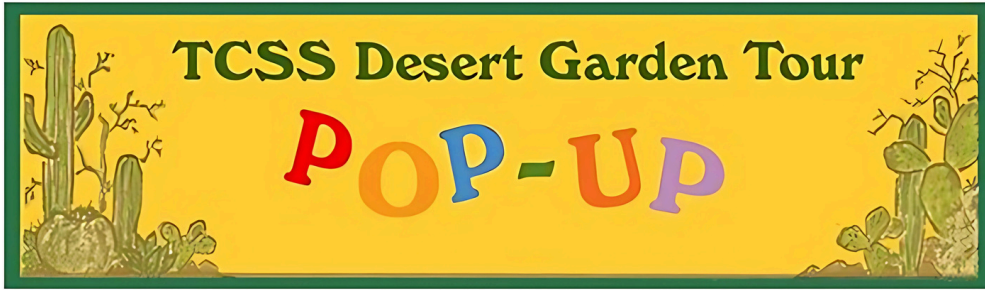
This program is quickly becoming one of TCSS's signature educational outreach initiatives. By combining conservation, education, and practical support, it empowers our members and the wider community to create landscapes that honor the unique beauty of the Sonoran Desert.

How You Can Be Involved

We are looking for **active members who want to be part of this exciting program** as it expands to serve more HOAs and community partners. Regular meetings will be listed in the TCSS Schedule of Activities, and there will be plenty of opportunities to learn, contribute, and share knowledge.

If you are passionate about desert plants and want to help shape one of TCSS's future signature programs, this is your chance to get involved. Together, we can make a lasting difference in how our community landscapes and cares for the desert.

GARDEN TOURS



If you would like to share what you've created in your desert garden with TCSS members please consider being on a TCSS Desert Garden Pop-Up Tour. These tours are usually held on Saturday mornings for about 4 hours. Our Garden Tour Committee will help arrange all of the planning and publicity so that members can take a leisurely tour of your landscape. The tour date is up to you, but we do need at least 4 weeks lead time in order to take photos and get all of the details into our monthly newsletter.

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](#)

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?
PLEASE CONTACT:



GARDEN TOURS
GARDENTOURS@TUCSONCACTUS.ORG

RESCUE CREW

ATTENTION Cactus Rescue Crew:
We have numerous Native Plant
rescues coming up in October—
Keep an eye on the Rescue Activities
Schedule

THE HUNTINGTON SUCCULENT PLANTS SYMPOSIUM AND A REMARKABLE DONATION

By Vonn Watkins

In August, I had the pleasure of attending the 42nd Annual Huntington Succulent Plants Symposium in San Marino, California. I have been participating in these symposia events for many years, and they have always provided a wonderful opportunity to connect with fellow plant enthusiasts and specialists from around the world. This year's program stood out as exceptionally well organized, featuring distinguished speakers whose presentations offered valuable insights into research, conservation, and cultivation practices.

Over the years, the Huntington Succulent Plants Symposium has grown into a premier international event, uniting experts from both the United States and abroad. The gathering began with a welcoming continental breakfast reception, followed by a lively silent auction of plants, books, and artwork generously donated by supporters—an activity that not only engaged attendees but also helped advance the institution's mission.

This year's symposium was particularly noteworthy as it coincided with the completion of extensive construction projects in the Huntington Desert Garden. Following a significant restoration effort, the Desert Plant Conservatory reopened with expanded displays of its renowned collection. According to John Trager, Curator of Desert Collections, many historically important specimens had recently been repotted and top-dressed, and they were exhibited in excellent condition.



Aloe dichotoma

Photo Credit: Vonn Watkins

THE HUNTINGTON SUCCULENT PLANTS SYMPOSIUM AND A REMARKABLE DONATION

One unique highlight of the symposium involved the story of a major plant donation by Sandy Chase of Sylmar, California. Sandy contributed an extraordinary specimen of *Aloe dichotoma*, which now holds distinction for its remarkable size. She recalled purchasing the plant in 1987 from Abbey Garden Cacti and Succulents in Carpinteria, then operated by Frank Horwood. At that time, the specimen measured approximately 24 inches and was acquired for \$30. Around 1989, Sandy planted the Aloe in the front yard of her quarter-acre property, where it thrived under regular irrigation provided for her tortoises' enclosure. Over the decades, the plant grew to an exceptional size. In 2020, Sandy generously donated the specimen to the Huntington. On December 7, 2021, the plant was carefully removed by crane, transported by truck, and successfully transplanted into the Desert Garden. Now standing approximately 14 feet in height and supported with bracing while roots establish, this *Aloe dichotoma* possesses a circumference believed to be the largest documented for the species. Its presence further enriches the Desert Garden and serves as a lasting contribution to the institution



For enthusiasts of cacti and succulents, the Huntington Botanical Gardens represent a world-class destination. In addition to its unrivaled succulent collections, the Huntington offers visitors access to diverse themed gardens, art museums, a variety of restaurants, and a distinguished research library—providing an experience of both scientific and cultural significance.

“Sandy Chase appearing with her huge Aloe donation and just after recent knee surgery”

Photo Credit: Vonn Watkins

CSSA NEWS

DISCOUNT MEMBERSHIP

Discounted Cactus and Succulent Society of America memberships for TCSS members! CSSA just announced a brand-new membership program exclusively for members of Affiliate Clubs, including TCSS. For **\$10 per year**, you can purchase a CSSA Supporting Membership. Non-affiliate pricing is \$20 per year.

This membership category includes:

- Quarterly digital newsletters with information about plant care, events, and much more
- Notifications of CSSA monthly webinars
- Access to seed purchases from the CSSA Seed Depot

Your membership supports CSSA's conservation, research, and education mission. To take advantage of this opportunity, **go to this link: Membership Discount**. Alternatively, you can purchase a CSSA Supporting Membership at

<https://cactusandsucculentsociety.org/membership/>, and enter discount code "Tucson-Affiliate-Partner-Discount" during checkout.

For questions, please contact affiliate@cactusandsucculentsociety.org, or reach out to Michiel Pillet, the CSSA Affiliate Representative for TCSS (cssa@tucsoncactus.org).



FREE PRESENTATIONS

The Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA) organizes monthly webinars featuring cactus and succulent experts from around the world. These webinars usually take place on the third Saturday of the month at 10 AM Pacific Time. Past webinars can be viewed here: [Past Webinars](#). Click on any webinar to find a link to be added to the mailing list.

Upcoming webinars:

- October 18th: Dave Ferguson – TBD (likely related to prickly pears)
- November 15th: Wendy Hodgson – TBD (likely related to Agave)

SPOTLIGHT THE PUBLICITY COMMITTEE



Do you enjoy sharing stories, spreading the word, and helping others discover the amazing work of TCSS? Then you'll love what our **Publicity Committee** is up to!

Meeting every other week via Zoom, this lively group has one big mission: **to make sure the public—and our members—know about the dozens of educational and conservation activities put on by the Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society.** With so much going on, there's always something exciting to share.

At our upcoming meeting, we'll be tackling three key projects:

- **Promoting Sonoran Xeriscape Educational Outreach:** We'll shine a spotlight on our
 - Major turf-removal project going on in a large Vail HOA. We are replacing grass with cactus and succulents as part of the **Sonoran Xeriscape Educational Outreach Program.** This project is about inspiring the community to embrace desert-friendly, water-wise landscaping. This is a very photogenic project and will be fun to publicize.
- **Recruiting Vendors for CSSA 2027:** The countdown to Tucson hosting the **CSSA Convention in 2027** has begun! We're actively looking for unique vendors—nurseries, artists, and makers—who will bring rare plants, handcrafted pottery, and cactus-themed art to the big event.
- **Spreading the Word:** With over a dozen **world-class programs and ongoing activities in TCSS,** our committee is at the heart of making sure people hear about them. From plant rescues to education programs, there's always a story worth telling!

If you'd like to be part of this fun, creative, and dynamic team, join us! The Publicity Committee is always looking for fresh ideas and new voices to help share TCSS's mission with the world.

CONSERVATION POLICY

Introducing the TCSS Conservation Policy on Wild-Collected Plants

On Tuesday, September 9th, the TCSS Board of Directors voted to adopt a formal Policy, included below, describing its position related to wild-collected plants. This Policy was developed in coordination with the Conservation Committee, driven by the accelerating threat from overcollection faced by cacti and succulents. In recent years, many cactus and succulent societies have adopted similar policies. As conservation is a key component of the mission of our organization, it is important for us to follow suit. Given the complexities involving wild-collected plants, the Policy aims to be flexible while formalizing steps to follow when confronted with such plants. Most members will not be affected. Importantly, the Policy is not intended to be punitive, and will be accompanied with educational materials so that we can learn to tackle this pressing issue together.

Please direct questions to the Conservation Committee: conservation@tucsoncactus.org.

Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society Conservation Policy on Wild-Collected Plants

1. The Conservation Committee's policy on wild-collected plants (the Policy), on behalf of the Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society (TCSS), will comply with all state, federal, and international laws and regulations governing the acquisition, transport, and distribution of plant materials, including whole plants, cuttings, and seed.
2. Per the Policy, TCSS will not allow the acquisition, distribution, or promotion of wild-collected plants, whether legal or illegal in nature, through any of its programs or activities, excepting material under the purview of the Native Plant Rescue Program (NPRP), the Sonoran Xeriscape Educational Outreach Program (SXEOP), and the Urban Rescue Program (URP).
3. The TCSS Board of Directors and Conservation Committee will work with affected TCSS Committees and other Members to ensure the following guidelines are adhered to:
 - a. Speakers at monthly meetings must not acquire, distribute, or promote wild-collected plants. Speakers must not include statements encouraging illegal collection of plant materials in their programs.
 - b. Member businesses must not acquire, distribute, or promote wild-collected plants, except those acquired through the NPRP or URP
 - c. Vendors at TCSS events must declare that they do not acquire, distribute, or promote wild-collected plants. No wild-collected plants may be distributed at TCSS events, with the exception of material under the purview of the NPRP, URP, and SXEOP.
 - d. TCSS must not acquire wild-collected plants through the URP, except those naturally growing on the donor's property.
 - e. No wild-collected plants may be donated to TCSS.
 - f. Material acquired in violation of this Policy will be donated to appropriate institutions or remain in the possession of TCSS.

CONSERVATION POLICY

4. Should TCSS Committees or Members experience difficulties identifying wild-collected plants, these Committees or Members will request assistance from the Conservation Committee.
5. Potential infractions of this Policy should be reported promptly to the Conservation Committee, which will in turn submit a report to the Board of Directors. Requisite features of this report will include an assessment of the infraction, as well as recommended follow-up actions.
6. Exceptions to this Policy must be approved by a Director serving on the TCSS Board of Directors, Program Chair, or Committee Chair. If time permits, the TCSS President or Board should be consulted in advance. Exceptions need to be promptly reported to the TCSS Board of Directors.



MEMBER'S PICS



Not a saguaro, one of the larger *Fercactus wislizeni* that I've come across.

Photo Credit: Thomas Staudt

DON'T FORGET
TO SEND IN
YOUR BEST
PLANT
PICTURES!

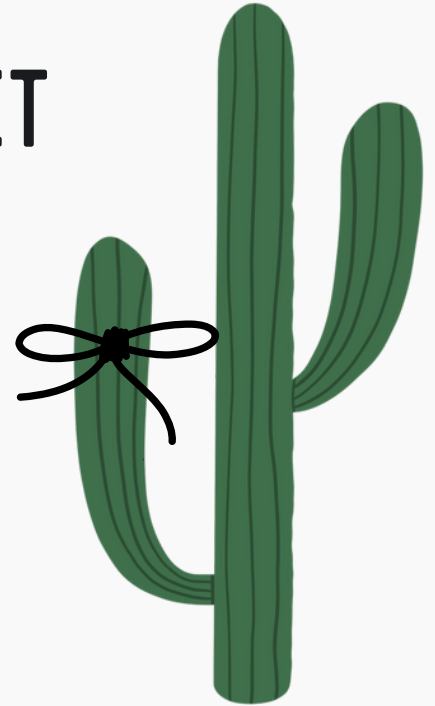


Photo Credit: Thea and Eliat



Photo Credit: Thea and Eliat

Thought you might enjoy a couple snapshots of our (unusually tall) Bishop's Cap Cactus (*Astrophytum myriostigma*) in bloom. One picture is with a yardstick to show that it is roughly 25" tall. The second picture shows the cactus in a bit more photogenic composition.

BTW, we purchased this bishop's cap cactus on 4-19-2014 at a TCSS sale and Arid Lands was the grower. I have several other Bishop's Caps purchased at around the same time and they've remained under a foot tall. I guess this one had a touch of "Jack-in-the-bean-stalk" in its genes!

TCSS DIRECTORY

TCSS OFFICERS

Terms expire December 31, 2026

PRESIDENT: Dick Wiedhopf	• president@Tucsoncactus.org
VICE PRESIDENT: Vonn Watkins	• vp@Tucsoncactus.org
SECRETARY: Barbara Watts	• secretary@Tucsoncactus.org
TREASURER: Donna Ellis	• treasurer@Tucsoncactus.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Terms expire December 31 of year indicated

RAY FISHER (2027)	KRIS THOMPSON (2026)	BRIAN VANDERVOET (2025)
RANDY HELLWIG (2027)	EDIE CAMPBELL (2026)	BRAD HAECKEL (2025)
AMY PEARSE (2027)	JULIE SHULICK (2026)	JOEL FONTAINE (2025)
CLARKE STEPHENS (2027)		STEVE WATTS (2025)

CSSA AFFILIATE REP: MICHIEL PILLET (2025)



Cochemiea (Mammillaria) grahamii - I am still small but showy
Photo Credit: Albert Everaerts



Cochemiea (Mammillaria) grahamii - flower explosion after the first monsoon rain
Photo By: Albert Everaerts

COMMITTEE CONTACTS

Cactus Rescue: Donna Ellis & Randy Hellwig • cactus@tucsoncactus.org

Urban Rescues: Julie Shulick • desertrat@shulick.com

Education: Kris Thompson • education@tucsoncactus.org

Free Plants: Mark Stubbs • plants@tucsoncactus.org

Florilegium: Joyce Peters • art@tucsoncactus.org

Garden Tours: Patsy Frannea • tours@tucsoncactus.org

Librarian: Brad Haeckel • librarian@tucsoncactus.org

Prickly Park: Linda Heisley • park@tucsoncactus.org

Programs: Vonn Watkins • programs@tucsoncactus.org

Publicity: Patrick Cavanaugh • publicity@tucsoncactus.org

Refreshments: Patsy Frannea • refreshments@tucsoncactus.org

Technology: technology@tucsoncactus.org

Research: Doug Rowsell • research@tucsoncactus.org

Field Trips/Tours: Open

Vendor Coordinator: Dale Johnson • vendors@tucsoncactus.org

Plant Sales: Open

Field Guide Sales: Susan Durham & John Durham • books@tucsoncactus.org

Conservation: Michiel Pillet • conservation@tucsoncactus.org

Newsletter Layout Editor: Cathy Cabezas • newsletter@tucsoncactus.org

Newsletter Reviewers: Thomas Staudt, Maria Voris & Jon Oravec •
newsletter@tucsoncactus.org

Webmaster: Julie Schulick • webmaster@tucsoncactus.org

Deadline for newsletters articles or photos: Third Thursday of the Month

TCSS Web Page: www.tucsoncactus.org

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS 2025

DONATIONS AS OF
SEPTEMBER 19TH, 2025

TONY & JILL BERNARDO

CHERYL CAGE

ASHLEIGH LEDET

KELSEY MCMONAGLE

JENNIFER ROBERSON

ASHLEY C/O TOWN REALTY



Trichocereus terscheckii - Early morning buzz
Photo Credit: Albert Everaerts

OCTOBER

2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	1	2 Monthly Meeting 7:00pm	3	4 CACTUS SALE PG. 20
5 CACTUS SALE PG. 20	6	7 Board Meeting 7:00pm	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

MONTHLY MEETING PROGRAM INFORMATION

LOCATION



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

ZOOM

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



BOARD MEETING

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



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

MEETING LOCATION

Temporary Meeting Site

Our monthly October meeting will be held at the Murphey Gallery at St. Philip's in the Hills Church, 4440 North Campbell. Located at the northeast corner of River and Campbell, it's just a stone's throw from our former meeting space at the Junior League.

The property can be accessed from westbound River Road by turning onto Camino Escuela or the next driveway before the light at Campbell. Watch for St. Philip's signs.

Going north on Campbell, take an immediate right onto the property after you go through the intersection and the road narrows.

We look forward to seeing you on Thursday, October 2nd at 7:00PM



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 **OCTOBER MEETING** we are asking members whose last names begin with "**A**" through "**G**" to bring something that would serve 10-12 people.

PUBLIC EVENTS



Cactus/Plant Sale!



OCTOBER 4th 8:00-2:00 pm
OCTOBER 5th 8:00-12:00 pm
2800 Block of E. 10th Street