



# ON THE DRY SIDE

DECEMBER 2025

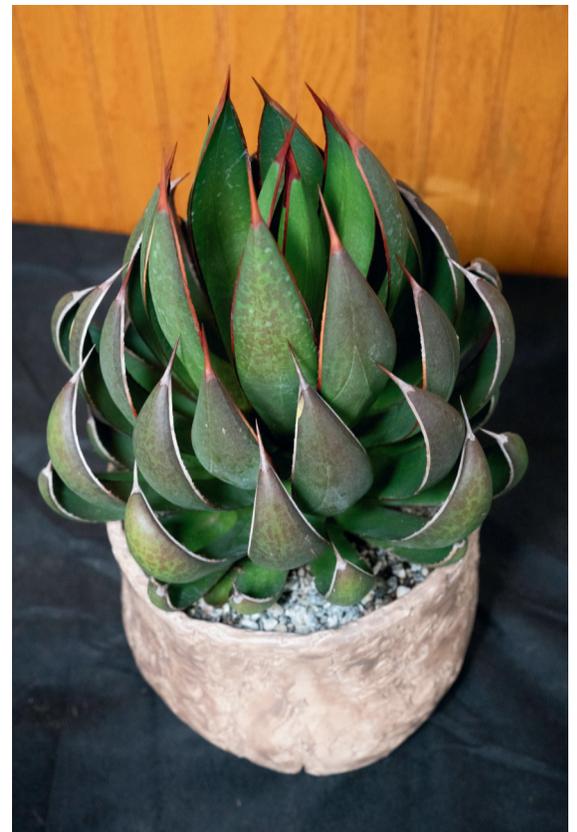
Dear fellow MBACSS members and fellow succulent lovers,

Well it is the end of 2025 and the end of my second term as President of MBACSS! Since the by-laws state that the President can only serve 2 two-year terms, that means I am retiring so this is my last "Letter from the President". I have mixed feelings of gratitude for you letting me serve the club in this way and gratitude that I can't do it again! Lots of things have changed since I was asked to take over during Covid (about 2020, when we were meeting on Zoom) including our new location for our monthly meetings and the new location for our Spring and Fall Sales and Shows. Lots of new members have joined us and several of our longest time members have passed, including Naomi Bloss, her daughter Lisa, Gary Stubblefield, and recently Roger Lane. Their absence is very truly felt, and we grieve for their loss to us and remember their contributions to MBACSS with gratitude. I am personally grateful for the work the Board and I have done together to keep MBACSS going and growing. We have made a good team and successfully have moved the club forward together.

Our new Board Members: Nancy Thomsen, President; Jon Lubbe, Vice President; Diane Salewski, the 3rd Member at Large were elected unanimously at our November Membership Meeting. Congrats to each of you and much good luck as you begin serving the club as Board Members. I look forward to new and even better things you will bring to us in the future.

The plans for our December End of the Year Holiday Party Auction coming up this Sunday are in full swing and should once again bring a lot of fun to our members. Nancy has included all the info you need in another part of the newsletter. I look forward to seeing you Sunday. Thanks for helping to make this a very good year for MBACSS.

Mary Louise Cross  
President, MBACSS



# APPROVED MINUTES

DECEMBER 2025  
PAGE 2

Call to Order: Mary Cross.

Members present: Mary Cross, Nancy Thomsen, Peter Beiersdorfer, Jorge Quiñonez, Dave Autore, David Kurtz, Diane Salewski, Meryl Abramson.

Minutes of 10/5/2025: Mary. October minutes reviewed and accepted as discussed.

Treasurer's Report: Mary. Accepted as presented.

Chairpersons' Reports:

Membership and Sunshine Committee: Mary. No updates this month.

Programs: Jorge. Oct. program did not take place as the floors at the Grange were being re-done. Nov. is Steve McCabe, and the election. Nancy has Jorge's raffle plants from last month and will provide them in November. Meryl will contact Daisy, and ask her to provide raffle plants in January instead of November.

Board Slate: All. Mary will create the ballot. Write-ins will be handled differently, to be explained at the meeting. If someone is nominated at the meeting and accepts, then that name will be hand-written by everyone onto their ballot. No members have come forward to compete for a spot on the Board. The nominations to date are as follows: Nancy for President, Lou for Treasurer, Jorge for Programs (and CSSA), Meryl for Secretary (and Raffles), Dave Autore and David Kurtz for Members-at-Large. Mary will be Past President, and the Board thanks her for six years of service! Lyn will continue at Membership, Cheryl at Sunshine, Diane S. as Website Manager. We still need a Vice President and one Member-at-Large, as well as a Librarian. The V.P. position primarily runs the Board meeting if the President is unavailable. The S&S Committee will replace Nancy as S&S Manager.

December is the holiday party. Jorge is working on programs for next year. Peter will send Jorge some information on a Sacramento talk about Conophytums. Peter can substitute as a speaker on short notice if he is in town.

CSSA: Jorge. No updates.

Old Business: All. Holiday Party: Dave Autore will be in charge of the Silent Auction. Dave will write up the rules to be placed into the newsletter so that members better understand the process. Nancy and Dave A. will provide the forms. Lyn & Lou will provide the food. Peter and Jan will run the Live Auction. For table decorations, Mary will bring decorations from last year and Diane S. will bring the show give-away plants.

New Business: All. Mary received an email from the Bonsai Society requesting us to share space at the Capitola Mall for a spring show, on the same spring date we have planned for. Rental price is substantially less than Portuguese Hall (which we can cancel and get our deposit back), and the Board enthusiastically agreed that we are interested. Mary will email Helen Klee our interest with a cc: Nancy; there are questions/concerns about safeguarding plants through the weekend. Nancy will speak with Helen. David K. is a member in the Orchid Society which shared space at the Mall last year. David will ask these questions and get info for Nancy. This will be on the agenda for next month.

Field Trip: Diane S. noted that Ruth Bancroft Garden does a holiday light show and will speak with Stan V. about coordinating a possible field trip.

Adjournment: Mary.

Respectfully submitted by Meryl Abramson

# HOLIDAY PARTY

DECEMBER 2025

PAGE 3

Our December meeting will be our annual end of the year banquet and auction. The reservation deadline has passed. If you RSVP'd here is a reminder of what is happening.

## LIVE AUCTION:

Each member may bring up to 3 plants for the live auction. Each plant should be at least \$30 in value.

## SILENT AUCTION:

Each member may bring up to 3 plants for the silent auction. Plants need to be valued between \$5 and \$30.

## PLANT EXCHANGE:

Members may bring 1 plant to enter in the plant exchange. This is a 1 for 1 exchange, you give one and you receive one. This plant must be clean and bug-free.

If you would like to bring additional plants, please be prepared to give them away on your own - the auctions and gift exchange cannot accommodate extras.

We need some help at this event - servers, auction clerks, set-up, tear down, clean up. Please be prepared to help in some way.

We will accept CASH, CHECKS, and CARDS this year



## MENU

Spiral Ham  
Roast Turkey  
Turkey Gravy  
Mushroom Gravy (vegan)  
Duchess Potatoes (vegan)  
Stuffing (vegan)  
Green Bean casserole (vegan)  
Roasted vegetables (vegan)  
Vegetarian Lasagna

Salads I will probably serve:  
Cold spinach Salad (vegan)  
Fennel salad with pears (vegan)  
Kale Salad (vegan)

## 2026 MEMBERSHIP DUES

Membership Dues for 2026 are payable by January 1, 2026. Single is \$25/year and Family is \$30/year. There are several ways you can pay your dues – online through our website, check by mail, or in person at a meeting. If you plan to attend the End of Year Party you need to pay before or at the time of the meeting December 21st.

If you plan to pay at a meeting, especially with cash, please fill out a form and attach your payment.

Please bring a check or exact change to place in the box for dues payments. Lyn will not be available to answer any membership questions at the party. If you have any questions about your membership status, please email Lyn before the party at: [mbacss.membership@gmail.com](mailto:mbacss.membership@gmail.com)

If you did not get a membership renewal email, you are okay.

MONTEREY BAY AREA

CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

**PLEASE PRINT**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**(required to receive newsletter)**

Renewing \_\_\_\_\_ New Member \_\_\_\_\_

Payment by: Check \_\_\_ Cash \_\_\_ CC \_\_\_

Type of Membership:

Single \$25 per year \_\_\_\_\_

Couple \$30 per year \_\_\_\_\_

You can renew membership or join online, or by mailing a check to:

Lou Falek, MBACSS Treasurer  
76 Nunes Road  
Watsonville, CA 95076

**CHECKS PAYABLE TO: MBACSS**

**To pay online go to:**

<http://mbsucculent.org/membership/>

New Members may bring dues to the first meeting they attend and give them to the Membership Chair

## BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO THE OPUNTIAS OF THE ALTIPLANO

**By Tom Glavich as published in "To The Point"**

September-October 2013

Edited by Mary Louise Cross

The Altiplano is the high altitude climatic region where Argentina, Chile, Bolivia and Peru meet. The altitude varies considerably from under 9000 feet to over 13,000 feet. Temperatures are more moderate than you might expect and are dependent on locations. Sunlight is intense, tree cover is nonexistent, and winds are nearly constant and often fierce.

Given how different the Altiplano is from the greenhouses and gardens of cactus growers it is amazing to see them being grown and shown at cactus shows everywhere. Even more amazing is cultivation in environments so different from their natural home is actually quite easy. They require little care, grow well in almost any quick draining natural mix, tolerate incredible abuse, and still look good, growing additional heads whenever given the opportunity. Like all cacti, they do best with a steady supply of fertilizer and acidified water, best simulating their natural environment. In nature, They grow slowly given the lack of nutrients. In pots, they can grow quickly, filling even a large pot in just a few years.

Most of the Altiplano Opuntias benefit from pruning which forces the low, ground hugging growth that is typical of habitat grown plants. If not pruned, they can grow too tall with heads that are loosely attached and wobbly.

Propagation is easy. Use a pair of pliers to gently remove whichever joint has become attached to your arm as you walk by! Place the separated joint about a quarter of the way down in potting mix with gravel placed around the base to about the half way point. Many species self-prune with joints departing the main plant and rolling into adjacent pots or work benches. Best results for propagation are obtained in spring or early fall.

As with nearly all cacti, mealy bugs are the worst enemy. White spined and wooly species give good hiding places, and a lot of damage can be done before you see the mealy bugs. The best treatment is a good soaking with any

insecticide, followed by a good washing the next day. This needs to be repeated about 4 or 5 days later to catch the newly hatched insects. A less poisonous and equally effective method for light to moderate infections is to soak the entire plant, including the roots and pot, in water with dish detergent. A soak of 4 to 8 hours generally produces good results and allows it to get into the smaller crevices where the insects and eggs are likely to hide. Be sure to submerge every part of the plant and pot.

The genera and species of the South American Opuntias are going through revisions. It is not unusual to find the same plant listed as an Opuntia, Tephrocactus, Puna, and Maihueniopsis, depending on the age of the source and the accepted author.



## UPCOMING MEETINGS:

**December 21, 2025**

End of Year Banquet and Auction

**January 18, 2026**

Speaker: Joseph Hidalgo

Topic: Habitat Style Staging

Mini Show: Show and Tell

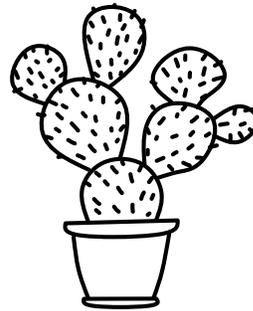
## FUTURE MBACSS SALES SAVE THE DATES

Here are the dates of the  
upcoming sales for 2026:

**Spring 2026 - April 25, 26**

**New venue - Capitola Mall**

**Fall 2026 - Sept 26, 27**



## SPRING SHOW AND SALE 2026

### Announcing Changes to the 2026 Spring Show and Sale!!!

A few months ago, we were invited to join the Santa Cruz Bonsai Kai at the Capitola Mall for our show and sale in April. Last month, I accepted the offer and earlier this month, a Show and Sale committee was formed. The dates are the same, April 25 & 26, 2026 with set up on Friday, April 24. Check the newsletter in the following months for more on this exciting new opportunity.

Nancy Thomsen  
Former show and sale chair



## 2025 OFFICERS

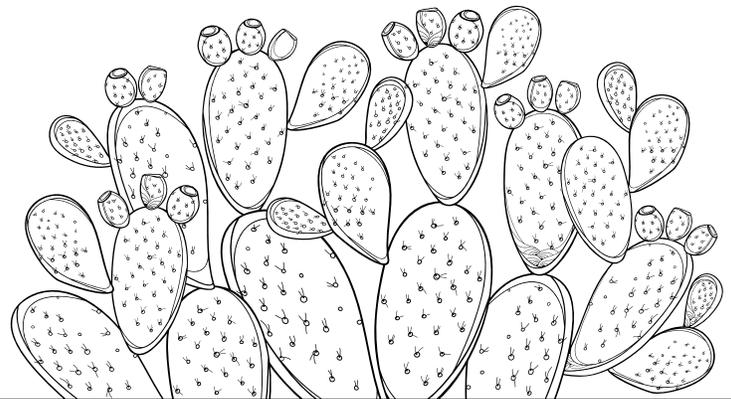
President - Mary Cross  
Vice President - Nancy Thomsen  
Secretary - Meryl Abramson  
Treasurer - Lou Falek  
Membership - Lyn MacDonald  
Affiliate Representative - Jorge Quiñónez  
Directors at Large  
David Kurtz  
Daisy Szeto  
Dave Autore  
Immediate Past President - Tom Karwin  
Founding Member - Naomi Bloss

## CHAIRPERSONS

Interim Librarian - David Kurtz  
Mini-Show - Stan Verkler  
Newsletter Editor - Nancy Thomsen  
Photography - Paul Albert  
Programs - Jorge Quiñónez  
Raffles - Meryl Abramson  
Sale Floor Manager - Peter Beiersdorfer  
Assistant Floor Manager - Janet Sparks  
Sunshine Committee - Cheryl Albert  
Webmaster - Diane Salewski  
Greeter - Dave Novarina

**See our website for  
more information!**

**[mbsucculent.org](http://mbsucculent.org)**



## **Our next membership meeting will be:**

**December 21, 2025  
Corralitos Grange  
165 Little Corral Way, Corralitos.**

There is plenty of parking near the hall and the building is ADA accessible.

Doors open at 11:00am

Bring your own lunch starts at 12:00pm

Meeting starts at 12:30pm