



# ON THE DRY SIDE

## SEPTEMBER 2026

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

September is always my busiest month. I thought I would have so much free time when the kids were out of the house. That was true for a few years, but then I started to get involved with groups. It didn't seem like much, but suddenly I have September commitments every weekend. This September is not much different. I think I have a weekend off at the end of the month, but I just remembered I have something that Saturday.

After the quick heat wave we had this month, my plants are happy. I have been growing plants for some time now, and still am learning about how to care for them. One of my aloes sent out a shoot and is rotting now. I raised that thing from a 3" pot. That's the life of an aloe.

Our August meeting was about plant photography. Everyone I talked to enjoyed the presentation and the photos. This month we will learn about orchids. Though orchids have different needs, many people combine orchids and succulents into displays. I think it will be another interesting presentation. There will be plants for sale, show and tell and a raffle. As usual we will eat lunch and chat before our meeting starts about 12:30.

**There will be an important and exciting announcement at the meeting Sunday.**

We have some fun events planned for the rest of the year - Ernesto Sandoval will be here next month for a hands-on demonstration of propagation by seeds, then Plant BINGO and then the Winter Banquet and Auction. Please plan to join us.

Nancy Thomsen  
President/Editor

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# MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order: Nancy Thomsen

Members present: Nancy Thomsen, Jon Lubbe, Mary Cross, Lyn MacDonald, Lou Falek, Jorge Quiñonez, Mary Edmond, Dave Autore, Andrea Michels, Meryl Abramson.

The Board welcomes Andrea Michels (attending) and Lynn Vieyra as Librarians.

Treasurer's report: Lou. Minimal financial activity this month.

Membership Report: Lyn. We seem to attract new members in bursts. Our latest new members are enthusiastic and involved, for which we are all grateful.

Next General Meeting (August): Nancy, Jorge. This month, Jaan Lepson will speak about photography. Peter B. will provide the raffle plants.

The Board chose the following categories for upcoming mini-shows; this is being decided early on so that our Librarians can prepare books based on both the speaker topic as well as the mini-show genus.

August—Lithops

September—Gasteria

October—Mammillaria

November—Aloe

Sept. speaker is Chris Thomas on Introduction to Orchids.

October is either Succulent Bingo and Ice Cream Social or Simon Szary who was scheduled to present in July but did not due to a date mix-up. The other option may be held for the January 2027 meeting.

November: Ernesto Sandoval will lead a workshop on growing succulents from seed.

December: Winter Banquet and Auction. Lyn agreed to prepare the food again. Dave A. will run the Silent Auction again, and will review the rules with membership via an upcoming newsletter.

New and Old Business: All. Nancy has communicated with Brian at the Mall, providing a date and an alternate for the Spring Show. She has given him time to respond, due to current events, an incident in the mall parking lot. Andrea noted that she is also a member of the Bonsai Kai.

Lyn is sometimes notified by membership of other plant sales. The Board agreed she should send them to Nancy for inclusion in the newsletter.

Dave A. will tag-team with Paul A. in bringing the screen and projector, as needed. These items are stored at the Albert home.

Adjournment: Nancy.

Respectfully submitted by Meryl Abramson

# SEPTEMBER SPEAKER

## YOU CAN DO THIS! (GROW ORCHIDS) CHRIS THOMAS



Chris Thomas is a writer and editor who's been growing orchids as a hobbyist for 25 years – in Boise, Seattle and now in Central California – and still considers herself a novice. Chris remembers how hard it was to even pronounce some of the plant names, let alone figure out how to take care of them! Her presentation – “You Can Do This!” – is a lively look at orchid parenthood, how to keep your plants alive and even get them to rebloom.



# BEGINNER'S GUIDE

## BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO PARODIA

From an article by Tom Glavich  
In "To The Point", August 2005

Parodia are wonderfully geometric and colorful cacti, readily accessible to the beginner, and capable of making it as the 'best in show' in any collection. They flower freely with vibrant colored flowers, open during the day. They are magnificent cacti, generally easy to grow, and displaying some of the best geometric spinations in the entire family. The genus includes everything from small plants never outgrowing a 3 or 4 inch pot, to true barrel cacti.

The genus Parodia has grown over the years, now encompassing Noctocactus, after Noctocactus swallowed the smaller Wigginsia, Brazilicactus, Eriocactus and several other even more obscure genera. As more and more different species and locality data become available, taxonomists realized how variable some of the species and genera are and how poorly and arbitrarily the boundaries between genera were defined.

Parodia are South American cacti, with the center of the genus in Brazil, but with members throughout the eastern side of the Andes. Almost all are easy to grow, growing freely in the spring through the early fall, and going more or less dormant as night time temperatures drop below 50 F. Some will flower in mid-winter, and given their native environment, most do better if given a little water year around. Some of the more tropical species need protection from cold, damp weather to prevent scarring, but most are surprisingly hardy. They do well in standard, quick draining cactus mix. They often occur in grasslands, and have a bit more organic material available to them than some other genera. They do well with regular fertilization throughout their growing season, with most growth taking place in the spring before the major summer heat arrives.

The main cultural difficulties encountered with these plants are the ones common to all cacti: mealybugs, spider mites, and fungal spots. Mealybugs can be kept away by keeping the plants clean and keeping ants away from the pots. Spider mites can appear anytime. A periodic hosing of the plants will keep them away as well. Fungal spots and creeping crud growing from the base can be kept at bay by keeping the plants in growth as much as possible by fertilizing regularly and keeping the growing area clean and debris-free to allow as much free air movement as possible.

All the species are easy to grow from seed. Seed is available for nearly all the species, general with variants from specific localities. The seed germinates readily and can grow into a show quality plant in just a few years. Vegetative propagation of the clustering types is easy as well. Cuttings taken during the late spring and early summer root in a few weeks and will show new growth before the season is over. This is best a most quickly done in a shady location, where there is moving air. In humid environments, a little horticultural sulfur or rooting hormone with fungicide will prevent rot on the newly cut surfaces.

Edited by Mary Louise Cross

# AUGUST MEETING



# CLUB NEWS

## SANTA CRUZ COUNTY FAIR

The club has a table at the Santa Cruz County Fair this weekend. We still need volunteers. If you can volunteer for a shift, you will get a parking pass and entry into the fair for the day.

Email Jon Lubbe to make arrangements:  
jonlubbe@gmail.com

## PLANT SALE

After the success of having a vendor bring plants for sale at the last meeting, the board has decided to invite a vendor to sell plants at regular meetings. Everyone seemed to enjoy the plants, Peter sold some and members got together to talk and get to know each other. This is also another chance for our local vendors to sell plants when there are no other sales happening. Jorge will bring plants this month.

## NOVEMBER MEETING

Our November meeting will be our first attempt at Plant BINGO. Everyone will receive a BINGO card and plant species will be called. When someone fills their card, they win a nice plant. We expect to do 4 - 5 rounds of the game. There is no charge to members to participate.

## WINTER BANQUET AND AUCTION

In December, we will have our annual Winter Banquet and Auction. Start propping you plants now for the live and silent auctions. More information will be in upcoming newsletters.

"Here is a late summer blooming Aloe. That is a lovely sized plant, adding its beautiful color orange to the garden!" - Kathy Wittpenn

## UPCOMING MEETINGS:

**October 18, 2026**

Speaker: Ernesto Sandoval  
Topic: Propagation from seed  
Mini Show: Mammallaria

**November 15, 2026**

Plant BINGO!

**December 20, 2026**

Winter Banquet and Auction



# Leadership

## 2026 OFFICERS

**President:** Nancy Thomsen  
**Vice President:** Jon Lubbe  
**Secretary:** Meryl Abramson  
**Treasurer:** Lou Falek  
**Membership:** Lyn MacDonald  
**Affiliate Representative:** Jorge Quiñónez  
**Directors at Large:**  
**Dave Autore**  
**Diane Salewski**  
**Mary Edmund**  
**Immediate Past President:** Mary Cross

## CHAIRPERSONS

**Librarians:** Andrea Michels & Lynn Vieyra  
**Newsletter Editor:** Nancy Thomsen  
**Newsletter Designer:** Leia Dilley  
**Photography:** Paul Albert & Dave Autore  
**Programs:** Jorge Quiñónez  
**Raffles:** Meryl Abramson  
**Sales Floor Manager:** Peter Beiersdorfer  
**Assistant Floor Manager:** Janet Sparks  
**Sunshine Committee:** Paul Albert  
**Webmaster:** Diane Salewski  
**Greeter:** Dave Novarina

**See our website for  
more information!**

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

## MEMBERSHIP MEETING INFORMATION

There is plenty of parking near the hall and the building is ADA accessible.  
Doors open at 11:30am  
Bring your own lunch starts at 12:00pm  
Meeting starts at 12:30pm

**Location:**  
**Corralitos Grange**  
**165 Little Corral Way, Corralitos.**