ON THE DRY SIDE

NOVEMBER 2026

Monterey Bay Area Cactus & Succulent Society

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We finally are getting our nice fall weather, warm and clear, but it's about to start raining and that is my plants' favorite time. The ph balance in rain water perks up my plants. Some start growing, some bloom and all of them look happy. I take my greenhouse and indoor plants out to get some rain. I also collect some rain water to use for the next watering.

As the year winds down, I find myself busier than usual. My calendar is filled with appointments, meetings and trips. I had a hearing test this week. The last hearing check I remember was in grade school. This test was very different. In the end, my hearing is good. The day after our meeting, we leave for a quick trip to SoCal. Our office building is being painted and we're getting a new sign. These are just a few of the things going on this month.

Last month we had a fun meeting that included BINGO and ice cream. I heard so many members say how much fun it was. Thank you to Jorge for giving a brief description of the plants called for BINGO and thank you to Meryl for bringing the ice cream. We will do this activity again next year.

This month we will have a propagation from seed workshop. Ernesto Sandoval will bring seeds and we all will plant our own under his guidance. This will be another fun and educational activity.

Next month is our Winter Banquet and Auction Sunday, December 20. If you plan to attend, you must make a reservation. Email Lyn MBACSS.membership@gmail.com to reserve your place. More information later in the newsletter.

The end of the year is also the time to renew your membership. Memberships run from January 1 to December 31 no matter what time of year you joined. You can renew on-line, by mail or in person at a meeting. The best choice for the club is to go to the website and renew online. http://mbsucculent.org/membership Check the newsletter for other options.

See you Sunday,
Nancy Thomsen
President

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Meeting Minutes

Call to Order: Nancy Thomsen

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

Notes, not Minutes, were not taken at September's Board Meeting.

Treasurer's report:Lou. Minimal financial activity this month. We have paid for three years of web hosting, and that is now on auto-pay.

Membership Report:Lyn. During the Club's attendance at the County Fair, 16 people requested more information. Lyn has sent individual letters to each person who expressed interest.

Santa Cruz County Fair:All who volunteered. We were able to cover all 5 days of the Fair, with little notice. Jon spoke with Kevin of the Horticulture area, and Kevin would like to have more plants for the contest. A member concern is that the plants are outside and not secure. Other thoughts: A prep sheet or script would be helpful for volunteers (Lyn provided something, and it was very helpful). A table cloth with our club logo would be great. Also, we could promote volunteers to bring their own plants for show, and provide a club sticker on each pot.

Last Month's General Meeting (September): All.Chris Thomas talked about orchids and was well received: interesting, well-presented information. It was good to have a vendor at the meeting, and sales did not detract from the raffle.

This Month's General Meeting (October): All. We are trying something different. This will be a social meeting to replace the County Store. We will have an ice cream social after lunch, and will play 4 games of Bingo, cards provided.The Board wishes to thank Diane S. for her hard work creating the cards, and to Nancy for printing them.We will have a raffle with plants provided by Stan, who will also bring plants as this month's vendor, and provide Bingo prize plants. Raffle plants will be fewer but nicer and less common. The raffle will be held after Bingo.

The Raffle bag has been located.

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.
October—Mammillaria.November—Aloe. Please bring a favorite plant in that category and receive 2 free raffle tickets.

November: Ernesto Sandoval will lead a workshop on growing succulents from seed.
December: Winter Banquet and Auction.

Old and New Business:All. Lyn will purchase brisket from Aptos BBQ for the Winter Banquet, and the Club will pay for it. She will make GUEST badges since some people seem to be attending meetings but have yet to join. All, please encourage membership to those with GUEST badges.

For the live auction, Dave will use a station with computer to project each plant full size on the screen for easy viewing, hopefully promoting even more bids!
Mary E. will help Dave with the auction.

Adjournment: Nancy.
Respectfully submitted by Meryl Abramson

November Speaker

Propagation of Succulents from Seed: Tricks and Techniques

By Ernesto Sandoval

Ernesto will share his tips, and tricks for improving seed germination in a special live demonstration. If you haven't tried growing from seed, or if you are looking for ways to increase your success rate, check out his presentation, which will include a hands on demo. He will share seeds of Aloes, Agaves, and at least one of his favorite South African bulbs, Ornithogalum fimbrimarginatum. Participants will take home a pot of sown succulent seed to watch them grow at home!



Ernesto has been investigating why plants grow and look the way they do for nearly 40 years. Now he explains and interprets various aspects of the world of plants to a wide audience, from amateurs to professional gardeners. Ernesto regularly gives presentations to succulent societies and garden clubs throughout California, helping others understand the why and how of plants with minimal scientific jargon.

Ernesto received a degree in botany at UC Davis, and worked his way up over 30 years from student weeder/waterer to the Director of the UC Davis Botanical Conservatory. He is currently a graduate student at UC Davis, conducting experiments on container media (aka potting soil) for succulents, California natives, and Mediterranean climate plants.

Beginner's Guide to Growing Cacti and Succulents, "Doubting Dormancy"

By Roger Brown from November – December 1999 issue of "To The Point"

I am a self-proclaimed tree-gazer contentedly drinking in the annual spectacle of fall colors. Watching their leaves fly is a stimulus to address the myth of dormancy. This is not a suspension of life that I once thought it was. Our succulent plants dismantle for storage the oils, fats, starches, and sugars in their leaves before leaf stalk bases dry and are pinched off. By the time the leaves dop off these products have been converted to winter goods. It is sort of like a squirrel storing a pile of nuts for winter.

The lesson here is not to pick half-dead leaves from your plants while grooming in the fall. These are storehouses of food that your plant has not had time to move. Once the leaves have dropped, hormones are manufactured to preven growth of new buds, and alcohols and sugars are manufactured in abundance to act as antifreeze protecting against cold damage. It's hard to imagine our plants spending their winter bathed in sugar and stewed on alcohol

Plants that embrace an annual dormant rest are born with yardsticks that may be used to measure the length of their dormancy. For some it is the length of ay. Certain plants can discern as little as a fifteen minute change in duration of daylight. They know the month of December as surely as you do when looks at the calendar. Others measure the number of hours of low temperatures. Most plant that winter over outdoors must have at least 900 hours of cool temperatures before awakening in the spring

The most important thing to remember is that even though your plants are resting, roots continue to grow all winter. Growing roots need a little water throughout the winter, or they will die. All of my plants receive light watering at least on a monthly basis during their winter rest. There are a few highly specialized plants, such as Lithops, that are an exception to this rule.

Succulent sense, where does it reside? Our plans have no eyes, ears, brains or nerves. Think of each plant as a miniature city, a community of cells that work together for the common good. Each cell transmits the limited information it has through protoplasmic strands connecting each its neighbor. Every protoplasmic strand enters its neighbor through pores in its cell wall. Plant behavior is so strange that you will frequently find truly shocking errors in our thinking. Plant myths abound, and many questions, but few answers. Success will follow those that seek out those answers.

Until recent it was assumed that plants were silent, and nor form of life could be more noiseless that the lowly plant but researchers in the United States, Great Britain and Israel used photo-acoustic spectroscopy to search for plant sounds beyond the range of human hearing. This research has shown that even the lowly corn stalk produces many sounds that no human ear can hear. It is believed that plants hear but in a different way. They sense vibrations and respond either favorably or unfavorably toward the sound source. It has been proved that plants exposed to classical musical forms exhibited rapid growth toward the source of the sounds, but those exposed to rock music grew away from the sound, and even tried to climb the slippery walls of their glass cage. The conclusion was that the harmonics of highly structured music has a positive stimulating effect on organic life. Even plants need more than just food to be happy!

Edited by Mary Cross

OCTOBER MEETING

















Winter Banquet and Auction

Our December meeting will be our annual Winter Banquet and Auction

Date: December 20, 2026
Location: Corralitos Grange Hall Time: 10:30 opens for setup and decorating
Lunch: 12:00-12:30
Silent Auction: Tables start closing at 12:30 Live Auction Begins: 12:30-1:00
RSVP: No later than December 7, 2026

We have started taking reservations. Membership Chair Lyn will sents an email to all members explaining the event and instructions for reserving space. I know we are all busy, but we need to let Lyn know how many people we expect so we will have food for everyone. You don't want to miss this meal. As usual it will be delicious and have something for everyone.

Live auction members may bring up to 3 plants with at least a $30 value
Silent auction members may bring up to 5 plants with a value between $5 and $25
No plant exchange this year







Dues

Membership Dues for 2027 are payable by January 1, 2027

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. mbsucculent.org/membership

If you plan to pay at a meeting please fill out the dues form, bring a check or exact change and place the box for dues payments at the entrance. If you have any questions about your membership status, please email Lyn by email: mbacss.membership@gmail.com

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

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

November 15, 2026
Speaker: Ernesto Sandoval
Topic: Propagation from seed workshop
Show & Tell: Mammallaria

December 20, 2026
Winter Banquet and Auction

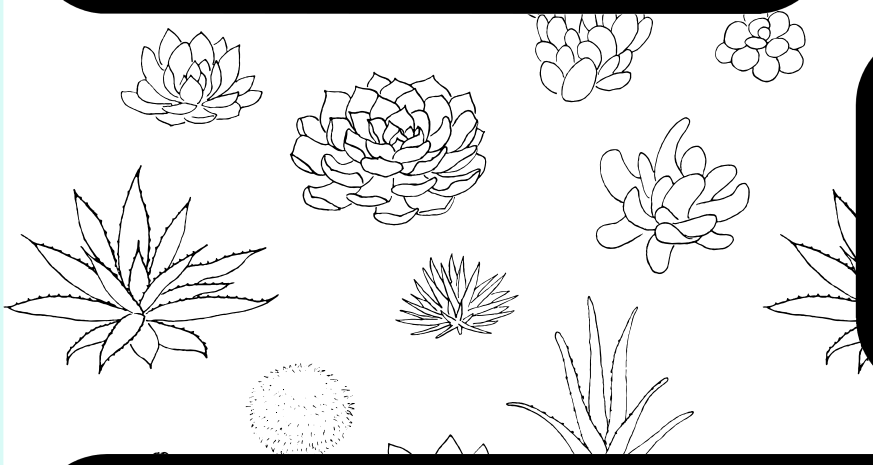
Leadership

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

Membership Meeting Information

Location:
Corralitos Grange
165 Little Corral Way, Corralitos.

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