



SACXS FACTS

January 2020

Volume 32; Issue 1

President's Message



We had a lot of a wonderful activity, excellent programs, and success for the Club in 2019. So now we're off to 2020 at four hundred miles per hour with our hair on fire. It's going to be a fun ride.

Mandy Bulmer, our Program Director and First V.P., already has a number of programs planned for the first part of the year. I think you will be entertained and enlightened with each one. Plus the 2020 SACXS Show and Sale will be here in a flash. There will be a ton of activity leading into the Spring. As we head into the new decade, consider the following:

As you may recall, my stated vision for last year was to embrace the original Club mission: *"To increase the knowledge of, to propagate, to identify, and to preserve endangered species of desert plants and to encourage others to do the same"* as recorded in the original minutes of that first meeting. I think we are on the road toward accomplishing that goal together, but we still have a lot of work to do.

This year, let's strive to work together to accomplish our educational goals, to maintain friendships, and to have a good time while doing so. We literally will start out 2020 with a speaker from the opposite side of the globe from Melbourne Australia. I'm looking forward with anticipation and excitement to an action-packed, successful year. See you at the meeting in January.

Jimmy Black

2020 Board of Directors

President: Jimmy Black

1st VP/Programs & Show Chair: Mandy Bulmer

2nd VP/Membership: Anna Marie Stern

3rd VP/Tours/Field Trips: Alyssa Danna

Treasurer: Don Clark

Recording Secretary: Judy Kugle

Publicity Secretary: Linda Lopez de Roman

Director: Barbara Schulze

Director: Linda Draper

Director and Newsletter Editor: Ann Black



Meeting Information

The January meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 1-15-20

at the San Antonio Garden Center, 3342 North New Braunfels

Social time: 6:45pm

Meeting Begins at: 7:15pm

Speaker: Chuck Cerrillo,
from Melbourne Australia

Topic: Aeoniums & A Report on Current
Conditions in the Homeland



Get ready for another interesting presentation from Down Under. Chuck Cerrillo with Cerriscapades will be joining us for a virtual presentation on Aeoniums. Aeoniums are a fascinating genera of succulents which can be grown in the milder, temperate regions. They do have some special growth requirements.

While their weather is similar to ours in some respects, parts of Australia have experienced drought along with record temperatures this summer, and are currently in the midst of one of the worst bushfire seasons on record. The loss thus far of human life, homes, wildlife, and habitat is staggering. Chuck will report on current conditions and how he and other residents are coping with the forces of nature.



Chuck is the curator of an amazing *Echeveria* collection as well as many other beautiful succulents. His garden is the subject of a popular YouTube Channel "Let's Plant". Check out his website: www.cerriscapades.com & Cerriscapades on Facebook

We will connect to Australia via satellite...

January Auction Plant Assignments

Karl and Kay Knox

Carolyn and Robert Komada

Judy Kugle

Lynn Lee



Dues Are Due

*Dear SACXS Members:
It's time to renew your
membership.*

There are two ways to pay:

- At the January meeting.
- Online at www.sacxs.org
via PAY PAL.

One Year Single Membership: \$20.00

One Year Family Membership: \$30.00



Show & Sale News

Dear Fellow SACXS Members,

Welcome to 2020! The 42nd Annual SACXS Show & Sale will be here before we know it! This year, the Show and Sale dates are April 23-25. The three days of our Show and Sale are honestly some of my favorite days of the year.

The SACXS Show & Sale is held at the San Antonio Garden Center (a logical location), and is packed with a variety of fantastic vendors, educational displays, and special activities for children in the Kid Zone. Throughout the Show and Sale, we have hourly raffles, silent auctions (Thursday and Friday), and live auctions (Friday and Saturday). Lunch is provided to volunteers and vendors, we advertise with social media and signage (including yard signs, banners, and fliers), and we have volunteers around the Garden Center helping visitors. As always, we have the best vendors selling a huge selection of fascinating cactus & succulents and the best member volunteers who make the Show & Sale a success.

Our 2019 Show & Sale was the best ever – best attendance, most profitable, and best member participation. If you've been around a bit, this is the case every year, so this year we've got big shoes to fill! It takes a village to pull off a successful Show and Sale, and every volunteer is important to that success. There are a few open spots on the Show committee, so if you want to volunteer to help right now, it's never too soon. You can reach out to me via email or text/call me to get connected.

Mandy Bulmer
2020 SACXS Show & Sale Chairman
Programs@sacxs.org
210- 274-6524

P.S. Check out photos from the 2019 Show & Sale. Text sacxs to 56512 on your cell phone to go to our mobile website. Click on Past Events.

P.P.S. If you've got raffle plants started, don't forget to water them!

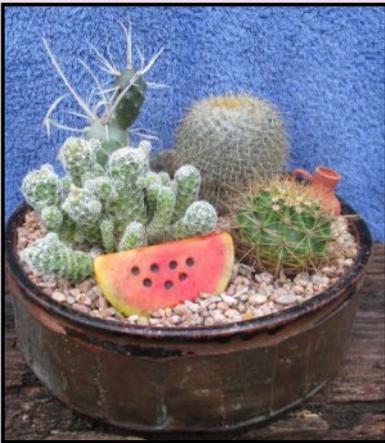


Show and Sale Silent Auction

Happy New Year! Happy New Decade! With the New Year, 2020, it's time to start planning ahead for yet another outstanding Silent Auction during our 2020 Show and Sale.

Once again this year, I'm serving on the Show and Sale Committee by heading up the effort to make our Silent Auction even more successful than last year. Last year's Silent Auction was very successful with almost our entire Silent Auction items being beautiful dish gardens and nicely potted specimen plants donated by our members. There was a lot of lively bidding as our Show and Sale guests vied to own these one of a kind offerings. We raised a record amount of money and had fun doing it.

Any success we have with the Silent Auction is due solely to YOU. Without your help donating your time and talent to make and care for the dish gardens; helping run the Silent Auction it just would not have happened. Not wanting to mess with a good thing, I'd like to repeat what we did last year and concentrate again this year on dish gardens and nicely potted plants for the majority of our Silent Auction offerings. For our non-plant donations we would like to request the truly unique items like art work, handmade things, vintage items ...all cactus or succulent themed. Our space for the Silent Auction is limited, so we want to get the most we can from our donations.



Here are several ways you can help make the Silent Auction a success.

- **Volunteer to help run the Silent Auction (Thursday and Friday of the Show and Sale)**
- **Donate dish garden containers**
- **Donate plants, either specimens or smaller ones for dish gardens**
- **Donate dish gardens**
- **Participate in one of our "*Dishapalooza*" events : Sunday, February 16, 2020 from 1-4 pm and Monday, February 17, 2020 (Presidents Day) from 1-4 at my home.**

I've started prowling through thrift stores and purchasing containers for dish gardens. I've drilled holes in quite a few already.

Since we all seem to enjoy making dish gardens I thought it would be fun to have a couple of "*Dishapalooza*" events where we can get together to make up dish gardens for the Silent Auction, have snacks and visit. If you've never made a dish garden before, several experienced "dish gardeners" will be on hand to offer suggestions for creating spectacular dish gardens that will bring high prices at the Silent Auction.

The "*Dishapalooza*" events will be at my home on Sunday, February 16; and Monday, February 17 from 1-4 pm both days. We'll work in my carport and I'll have the fire pit and chiminea working so we can warm up if it's too chilly. I'll have snacks and something to drink. We can use the containers I've been collecting but I would encourage attendees to bring containers they want to donate. We will provide some cuttings and small plants but please bring any you might want to donate as long as they're healthy and suitable for planting in dish gardens or alone as specimen plants. We'll have soil and top dressing available along with a limited selection of pots and other containers. If you can, please bring any containers you might have or find between now and then (if they need to be drilled and you can't do it, we'll do it that day), and your favorite potting tools. I always like to add a pretty rock or piece of wood or some other interesting thing to my dish gardens so if you have things like that, feel free to bring them along too.

At the end of our session, I hope you will be able to take your creations home to care for until the Show and Sale in April.

Attendance will be limited to 12 persons per session due to space constraints. Text me at 210-508-2997 with your name and what day(s) you want to attend. Or email me at draperl@prodigy.net . I'll let you know final details on times in the first week of February.

The pictures are examples of the type of dish gardens we hope to make.

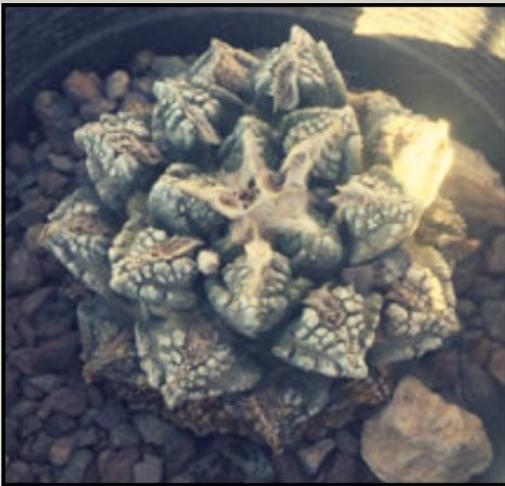
Linda Draper, Show and Sale Silent Auction Chairman



***Ariocarpus fissuratus*:**

A strange little plant with a big following

by Jimmy Black



This is the first in a series of articles about *Ariocarpus fissuratus* (formerly known as *Anhalonium fissuratus*). We will start with the basics about this unusual plant. *A. fissuratus* is the only US representative of a small genus of spineless cacti that grow close to the ground, with the greater part of the plant below the surface, above a thick taproot. *A. fissuratus* is found in very small numbers in west Texas as well as northern Mexico. The distribution in Texas centers in Brewster County (Big Bend Country) and runs for a modest if not short distance both east and west along the Rio Grande. During dry periods the stems shrink and become even less visible, merging with the ground, hence the common name of living rock cactus. Other common names include false peyote and star cactus.

A. fissuratus contain many small warty, triangular outgrowths called tubercles which emerge from a large tap root. They are usually solitary plants (without off shoots) but commonly are in groups (sometimes large). The plant is greyish-green in color, sometimes taking on a yellowish tint with age. Its growth rate is extremely slow taking a decade or more to reach maturity (signified by its ability to bloom). *A. fissuratus* are naturally camouflaged in habitat, making it difficult to spot. However, in October and November, their pinkish bloom is a giveaway to their location (Photos by Jimmy Black & Wynn Anderson).



Because of the slow growth rate, *A. fissuratus* in cultivation is often grafted to a faster-growing columnar cactus to speed growth. Unfortunately, because the growth rate is so slow, there is a market for plants removed from habitat and sold on the black market. This is especially true for demand from Asian countries where these small but mature plants sell for \$200 each.

One additional attribute that has made *A. fissuratus* popular is the unsupported (and in my opinion incorrect) observation that the plant has psychoactive, Peyote-like effects. *A. fissuratus* has been used by Native American tribes as a mind-altering substance, usually as a substitute for peyote. However, *A. fissuratus* does NOT contain mescaline (like peyote). The plant does contain other centrally active substances, such as hordenine but the concentrations are too low to be active.

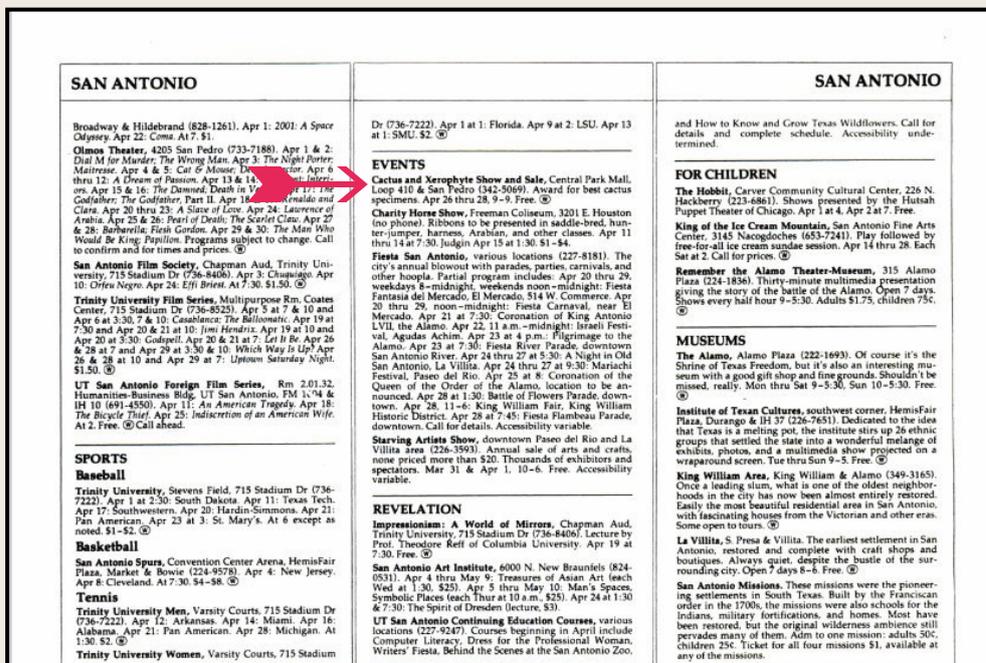
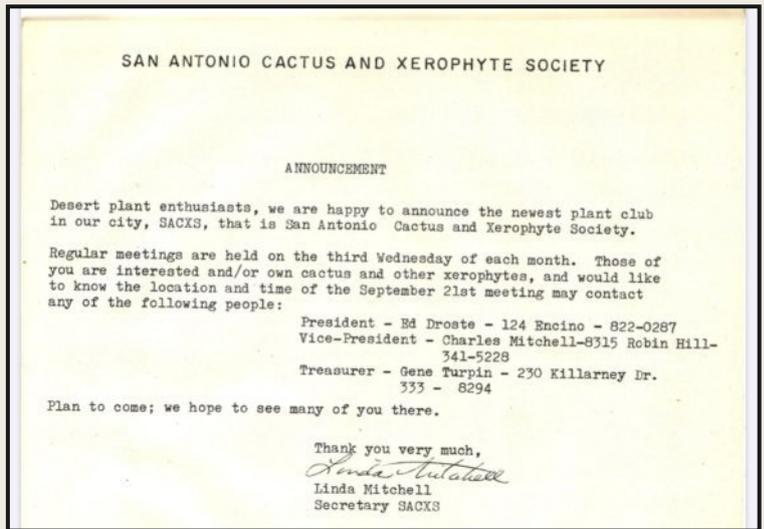
Over the coming months, we will explore several aspects of this little plant. This will include its disappearance from habitat due to poaching, efforts to reintroduce the plant into habitat, and other issues I hope you will find of interest. With the ultimate goal to help this little plant survive for generations to come.

If you would like to contribute an article on xerophytes and club happenings, submit your item as an email attachment or JPEG file to: annblack96@yahoo.com.

A Blast From The Past

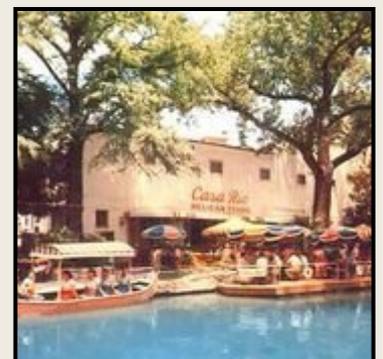
A Bit of SACXS History from from 1977 to 1980: "The Early Years"

The San Antonio Cactus and Xerophyte Society was founded by Dr. Al Droste and held its first meeting on August 17, 1977. Twenty people attended, and the first officers were elected. As life members recall, club meetings were held in member's private homes, and the first officers were elected. As life members recall, club meetings were held in member's private homes. During the first few years, the club members entered plants in the Garden Center annual plant show and took top awards with their entries.



Later on the Club began to hold meetings at the Garden Center. It also established its own Shows and Sales at the Central Park Mall. Here is one of the announcements from the April issue of Texas Monthly Magazine in 1979.

Here is what the Riverwalk looked like in 1980. The population of San Antonio was 785,880. The San Antonio Botanical Garden opened its gates in 1980.



Time passes so quickly, and the decades roll by. Our Club History is so important. We have lost some of our older members, and with it our early heritage. If you have old photos, newsletters and other vintage items from SACXS and wish to share them, please contact: Ann Black, Newsletter Editor: annblack96@yahoo.com

