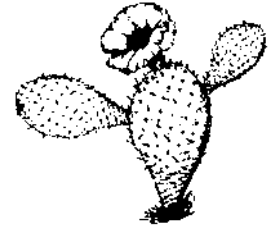


# THE CACTUS PATCH



*Opuntia basilaris var. treleasei*

Volume 17 **August 2014** Number 8

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAKERSFIELD CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

This Month's Program

**Tour and Meeting at  
Robby's Nursery and  
Calico Garden  
4002 Terracotta Ct.  
Bakersfield, CA 93314  
6:00 PM**

## Monthly Meeting

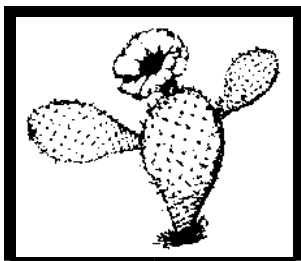
**Tuesday,  
August 12  
At  
6:00 PM**

**SEPTEMBER MEETING  
Planning for the  
Fair Exhibit 09/17-28  
and Show & Sale @  
East Hills Mall  
OCTOBER 11 and 12**

The Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society  
% Polly Hargreaves, editor  
pollypearl@hotmail.com



***Leuchtenbergia principis***  
a Mexican cactus  
with elongated tubercles  
photo by BJH

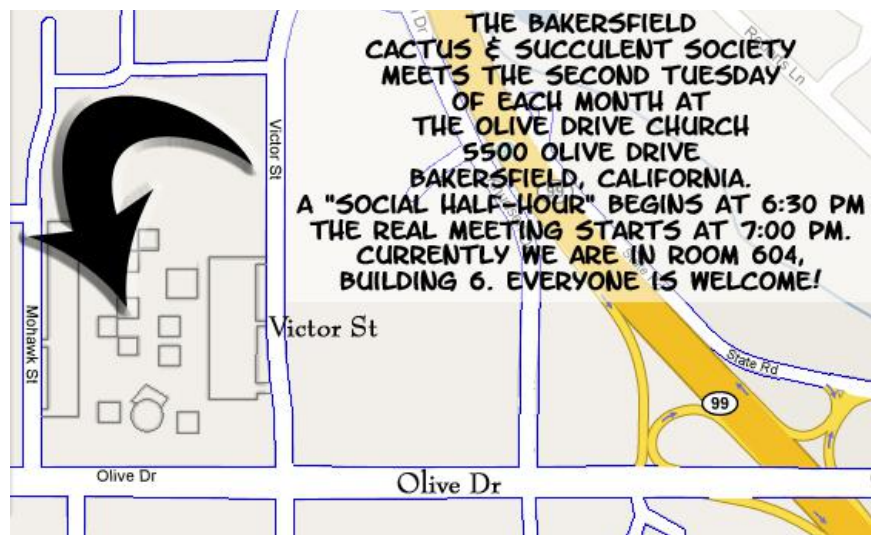


# The Cactus Patch

## Volume 17 Number 8

### August 2014

The Cactus Patch is the official publication of the Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society of Bakersfield, California



Membership in the Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society costs \$10 per year for an individual and only \$15 a year for a family.

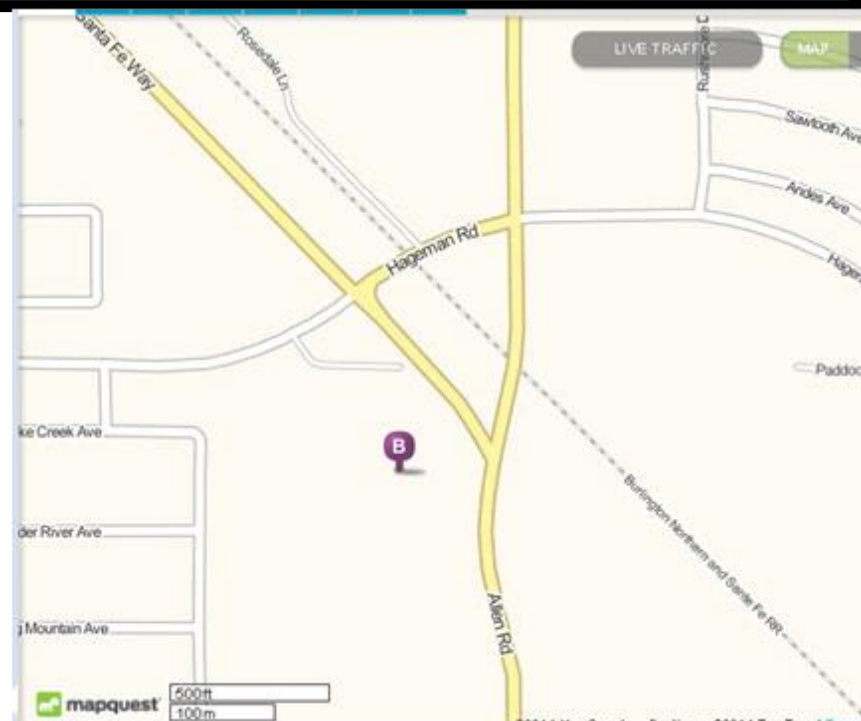
Visit Us On the Web!

[www.BakersfieldCactus.org](http://www.BakersfieldCactus.org)

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## AUGUST 12, Meeting



### [Robby's Nursery & Calico Gardens](#)

Robby's Nursery is a family owned buisness that's been in Bakersfield for 50 years this 2012. We truely love owning a nursery. We carry a full line of trees, shrubs, perennials, color, sprays and garden gifts. We feature many drought tolerant plants.

Kathy Robinsno, our guide and speaker, has gardening articles published monthly in the Bakersfield Voice.

Drive west on Hageman, cross Allen Road, and turn south onto Hageman frontage Road.Go South on Terracotta Court to entrance.

**4002 Terracotta Ct, Bakersfield, CA 93314**

# July 8, 2014

We met at “Cactus Bar and Grill”  
for a great dinner. The Salsa/Chips and Drinks kept coming as we  
waited for our food.  
(That's what happens when 20+ orders go into the kitchen at once!)

## Dinner Table

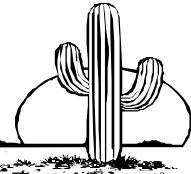


# September 9, 2014

Planning for Kern County Fair display  
Sep 17, 2014 - Sep 28, 2014

Planning for the Show and Sale Oct 9-11  
**FRIDAY SET UP: Oct 10: Friday afternoon. Around 3 pm.**  
**PLANT SET UP: Oct 11: Saturday 7 am to 10 am**  
**SHOW HOURS: Oct 11: Saturday 10 am to 5 pm**  
**Oct 12: Sunday 11 am to 4 pm**  
**TAKE DOWN: Sunday 4 pm to 6 pm. We're usually done**  
**about 5 pm.**

## UPCOMING EVENTS



**July 25-27: Orange County C&SS Show and Sale**  
Fri/Sat:9AM-5PM; Sun: Noon -4PM  
1000S. State College Blvd Anaheim CA (949-212-3417)

**Aug 9-10: 29<sup>th</sup> InterCity Show and Sale**  
L.A. County Arboretum 9AM -5PM  
301 Baldwin Ave. Arcadia CA

**Aug 30: Huntington Symposium**  
Huntington Botanical Gardens; All Day  
Info: 626-405-2169

Sep 17, 2014 - Sep 28, 2014 Kern County Fair display

Oct 11--12: Show and Sale at East Hills Mall

# The Succulent Garden at Cal State



## *Euphorbia antisiphilitica*

Candelilla is a very drought resistant and heat resistant plant of the chihuahuan desert. It's native range is northern Mexico and stretches from Texas to Baja California. It has long thin stems that form a large clump up to two feet tall. Though the

flowers are small, they can occur in abundance and are quite fetching when viewed up close.

To protect itself from water loss, candililla stems are coated in a grey wax. This wax has proven valuable for all sorts of things from chewing gum to varnish. The harvesting of candililla is making it harder to find in the wild (apparently cultivated plants do not produce enough wax).



As a garden plant *Euphorbia antisiphilitica* does not fit in well with the typical 'cottage garden' but it fits right in with a more desert themed landscape. Not only can it take extreme heat, it is hardy to well below freezing. Given our present lack of rainfall, this is a plant to look for when planning your xeriscape.

Stephen Cooley

# FIFTY Years!

A Letter From Bruce



It's hard to believe, but Polly and I have been married for fifty years! The celebration actually began a day

early on 18 June when eleven yellow roses arrived.

Polly e-mailed her sister Cathy who had sent them and by Friday we had an additional dozen roses, the intended number.

On the day we went to Denny's for an early breakfast to celebrate Lora's husband Dave's birthday since Denny's offers a free birthday meal. Polly and I then went to our Silver Sneakers exercise group where they sang to us. We then went to Chuy's and had a pitcher of margaritas with lunch. We watched a preliminary world football cup game between Japan and Greece. It was a boring game with no one scoring. We then had supper at the Elephant Bar. I ordered an "Island" Tilapia just out of curiosity as to what that means. It was very ordinary with a tiny touch of mango in the garnish. I think it was meant to portray an image of tropical isles, but since Tilapia is a fresh water fish found in inland lakes and streams, this doesn't quite work. I suppose you could count Mumbo Island in Lake Malawi which is tropical and freshwater and has Tilapia. (There was even a fishing camp when we visited it, although it is now part of Lake Malawi National Park.) To make it appropriate for the Elephant Bar, it should be noted that an alternate name for the island is Elephant Island since an elephant was found there, having, apparently, swum the five miles from the mainland!

Next morning we opened the newspaper and found a picture from our wedding! It was said to be from our kids and grandkids, but we have learned that it was placed by our daughter-in-law Emily. There was also a note from Polly in Herb Benham's column.



He had mentioned missing some of the World Cup due to a visit to the dentist. Polly was also at the dentist, but, fortunately, ours has TV screens on the wall and ceiling.

Nothing happened on Saturday except a couple of World Cup games, but on Sunday the whole family and friends went to the Stake and Grape. We received cards and a "Golden Ticket" with a string of tiny lights attached to a battery as well as too much chocolate. (More on the golden ticket later.) After lunch we had an anniversary cake.

We watched a lot more of the World Cup games, but nothing else of interest happened in June. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July we went to Fresno for the annual Pot Luck supper. It was hot, but not so bad as to cause cancellation as happened last year. In addition to feasting, they had the usual Adenium orgy and silent auction.



I mentioned that I had just read *Fall of Giants* (an account of World War I) by Ken Follett and Polly's sister went on line and ordered the second book in the trilogy, *Winter of the World*, which covers the second WW. It arrived one week later. The third volume will not be published until December, but I don't really need to read it. I lived it! For anyone wanting to read these books be warned. I am a fast reader and each one took me a week to read! We returned to Bakersfield for the Fourth, but avoided fireworks. (It's amazing how double glazing cuts the sound!)

The 6<sup>th</sup> of July was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Malawi's independence. (We arrived a year after independence when we served in the Peace Corps). I wish we could have been there for the celebration. We were there when Malawi turned 25. It was neat because we had just reached 25 in our wedding anniversary and there were 25 banners all over. On the 8<sup>th</sup> Polly and I had lunch at Rusty's to watch the match between Brazil and Germany. We missed the first half and I stupidly said, "Nothing ever happens in the first half".

Of course Germany had to prove me wrong by scoring an incredible five goals! Of course we got to watch them score another two in the second half (as well as Brazil's single goal), but it wasn't quite the same. The rest of the World Cup matches were not quite as good. We had lunch with the family at Chuy's for the final match, but it was boring.

Incidentally, my brother Robert gave me a book on 50 *Plantas Medicinales de Honduras* which he bought in Honduras. Unfortunately it has few succulents (Aloe vera, two *Dorstenias* and a *Bursera*). I hope everyone saw his letter in the *Californian*. In Central America he saw villages without men because there was no employment there. It reminded me of Lesotho where all the men went to South Africa to work in the mines.

On the 8<sup>th</sup>, of course, we joined the BCSS for dinner at the Cactus Bar and Grill. It was good to see the quality of the food is still great even with the new management.

At the May meeting I borrowed a copy of *Bradleya* 21 (*Journal of the British Cactus and Succulent Society*) just to see if they had anything interesting. It had an article on *Kalanchoe paniculata* and I found an article of mine cited for its occurrence in Botswana.

The news recently mentioned the confiscation of Giant African snails which had been shipped to California. We were told they carry disease, but not which one. The truth is they do not carry disease in Africa. It was only when the Japanese introduced them into the South Pacific that they became host to a parasitic worm which normally infests rats, but can transfer to man. Incidentally, they are delicious, but make sure they have a cleansing diet if they are wild caught. I once found them eating poisonous succulent spurge!

I wonder what most Americans think of Africa! On 16 July we watched "The elephant who found a mom" on TV. It told of an orphan baby elephant raised by a British settler woman. The elephant died and the program bemoaned how we are losing this endangered species. An hour later we saw "Sex in the Wild" which showed us the sex life of elephants in Botswana where they are overpopulated.

(It was amazingly graphic and really contrasted with Disney's movie "The Vanishing Prairie" in the fifties which was considered scandalous because it showed the birth of a bison!) The show then went to South Africa where they are sterilizing male elephants to control the population!

Then on the 19th we saw the movie "Blended" where two American families go to "Africa". The so-called Africa is actually the resort at Sun City, South Africa (unidentified) and compares to the rest of the continent as much as Las Vegas represents North America. The movie is very American, even having an African refer to a "gas station" when the term used is actually "petrol station". The lead singer/dancer who keeps popping up is actually Terry Crews, an American football star! Despite all this, we actually enjoyed the movie.

[Bruce's opinions are his own and are not necessarily that of the BCSS]

# Plant of the Month

## *Aloe pillansii*

I like the giant tree aloes and wish I could grow them in my yard in Lake Isabella. As global climate change progresses the day may come when I or whoever comes after me, will be able to. As it is the drought that we are having up here is forcing me to water my native blue oaks (*Quercus douglasii*), something I have never had to do in the nine years I have lived here.

Now back to *A. pillansii*, this giant aloe is native to Namaqualand in South Africa and Namibia. The taxonomy is in flux at present and some have placed it in a different genus (*Aloidendron*) or lumped it in as a subspecies of *A. dichotoma*.

This column will not resolve the matter. *A. pillansii* grows to a height of 30+ ft. (10 m.). It differs from *A. dichotoma* in that it branches more sparingly, has wider leaves which are silver gray and the yellow flowers are borne on drooping inflorescences. It is considered to be to be much endangered in nature due to mining and other activities. The wild populations are considered to be in the hundreds. The common name or "giant quiver tree" comes from the fact that the hollowed out stems were used as quivers by the natives.

When I saw them in South Africa I was awestruck by their stark nobility, growing on rocky hillsides inland from Port Nolloth. I made note of several young plants only one to two feet high which



indicated that they were still reproducing in their environment, a hopeful sign. They should be pretty easy to grow from seed. I had good success with the *A. dichotoma* seeds that I purchased while there. They should grow well in our hot dry areas of CA. They are cold tolerant to 25 F so everyone in Bakersfield should have two or three in their yard. Once established they require no water other than the natural rainfall. They are available from San Marcos Growers.

*Jack Reynolds*