

# Connecticut Cactus & Succulent Society

Newsletter for August, 2015

## President's Message

Welcome to the new format of the CCSS Newsletter. Thanks go to Ken Mosher for coming up with a quick fix for our newsletter needs. We are using a shared google text document in which any of the officers can directly insert and edit articles. Members with articles can email them to Ken for inclusion into the newsletter. About 2 weeks before the next meeting I will print the document and put it in the mail and Ken will post it to the CCSS website. Of course it's the only new format only until we can find a newsletter editor. If you don't want to be newsletter editor but wish to help out, you can volunteer to help print and mail the newsletter without being editor.

Thank you to Matt Opel for running the meeting at John Spain's house on July 12<sup>th</sup>. From what I hear, Ken Mosher gave an excellent talk on outdoor hardy cactus gardens. While Matt and Ken entertained and educated everyone on hardy cacti, I was in California on a family vacation. In addition to the usual sightseeing I did some cactus and succulent shopping. About twenty years ago was the last time I was in California and the Vista area was the hot spot. I went to Vista but was disappointed to find that almost all of the nurseries were wholesale except for the well known Grigsby's Cactus Garden. Grigsby's does mail order and I bought a number of assorted cacti and succulents and had them shipped back. The other nursery I visited was the California Cactus Center in Pasadena. The plants there were particularly high quality and of all sizes and rarities. I'm not sure if they do mail order, but if you are in California, I highly recommend a visit there. I should have additional pictures when we have a meeting with a screen.



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News of the Newsletter. How meta!  
by Ken Mosher

Members who attended the July meeting at John Spain's house heard the tale of the newsletter. Our new editor, Kitty Hickcox, realized that she was much too busy to produce, print, label and mail the newsletter on the necessary schedule.. The July newsletter was never mailed, but it was posted on the web site and everyone who signed up for notifications through the Yahoo!Group was notified immediately when it was available.

Unless we find another newsletter editor there are going to be a lot of changes, and the biggest change is that we will probably no longer send a paper copy in the mail. A minimal newsletter, such as what you're reading now, will be posted on the club's web site's newsletters page. We may or may not send a postcard; our president is still considering the pros and cons. If you want to know when and where the next meeting is and you're NOT already being notified when the newsletter is posted, then please visit <http://ctcactusclub.com/contact.aspx> to see the directions for signing up. **If you don't do this then you may not get notices about future meetings!** It's up to you.

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Norlite, or, What Is This Stuff and Where Is My Pumice?  
by David Schultz

After discussions, the society will make arrangements to order 60# bags of Norlite, in both 3/16" and 3/8" sizes. Bags will cost about \$20 each and will be delivered to the Norlite Corp facility in Meriden. We do not have the details on that yet but we do REQUIRE input from anyone interested in ordering bags of either (or both) sizes. If you would like a smaller amount than a 60# bag, at least respond so that we know to include your order. Norlite is an expanded shale heated to over 2000 degrees that results in a lightweight material that is porous and a gray/brown color (as opposed to the white pumice). Norlite is slightly denser than the pumice we have been using. Both sizes are "clean", that is, they have very little fine material present. The 3/8" appears to make a very good top dressing as well as soil additive. The Norlite will be replacing pumice in our soil mixes. Matt Opel has been experimenting with Norlite and so far has had no problems.

We intend to order this material in August to have it available for pick-up sometime in Sept. You can contact David Schultz to add your order to the list; if you don't we may not have any to sell to you. We will NOT have pumice for sale at the show and sale because we're no longer able to get it.

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## Minutes of the Meeting - 7/10/2015

by John Canali

We met at Becky Lynn and John Spain's home. It was a lovely day in Middlebury. Matt Opel conducted the meeting as Chris Allen was out of town. It was reported that Susan Amoy had a fire at her house. The greenhouse was spared, but she lost several pets to the fire. Our thoughts go out to her. Judy Becker had dual surgeries on Monday, 7/6. We haven't had an update from her yet.

Our newsletter editor, Kitty Hickcox, emailed Chris to resign as editor. Many thanks to Kitty for her work on the newsletter. The future newsletters (for now) will be much simpler and will be put on the club's website. All are encouraged to visit the website regularly for information. (See item below for more details.).

Our next meeting will be on August 2 at Jack and Pepper Phillips' home in Lebanon.

The September meeting will be on Saturday, Sept 12, at the Cactus & Succulent Society of Massachusetts' show and sale in Wakefield, MA. Make a double note that this is a **Saturday** meeting.

Ken Mosher gave a talk on Winter Hardy cacti. He suggests to start with a soil mix of 2/3  $\frac{3}{8}$ " gravel and 1/3 sandy loam topsoil. Mounding your bed will help with drainage. *Opuntia fragilis* is probably the most hardy cactus to start with.

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For the Bookshelf. That's right, for the bookshelf. It's much too nice for you!

by David Schultz

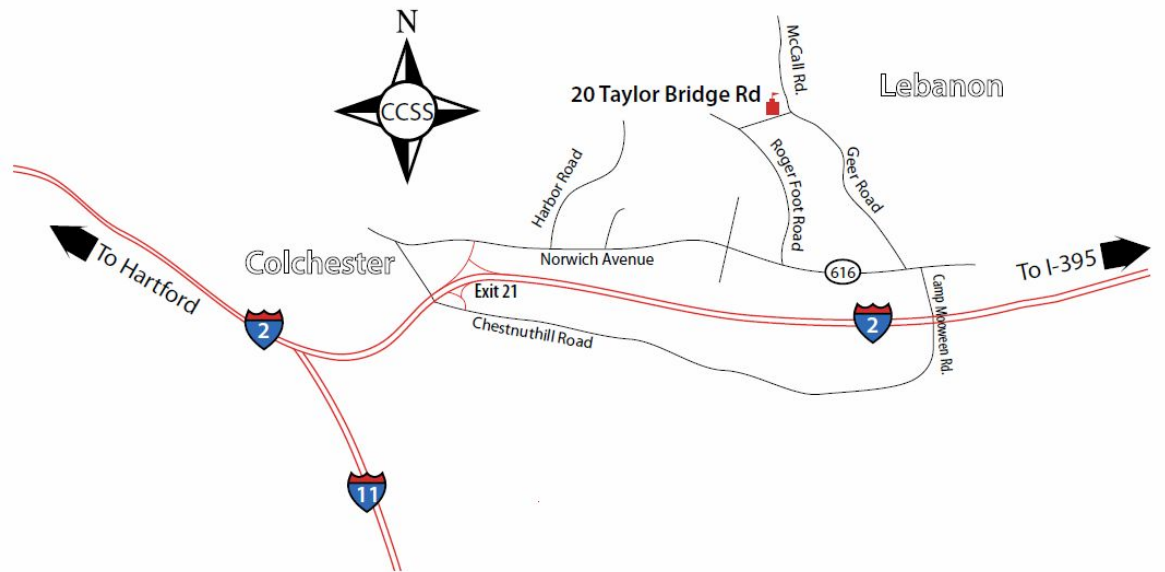
Although there are no NEW items to report, we have restocked several very popular titles, including *Haworthia for the Collector* by R. Schulz and 2 books by Philippe de Vosjoli, *Pachyforms: A Guide to Growing Pachycaul and Caudiciform Plants* and *Pachyform II – Succulent Bonsai*. Copies will be available at the meetings.

## Directions to Jack Phillips's House

- **From Hartford, taking Route I-84**, take Exit 55 merging onto Route 2 toward Norwich/New London.
- In about 26 miles, take Exit 21 off Route 2 and turn right onto Chestnut Hill Road.
- In about 1 mile, turn right onto Norwich Avenue.
- In about 5 miles turn, left onto Geer Road.
- In about 1¾ miles turn left onto Taylor Bridge Road. Jack and Pepper's home is about 250 feet on the right, #20.

- **From New Haven, taking Route I-95**, take Exit 76 placing you on I-395.
- At Exit 81 West, leave I-395 and get onto Route 2.
- Leave Route 2 at Exit 21 and turn right onto Norwich Avenue.
- In about 4 miles turn left onto Geer Road.
- In about 1¾ miles turn left onto Taylor Bridge Road. Jack and Pepper's home is about 250 feet on the right, #20.

**All distances are estimates. Be alert. See Map Below.**



**Sunday, August 2nd, 1 to 4 PM.**

**Bring Chairs!**

- Entré:** | This month is the annual picnic so there are no  
**Appetizer:** | food assignments. Bring your favorite picnic  
**Dessert:** | dish.