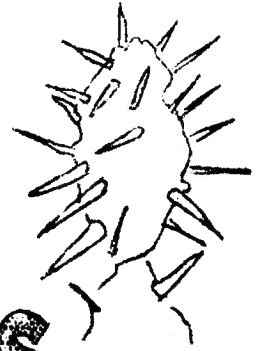


ESPINAS

Y

FLORES



Feb 1968

PUBLICATION OF THE SAN DIEGO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY

IMPROVE ON NATURE

THE "dormant season" is that time of year when we give our plants their annual rest, and February is the period of their deepest slumber. However, this is not true for the gardener; if by act of congress we could put another 5 or 8 hours in the day, we still couldn't find time enough to get all of our February chores done.

Thus we look for new ways or improve the old ones to make the task more unconstrained. This, more than any other period of the year, is the time to prune and shape the things to come. Although the subject of pruning is inexhaustible, the basic principles are simple. It is important to know when, how, and what to prune; as well as the proper tools to use for the job at hand.

Nature unattended goes about this task in an unbalanced almost reasonless manner, as can be evidenced by the tangled underbrush of our forests or a branch of one of our prize specimens lying on the ground after a heavy wind. Weak branches die and drop off, rubbing branches kill one another, and uneven or abnormal growth is easy prey to marauding winds. Nature's pruning is slow and haphazard at best. A quicker and more uniform result is desired, so we help nature with our pruning shears.

The essential reasons for pruning are to promote stronger plants, sturdier growth habits, more abundant fruits, larger and more pretentious blooms; along with controlling the shape, size, and symmetry. Dying or dead, broken or diseased portions of a plant drain vitality. Pruning enables one to allow a plant to retain its basic structure and make certain it grows within prescribed limits. A thinning out of old "wood" helps a plant to retain a new and fresh appearance, also a constant state of rejuvenation. By keeping a proper balance between the foliage above and the roots below the ground, more and larger blooms are usually the result.

FEBRUARY MEETING

Saturday Feb. 3rd. 2pm
Floral Assoc. Building
Balboa Park

"CANARY ISLANDS TOUR"

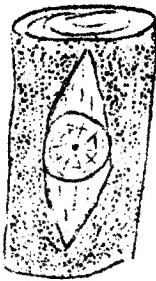
-Colored Slides-
narrated by
Dr. Phillip G. Corliss
"Unusual" Plant Raffle
Refreshments

We could continue in an endless barrage depicting the merits of pruning the "peachfussed pussy-willow" or cutting on the "currant-berry creeper" in the specified manner, but time and space have precedence. Let's stick to the fundamentals; where and how to cut. Any plant has a great will to live; the cutting operation leaves a wound which must be allowed to heal and callus over, otherwise infection may set in, thusly, all cuts must be clean and smooth. As in humans, untreated wounds can cause serious com-
(con't next page)

Improve on Nature (con't)

is to leave no stubs! Cut as close to the main trunk or branch as possible! In cutting a large or heavy stem or branch use the 3 cut method! The first cut should be on the underside a short distance from the main stem and about 1/3 the way through the member! The second cut should be made slightly farther out, cutting from top to bottom all the way through! The third and final cut is to remove the remaining stub flush with the main stem! Doing it in this manner guards against the large member falling prematurely, thereby ripping the bark or flesh of the plant and facilitates the making of a smooth finish on the final cut.

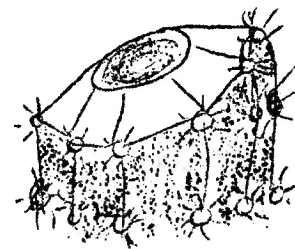
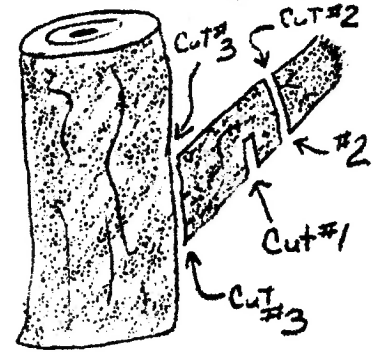
Any wound more than 1½ inches in diameter should be given a protective coating of shellac, dark colored house paint, or a commercially prepared compound! This prevents moisture favoring decay fungi from getting a foot hold, and is especially important with cacti and succulents, because of the large amount of soft tender flesh left exposed after a cut.



In any pruning operation cut just above the bud or areole that points in the direction that new grow is desired, exposing a minimum amount of tissue and on a slight angle. The healing process is performed vertically in the plant rather than laterally, so large wounds should be trimmed to a taper or oval shape to accelerate this function! When transplanting Cacti or succulents, prune the roots using the same principles as apply to the top portions of the plant. Cut off all broken or damaged roots and allow a duration for healing dependent on the severity of the cut back before replanting. In making a horizontal cut on a Cactus, where a stub must be left, cut on a scant diagonal from aerole to aerole. Because the flesh has a tendency to draw up around the woody core forming a cup that would retain water and increase the likelihood of decay, trim back away from the center and cover with a protective coating to reduce shrinkage.

The proper time for pruning is as variable as a \$1.00 pocket watch, but by in large most shrubs, trees, and other plants prune best while dormant, just before the sap starts to flow. Doing it at this time results in quicker healing as the new growth is about to start. There are some exceptions, such as many flowering shrubs and trees should not be cut until after blossoming. There are some plants that can't stand it at all, while others thrive on it. Nevertheless, one can't go too far wrong by always cutting out diseased, dead, or broken parts at any time - pruning the weaker of two rubbing or crossed branches that are developing wounds - cutting flush with the parent stem - leaving no stubs or ragged cuts - protecting large wounds.

Tools should be kept sharp and well oiled; use hand shears for cuts up to 3/4 inch, the anvil type seem best for all around usage. For cuts up to 1½ inches use long handled lopping shears. A 14 inch pruning saw is a mighty handy item to have around; it will take care of most of the average requirements around the home, and don't forget a sharp knife.



NATIONAL MEETING

THE National Cactus and Succulent Society of America, Inc. is sponsoring a sectional meeting in Southern Calif.

WHERE??? At Palomar College in San Marcos - exactly which room, I'm nota gona say - there seems to be a bit of uncertainty regarding this matter - Possibly their not sur the "Wagonmaster" can put together a CACTUS CAR-A-VAN on such short notice. At any rate look for the signs, and there's always plenty of parking space.

WHEN??? February 11, Sunday afternoon - the building will open at 12noon and will probably lock up around 4pm. The speaker will clear his throat, say "Ladies and Gentlemen" or "Y'all Cactophyles" and begin disseminatiog knowledge between 1 and 1:30.

WHO??? The best, none other than Dr. George Lindsay of the Academy of Sciences, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. George used to be head of the Natural History Museum in San Diego, remember? That was before nearness to the Mint in San Francisco became more attractive, and remunerative.

SUBJECT??? George will talk on Ferocactus or he may broaden his subject and make it Ferocacti. We will leave that up to his discretion; after all he's the authority.

CACTUS CAR-A-VAN??? Of course, several cars will be going, so we will sponsor the trip at our February 3rd meeting. We're sure many spaces will be available for those who don't have transportation. All you do is just ask. No charge.

THEN WHAT??? Remember Sir George's (no relation to Dr. Lindsay) at the Escondido Shopping Center? We will endeavor to reserve a table in the back room with your name on one of the dinner plates, but you will have to pick up your own modest check. Sir George is a nice fellow, but has a peculiar back problem - he can pick up the dishes, but not the checks. We plan to eat between 4 and 4:30.

WHAT THEN??? There's no nicer place to return to than San Diego, when the Sun begins to pull the ocean covers up over its head.

- Charlie Cutworm -

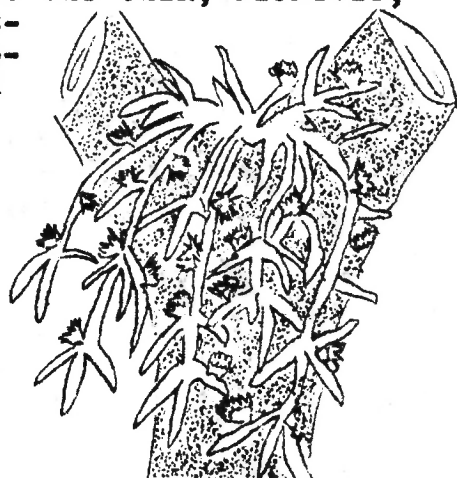
PLANT OF THE MONTH

CLAMBERING over rocks or hanging from the crotches of tall shade trees in long festoons reminiscent of a chinese puzzle, we will find RIPSALIS CASSUTHA languishing in the humid atmosphere of the dense primeval forests of South America and tropical Africa.

The generic name Rhipsalis (rip-sa-lis) comes from the Greek word "rhips" meaning wicker-work and is an allusion to the thin, flexible, interlacing branches of the plant. Cassutha (kas-su-tha) is derived from a genus of parasitic tropical vines which form masses of leafless thread like stems.

Rhipsalis is often unduly neglected by the average collector, basically because they offer no singular attraction of form or captivating beauty of flower as in other Cacti. However, the growth habits, which are amazingly intricate and varied, supericially resembles coral, hence we get one of its common names - "Coral Cactus". In combination with the stem patterns the dainty little flowers, which are individ-

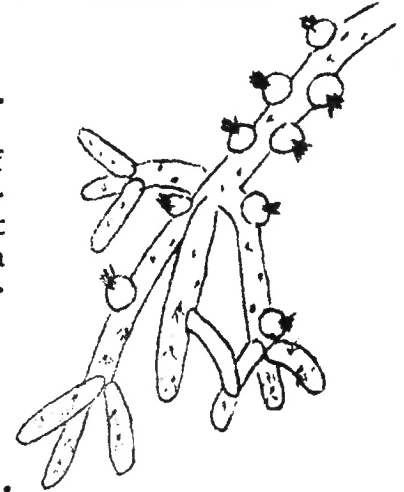
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PLANT OF THE MONTH (con't)

usually devoid of charm, are large in number and evenly distributed in a peculiarly lovely and elegant spring-like beau monde. The flowers are succeeded by small, globular, berry-like fruit mostly white in color and resembling mistletoe, which eludes to the second common name - "Mistletoe Cactus".

R. cassutha and one or two other species of *Rhipsalis* are the only members of the Cactus family to occur outside the Western Hemisphere. Most experts agree that these are not products of parallel evolution, but rather deposits by migratory birds. It might be interesting to note that this plant was officially described in 1788 by a German Botanist named Gaertner, but had been collected and lightly written about some 40 years earlier. Even though in many Journals its home is listed as Ceylon or tropical Africa, it is found in abundance along with many other species in the jungles near Rio de Janeiro with sparse scatterings, as far north as the state of Florida.



In description *R. cassutha* is a tree or rock dweller hanging in pendulous clusters from 3 to 30 feet in length. Its thin, weak cylindrical branches are 4 to 8 inches long, rarely up to 20 inches, and not more than 1/16 inch thick. New branches are formed at the tips of each stem in a bundle of three or more. When young the pale green body bares 5 to 9 small white bristles from each of the areoles that spiral the lineage, which become naked with age. The flowers are tiny and white about 1/8 to 1/4 inch long and are borne from the areoles and at the joints of the branches. They are open both day and night and will last for weeks. The fruit will soon follow and will most often be small white berries, but sometimes will take on a flesh colored hue.

Rhipsalis grows in the summer and blossoms in the winter; a bright situation is fine, never in the direct sun. At the end of the growing season, which should be in the early autumn, slock off on the water and keep them quite dry until the flower buds begin to swell. Then resume normal watering. The planting mix should be very light, but very rich. 75% organic matter to sand, sponge rok, or vermiculite. Large chunks of fir bark might also be desirable to keep the mix open and to make the plant feel at home. They will tolerate a great deal of other than tender loving care (TLC), however, be careful of temperatures that drop below 50° F for any period of time - otherwise, Kaput. For fertilization try using a 16-20-0 mix, but don't stand too close; it will respond like a 4th of July "Skyrocket" bursting forth in both stem and flower.

Of course they make simply magnificent hanging baskets; by themselves or mixed, and especially mixed with the flat leaf species of *Rhipsalis* that is often mistaken for *Epiphyllum*. New plants are easily raised from stem cuttings or from the seed that ripens freely. As a graft, *Rhipsalis* is hard to beat. Make a wedge cut at the base of the scion and insert in a cleft in the tip of a slender *Cereus* stock. There are about 60 different species, and if you are looking for an unusual collection that would be different from your nieghbors try *Rhipsalis*.

(con't next page)

PLANT OF THE MONTH (con't)

A GARDEN without an ALOE is a garden without love. Aloes (commonly pronounced, al-o) are often mistaken by laymen to be Agaves, and superficially there are many species that have a resemblance. Aloes are members of the Lily family and are chiefly found in South Africa and surrounding territories, while Agaves are members of the Amaryllis family and found in the desert and semi-arid regions of the Western Hemisphere. Fundimentally we find that not only are the flowers different, but they are also borne in a different manner. The flower of the Agave emanates from the growing point of the plant, consequently the flowering rosette dies after bloom; where as the infloresence of the Aloe arises from a leaf axil and does not effect its future growth.

Aloes are tender succulents with thick fleshy leaves which store large quantities of water during the rainy season and are thus able to withstand long periods of drought. Many become tree-like with stout woody stems, while others form dwarf clumps of stemless clustered leaves. Aloe comes from the old Arabic name for these plants, and for centuries before Christ the resinous juice of the leaves was medicinally used for a myrad of ailments both internal and cosmetic.

The leaves are usually spear shaped with the margins being lined with a horny material or toothed. The surface is dark green, grey-green, or reddish; often flecked or striped. The bell-shaped flowers are orange-red to yellow and are borne as a club-like cluster on one spike or a many branched cluster like an exploding fireball; they will last for many weeks.

ALOE VARIEGATA will be in full glory during the month of February and deservedly rates our spotlight at this time. The specific name, variegata, (pronounced, va-ri-e-ga-tus, but most of the time, vare-e-gat-us), is derived from the rythmic transverse splotches of white that adorn the otherwise dark green leaf. This along with the erect leaf give the allusion of a Partridge, hence the nickname of "Partridge Breast Aloe". Variegata hails from Cape Province in South Africa; Cape Province is very much like San Diego County with its sub-tropical coastal plains, inland mountains, and arid-desert beyond, and variegata comes from the other side of the hill, so to speak. Because of the dry air it seems to grow better inside the home than it does in a greenhouse, but shows a full measure of appreciation for the Southern California outdoors.



The stem is very indistinct; covered closely by triangular sharp leaves 5 inches long in a 3 leaf rosette, and grows to a height of one foot. The leaves are concave on the inside and keeled on the outer edges giving the plant a three dementional perspective. The margins are horny with minute white teeth. The flowers are reddish and droop in a cluster from an unbranched spike. Propagation is chiefly done by removing the numerous subterranean offshoots, as well as shoots above the ground in the leaf axils. Plants are produced very readily from see; but as in all Aloes, caution should be taken to make sure the seeds are obtained from a pure source on account of the tendency to hybridize with nieghbors.

Water thoroughly during the summer; keeping it quite dry in the winter. Although A. variegata comes from an area of poor soil, we have found it does quite well in a standard Aloe mix of 2 parts organic to one part sand with a sash of lime to keep the pH from getting too acidy.

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PLANT OF THE MONTH (con't)

Most Aloes tolerate full sun, but unless you give them a little protection from the high noon variety, sun scald and tip burn will be prevalent. There are many many species in this genus, and they offer a wide spectrum of shapes, colors and interest. As a matter of fact, this one genus could develop into a life's work. The good place to go for more detailed information about this exciting flock is in "Aloes of Tropical Africa and Madagascar" - by Reynolds, or you might drop a line to Helen Crane - 306 W. Frontage Rd. San Ysidro, Calif. 92073, our local authority.

- js -

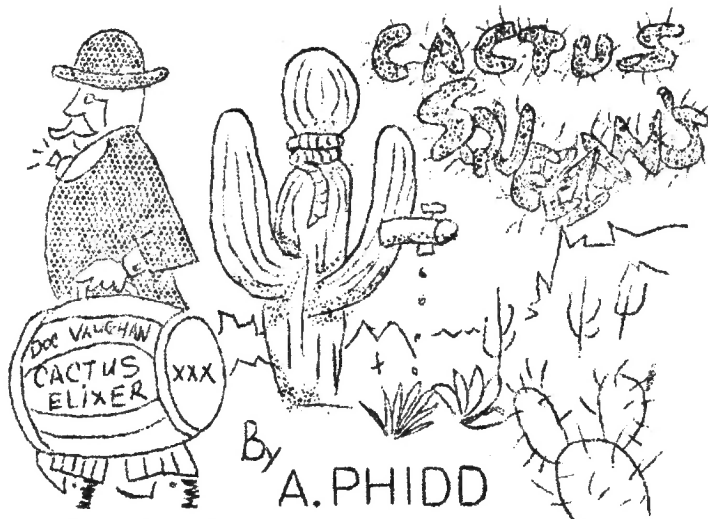
VITALOGY

DID GRANDMA know best, or does the modern laboratory technician? The information revealed in a contemporary exploration of the "common cold" probably gives us a fairly good answer: It might be wise to assume that there is no definite stand to be taken - there is no "white is white, and black is black". Our pioneering forefathers certainly were not going to their doctors for "cold shots" or "flu shots" or taking antihistamines with complicated names. On the other hand, when their descendants of today do come down with a cold, they are quite likely to use at least some of the attempts for relief that the pioneers used.

To be more specific to whether or not laymen, or the medical people of today, should even consider some of the possible benefits to be found from folk medicines, it might be well to read what Dr. Benjamin Rush, the doctor usually called the father of American medicine, remarked to other doctors a good many years ago: "Do not condemn or oppose unnecessarily the simple prescriptions of your patient." With his observation in mind, we may well take a look at "folk medicine".

One medical writer of the same era wrote: "We are often troubled with severe coughs, the result of colds of long standing, which may turn into consumption or premature death. The remedy, I propose has been often tried by me, with good results, which is simply to take into the stomach before retiring for the night a piece of raw onion, after chewing. This esculent in an uncooked state is very heating, and tends to collect the waters from the lungs and throat, causing immediate relief." Another for homemade cough syrup-suggest boiling a lemon for 10 minutes, slicing it in two and extracting the juice. Put the juice in a drinking glass, add two tablespoonfuls of glycerine, stir, and then fill the glass with honey, stir again and take a teaspoon at a time as needed. Some say a salt water gargle does wonders for a sore throat...others rely on vinegar and honey, which was used medicinally by Hippocrates, a few years back.

There has long been a maxim that we should "Feed a cold and starve a fever." Until a few years ago the general idea was to bring down the fever that accompanies most colds. Quinine, as well as aspirin, has been popular for this purpose. In recent years some experts have come to believe that the fever resulting from many virus infections is a major defense mechanism set up by the body to help defeat the infections, and that the fever should be allowed to run its course. Vitamin C has widely been acclaimed as a preventative; a little "Tody" is never overlooked, also a wide range of herbs, bacon rind, lemonade, and cider have delighted the sick man's fancy. No matter what your preference, rest and make the best of a bad situation; and be comforted by the thought that progress is being made - it use to take 7 days for a cold to run its coarse, but now with modern medicine we can whip it in a week. -js-



Never have we seen San Diego look more beautiful, never have we felt the pride of living in this paradise, as strongly as we did while viewing the colored slide program put on by JOAN FLEER at the last meeting. the color and composition marvelous. much of the subject matter was terrain that this writer barefootedly wanders through each day. obviously with his eyes closed; if we could sum it in a word, Joan. . .GREAT..

After a long and trying battle with the doctors at the Navy Hospital..

N.R. STEVESON bounces back with zest and smiles. it's goo to see you back on your feet again. look up, and not down; look forward, and not back; look out, and not in; and lend a hand. but if it happens to be in a cast, I'll wait. there's got to be more to the story of how IONE HUBNER broke her arm than has come to the ear of this writer. at any rate we'll be the first to contribute to an automatic Channel Changer. that WALT GREENWOOD takes lousy "minutes". BOB TAYLOR'S Echeveria crenulata took the prize for the Bragging Table open class, OLIVIA FLETCHER was close behind in the voting. Bob's was a rainbow of color and Libby's was a pyramid of yellow bloom. Senorita Mammillaria spinosissima var. rubra with her garland ruby crown eked out a triumph over a field of imminent contenders. she was sponsored jointly by A. PHIDD and NEMA TOED. who pint out that she was only a sample of things to come. meet the challenge. the gauntlet has been flung. Nema and Phidd will give to the person who wins the most awards. one free pass to the S.D. County Fair work parties...

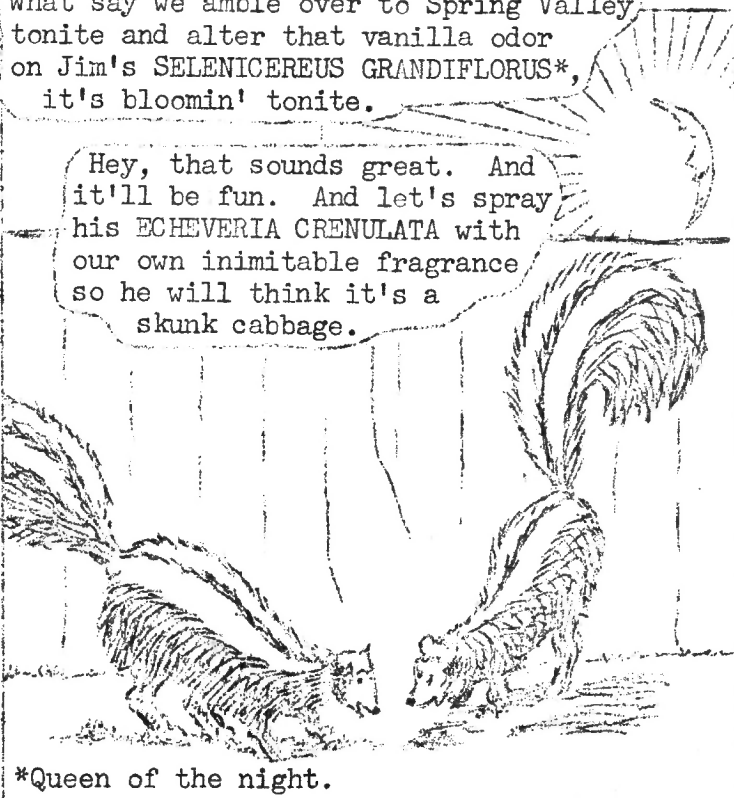
Welcome to the club. NIBBY KLIENFELTER, M/M H.W. BUCKNER, & PATRICIA HOCHBERG. remember this, the trouble with trying to get away from it all these days is that most of it is portable...

To those of you who have somehow forgotten to pay your annual dues-"the haves and the have-nots can often be traced back to the dids and the did-nots"...Two bucks per year.. three for the family.. OLIVIA FLETCHER at 4351 Alder Dr. San Diego-92116 awaits your pronouncement... Use friendship as a drawing account if you wish, but don't forget the deposits...

SCOTTY came up with a good paraphrase for the National meet, instead of "Try San Diego first", let's show'em. see ya - A. Phidd

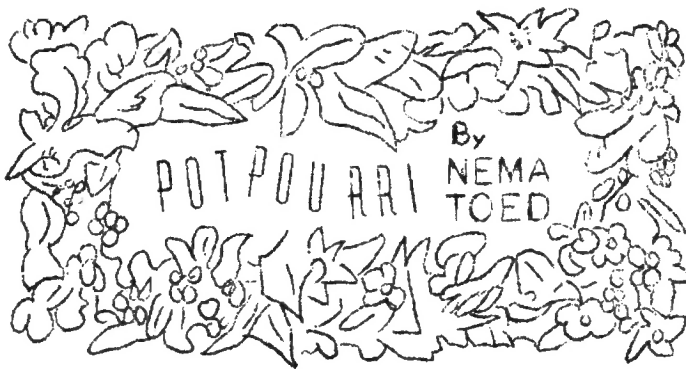
What say we amble over to Spring Valley tonite and alter that vanilla odor on Jim's SELENICEREUS GRANDIFLORUS*, it's bloomin' tonite.

Hey, that sounds great. And it'll be fun. And let's spray his ECHEVERIA CRENULATA with our own inimitable fragrance so he will think it's a skunk cabbage.



*Queen of the night.

SCENT CHANGERS



DEAR EDITOR: I read with imbibing interest your article on SLEEP AND REST in the January Espinas y Flores. It stirs me to the point where I must take a pencil and paper and give you my 30¢ worth. That may be only 28¢ by press time--devaluation, inflation, foreign aid, you know. I want you to know I am 100% on your side with this "rest-sleep" thing. If it was good enuf for Edison, it is good enuf for me. I'm inclosing a photo to make my point.

I think I have an improvement. As you will see I am writing in a semi-reclining position on top an Opuntia pad. You say sleep in short spurts is restful and makes for longevity. And you use Edison for your back-up man. It is more than that, the way I practice it. I'm afraid I'll live FOREVER. My formula is this: Take SIX 4-hour rest periods each 24 hours. Of course one must have a short intermission between rest periods: 1) to change positions, and 2) to take a nip of Juniper-berry-Vermouth on the rocks. Unlike Edison, I do not rest on a bench. I find an Opuntia pad very comfortable. It assists in keeping one position. I don't toss and turn like most people---I don't dare. Neither do I use a carbon lamp like Edison. He wasn't always awake when he awoke. He often fell off the bench. Besides he got in a commercial while he slept. An electric lamp attracts moths and who likes moths buzzin' around one's ears while he's asleep. They create a soft whir-r-r which is very annoying. That would "bug" me.

Just one more word about your Juniper-berry-Vermouth cocktail. I find if I put pyracantha berries in my martini, they add considerably to dryness. And as for your Tequila bit, I always had the impression it didn't make much difference what one added to Tequila--axle grease, H₂SO₄, potassium cyanide, old bones, arsenic trioxide--no matter how you mix it, it's a poor substitute for cactus squeezin's, as you say. Now since my rest period is overdue and I don't want this effort to degenerate into a cocktail recipe pamphlet, may I say: "That's 30 for tonite". ZZ-Z-zzz-zz--z--- (Photo by Staff Photog'r. Nema TOED) *Nema Toed*



REST--Rest--rest--re--z--zz-zzz

PERSONALITIES: Lillian Feingold's report card for January will show an "A" in Plant Identification. She was the ONLY one in the club who could repeat the name of Jim's club gift cactus: **OPECCEREUS HENDRIKSENIANUS**... Doesn't it have an easy common name, Lillian, one that any one of us can pronounce?

We don't know what Robin Strate knows about birds and bees, but by cracky she is an authority on BOY agaves and GIRL agaves. She certainly has their plumbing classified correctly and definitely. She says they are EITHER boys OR girls. None of this in-between or cross-over stuff.

POTPOURRI (con't)

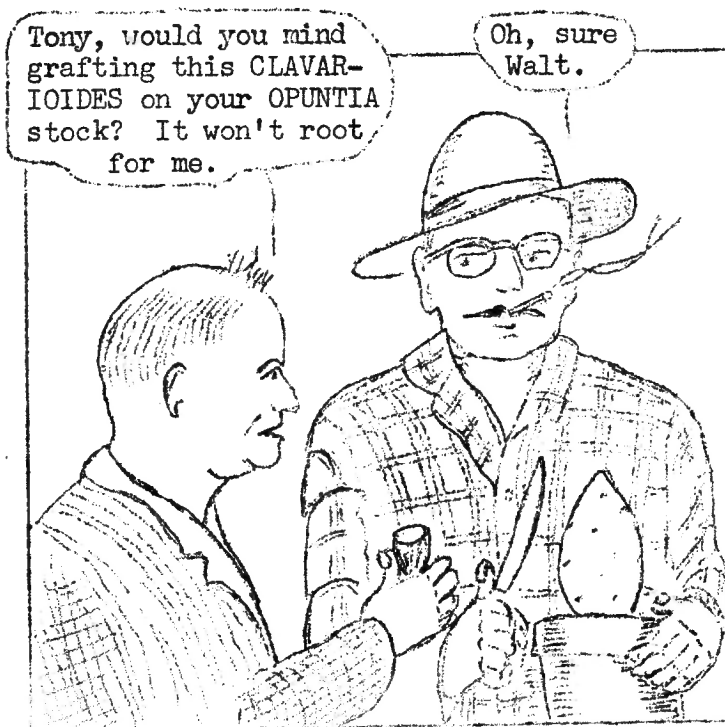
WOULD you two girls take another and closer look at Jim's Oreocereus, it looked for all the world like there was a doubled-barrled blessed event about to happen. Let's keep everything around the Club legitimate; and you two could clear the atmosphere, before the tongues start wagging. This plant may be around the Club for a long time..we don't want to send it to the maternity ward, if it isn't necessary, but we did overhear NELLIE KENNETT suggest that a "Cecereus" operation be preformed to remove the pair..oh, yes, Robin, you're getting an award too..no, not in plant identification...we are sending our recommendation to the officials of Imperial Beach that you be put on as a plumbing inspector..

THE INTERESTED OBSERVER sees: That Cactophiles tend to "stick" together in a dense, clustering mass, from which arises the brilliant, long-blooming flower of friendliness. That the pleasant odor of congeniality from this flower can be detected at a considerable distance, and tends to attract other Cactophiles to the spot. And that once attracted, any Cactophile worth his glochids will buzz around happily for years, scattering pups, grafts, pollen, and seeds on everyone.

Dear INTERESTED; In this world, it is not what we take up, but what we give up, that makes us rich...thanks again - N.T.

Some dribblings from Leif Hopper, just received..titled "Exchange Table"..A rag and a bone and a hank of hair, Got stuck on a feller named Jim; He learned a lot about girls from her, She learned about Cactus from him.. A word of advice about desert field trips..Keep plenty of liquids on hand. On a recent trip into the Imperial Valley waistes, after consuming a ½ pint, we found many interesting specimens..

DEAR LEIF; This is your first writing to us and we are grateful.. the cultivation of the mind is a kind of food supplied for the soul of man..... N.T.



GRAFT BY TONY

HELEN HEGYI is compiling a list of unusual implements used by Cactophiles, especially those that may relate to your profession present or past...send to here or Helen.. We were going to correct a badly mangled sentence about disposable plastic gloves in her last article, but decided to rerun the whole thing with the new information too...N.T.

L.E. Newton from Kumasi, Ghana, writes that a volumn of books-"The Genera of Flowering Plants" by J. Hutchinson has recently been published..it changesthe number of Cacti gerera from 233 to 84..sounds interesting...RUTH would you check on it for us, please..... N.T.

With the help of BOB TAYLOR, DOC VAUGHAN got off the seeds requested by our good friend Prof. FERDINAND PLESNICK of Olomonc, Czechoslovakia..also Doc informs that an anonymus donor has given the Club a new punch bowl & COFFEE maker...