

NEWSLETTER OF TUCSON CACTUS AND BOTANICAL SOCIETY

Affiliate of

Cactus and succulent Society of America, Inc.

Subscriptions \$2.50 Membership \$4.00 (includes Chatter)

VOLUME XV

1982

No. 1

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"Continually striving to expand our horizons and content in the interest of Cactophiles everywhere."

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I would like to repeat Josephine,s creed published on the first page of the last Chatter.

LET US PLEDGE OURSELVES TO THIS FINE CREED OF RESPONSIBLE HUMANS. LET US ASSUME OUR SHARE OF MAN'S STEWARDSHIP OF OUR NATURAL RESOURCES.

I pledge myself, as a responsible human, to assume my share of man's stewardship of our natural resources.

I will use my share with gratitude, without greed or waste.

I will support the sound management of the resources we use, the restoration of the resources we have depleted, and the safekeeping of significant resources for posterity.

I will never forget that life and beauty, wealth and progress, depend on how wisely man uses these gifts... the soil, the water, the air, the minerals, the plant life, and the wild-life.

from National Wildlife Federation
Creed

IN MEMORY OF
JOSEPHINE KANEN SHELBY
Born in Willcox, Arizona, June 29, 1904



DIED

Tucson, Arizona

August 24, 1979

I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good thing therefore, that I can do or any kindness I can show to any fellow human being let me do it now. Let me not defer nor neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.

by Stephen Grellet

I believe Josephine would like this quotation at the beginning of the story of her life. She was a most unusual person and I feel that we may be more able to understand her abilities if we know more about her life.

Even though she lived most of her growing-up years in El Paso, Texas, Josephine was born in Wilcox, Arizona. Her father was working there in the Nicholson Drug Store. Arizona was still a territory at that time. He would often go to work in a small town somewhere, but always returned to El Paso. For this reason, the family always considered El Paso their home.

The family consisted of the father, the mother, and four girls. The parents had a rule that they should not gossip around the dinner table, but they talked about current events and historical occurrences. A good book would also be a suitable subject.

Their father was a brilliant man who insisted that all the girls learn to read, write and speak Spanish. He did court dictation in Spanish and could transcribe it as rapidly in Spanish as in English.

Of the whole family Josephine was the only one who didn't like living in El Paso. She never told anyone why, she just didn't like it.

Josephine's maiden name was Kanen which had been changed from Koehnen when her grandfather came to this country from Germany.

The parents were strict Germans who made many rules and insisted on obedience. They had to get their lessons before they could do anything else. They were unable to stay outside at night because of Juarez.

All four girls graduated from the El Paso High School. Then all four girls went their own way, but that was on to college.

Now might be the best time to give the lineup of the girls. Josephine, Irene, Genevieve, and Flora are their names. Josephine was the oldest and the others follow in order. All of them but Flora graduated from college and Irene continued until she received her MA.

The entire family had the unique privilege of attending the ceremony when New Mexico became a state. He worked in the office of engineers and had obtained admission for them all. The night before he made sure they were to sit up straight and not to say a word. The state song of New Mexico was introduced that day. It was written by Elizabeth Garrett who was a good friend of theirs. None of them would ever forget that day.

From the time she was in High School, Josephine developed her love for the outdoors. She would much rather be with somebody outdoors than indoors. She had an exceptionally fine memory. Once she learned something, she never forgot it. She was interested in Indian and Mexian cooking and collected recipes through the years.

Josephine was an outstanding student in High School. She took journalism courses and worked on the school paper. She graduated with honors. She was voted the most popular girl and the most likely to succeed in her High School.

During her college years, Josephine made many friends that were to last till she was gone. She also became interested in activities that held her interest for years to come.

At the University of Arizona she became a friend of Thamar Richey. In the early twenties Thamar had become interested in the Yaqui Indians. She and the Indians built a rude building of scraps where her school met. When Mr. Rose saw it, he persuaded the School Board to construct a building of adobe. Josephine became a teacher in this little school. When Miss Richey became ill, Josephine took on more and more of the responsibility. She stayed on for some time after the death of Miss Richey in 1937. Josephine was also one of a group of First Methodist young people who would walk to Old Pascua Village every Sunday and assist in teaching Sunday

School. It was a distance of several miles and Josephine often remarked about how the students of today would consider it an impossible distance to walk just to teach Sunday School.

At the University of Arizona she was outstanding in sports. She won her letter A as a marksman. She broke all the records of that time and even beat the men. She was also very good in Soccer and basketball.

Josephine graduated from the University of Arizona in the class of 1928. She continued her interest in the Yaqui Indians, especially the children. She was influential in obtaining hot lunches for the children and getting vitamins to them so they would grow up more healthy.

After graduation she went to Scottsdale and taught Spanish in the public schools there. She lived in Scottsdale for about ten years and then returned to Tucson.

Josephine met her husband to be about this time. He was Ward E. Shelby. Mr. Shelby was a fine journalist and editor. He would often accompany scientists from the University on their expeditions to do the writing. He was the editor of the magazine that was the for-runner of the **Arizona Highways**. Josephine had copies of them all from the beginning. After her death they were given to his three children from a previous marriage.

After they were married the Shelby's home was in Tucson. They had many friends from the University,

They also had friends from the community outside the University. They were not joiners of groups, but enjoyed having friends in for stimulating conversations and good food from Josephine's collection of recipes.

Ward and Josephine enjoyed each others company in a very special way. They were both inquisitive and open minded. They enjoyed a good conversation with a friend. They enjoyed going to Mexico, walking the beaches and collecting shells. They kept notes about the shells and where they were collected and took pictures of the site.

One can only speculate on the development of their lives if Ward had not died in 1959.

Widowhood can be devastating to many women but not to woman of great spirit and understanding like Josephine Shelby.

In 1960 she was a charter member of the Tucson Cactus and Botanical Society. She was a member of the first board of directors of that society. To round out her achievements in that organization, she was the founder of CACTUS CAPITAL CHATTER and its only director until I decided to attempt to follow in her giant footsteps.

In 1971 she became Affiliate Director. In this office she was the official link between the Society and the national organization. As a part of her duties she represented the Society at meetings in various parts of the country. She also communicated

with people all over the world. The North and South Poles are the only place she had no friends.

In 1974 Josephine was appointed a member of the Governor's Commission on Arizona Environment. They met every few months in various cities around the state. She enjoyed working on this commission and was very proud to have been appointed a member.

She was an excellent choice for the commission as her interest that began in High School had grown and matured from then on. It was only logical that as her interest in nature grew, she became also upset with the desecration of Arizona environment by road building and subdivisions.

Josephine had an intense love for people. She loved to travel, particularly in Mexico. When she did travel she enjoyed talking with the people on the street or in their homes. She wanted to know how they thought. Age didn't matter one bit as she was as at home with a very old person as a young child.

Some time after Mr. Shelby died, Josephine moved to Oracle which is about twenty five miles north of Tucson and at a higher elevation. It enabled her to enjoy the summers more as the heat in Tucson bothered her.

Right away she became involved with the community and its problems. She began to pressure for a clean-up in Oracle and walked all over passing out plastic bags to put the litter in.

Josephine was a very organized person and kept papers and books in her file. She had a wonderful snell collection that was kept in a tall file with the shells organized according to their names and where they were collected. One afternoon we stopped to see her and she spent over an hour describing her shells and where they were picked up. We were very impressed with her knowledge as we were unaware of her interest in them.

She had a large Republican Party file and was active in the party in various ways.

Being the editor of the Chatter was a good outlet for her talent as a writer and her interest in conservation. She spent many hours collecting material for use, both now and in the future. This was all filed so she could find it at the proper time.

Josephine was a prolific letter writer and enjoyed every minute she spent with her correspondence. People wrote to her from all over the world, often about cacti or conservation. Some clubs would write to her about a problem and if she couldn't solve it herself, she would bring it to the attention of the Cactus Club. Usually the problem was solved to the benefit of everyone, Josephine, the club and the club with the problem.

Josephine's mother was very close to Josephine as she was the last married. Besides they were very much alike, genuine, real people. They did many things together. They wove and hooked rugs, many

of which Josephine had around her home. They had looms to weave on and also braided them. They cut the fabric in strips and made their own designs and copied from books. They also sewed, making clothing and things useful around the house.

Josephine was very talented artistically. She took lessons in water color painting and painted most of her life. She worked with plastic making placques and ash trays using shells and weeds. She also made wind chimes out of shells. Many of us have notes from her written on paper she made using wax paper and wild flowers. At Christmas she used to take a fern and put sequins on it and make paper out of it. She wrote her greetings on this paper.

She became intersted in the Boojams when she was introduced to them by her friend Dr. Humphrey. This is a very unusual plant that grows in Baja California. She asked me to read Dr. Humphrey's book about Boojams and became interested too.

Josephine was proud to be a bus leader when we had the National Cactus and Succulent Convention here in Tucson. She assisted the committees in any way possible. With her large number of friends she was able to be of much help.

The last trip Josephine was able to take was to Pasadena on the Huntington Sale Safari sponsored by the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix. She had a wonderful time making friends on the bus, visiting the famous cactus growers in Vista and enjoying the beauties of nature in the Huntington Garden and the Los Angeles County Arboretum.

By the time of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the national organization, Josephine was too ill to attend. Those attending all wore name tags that also gave the name of their club. When those sitting **near** us saw where we were from they would ask where Josephine was. At that time we did not know her illness was terminal so we just said she was ill.

We (my husband and I) visited with Josephine many times after she had to leave her home and live with her sister Irene and her husband Earle. It was good to see her wrapped in their love and devotion. Each time she would say, "I must get to work on Chatter, will you help me." And with tears in my heart I would promise to help.

Finally she had to be placed in the Desert Life Center. She wanted to be with those she loved and on her birthday less than a month before she died she had her wish. The whole family gathered and spent much of the day in the home with her. Carl Horst and his wife brought a cake and ice cream. Her family gave her yellow roses. John Taylor from Oracle came to the party. He had been a very good friend and hiking partner. She looked after his house when he was away.

It might help to know that she didn't suffer any pain as her tumor was in such a place on her brain that there were no nerves to carry pain.

She was a most wonderful person and Tucson and Oracle is a little less friendly as no one can fill the nitch she left vacant.

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We are living in a very crucial time for attempting to do our share of the stewardship of our natural resources.

It behooves us to listen and read carefully every article and news broadcast so that we may knowledgeable regarding the dangers to these resources.

When we do hear or read anything that is disturbing in this area, we have a duty to write a letter to the officials, state and federal, expressing our concerns. Explain why you are interested and pass on your ideas. If they receive enough letters they will at least be aware of your stand and hopefully it may make them think even if it doesn't change their thinking.

Your Editor

Please add a be after may so it will say may be knowledgeable.

We are sorry to announce the deaths of our former treasurer, Kenneth Hartsock and Carl Horst, one of our most erudite members.

Reminder:

Did you ever wonder why Euphorbia pulcherrima is called a Poinsettia? After much searching I can tell you. A Mr. Joel Roberts Poinsett was in Mexico many years ago and observed these stunning brilliant red blooms that appeared at Christmas time. To his surprise he found the blossom is the small yellowish flowers in the center. The glorious red was the petal-like bracts. He decided it would be a fine plant for the Christmas season and introduced the growing of them to the United States. There are also white and pink forms. They will take much abuse, but do not like drafts. One year I kept my Poinsettia near the front door and leaves dropped off shortly. The next year I put my plant in a three sided display window in my classroom. To everyone's amazement it looked lovely until Easter vacation.

MAY THE RABBITS ROAM ANOTHER HOME Dan Birt

To those Southern Arizonians who have moved out into the areas where the deer (and antelope) play and where a sharp toothed rabbit is seen every day, or at least where he gnawed last night, relief is in sight.

The June 1982 issue of American Vegetable Grower has listed a product to discourage the deer and rabbits. It is Federally registered as "Hinder or Repel." May this product end your discouraging words.

SOILS AND SOIL MIXES

by Dan Birt

The long time editor of Chatter, Mrs. Shelby, had written and asked me to prepare an article for her from the notes of my January 1978 talk to our club members.

Please forgive any repetition you may find in this article.

Soils are a lifetime study for some people and through their efforts we have these divisions and definitions to begin our discussion:

- I. Inorganic soils, where very low levels of organic matter are present and the mineral matter is very high.
- II. Organic or peat soils. In these soils organic matter is a very high proportion of the total. This best fits the soils of Florida, New Jersey, and other swampy and woodsy locals.

The origin of soils may be residual, developed in place or transported, a product of wind, water, gravity or glacial activity.

A cross section of the soil reveals a profile, layers that develop in depth and are identifiable around the world.

Soil chemical reactions vary from very strongly acid (pH 1 & 2) to pH 9 & 10 which are very alkaline. Drainage conditions, shallow water tables and restricted water movements often limit soil development, though this is seldom found in Arizona.

The mechanical classification of soils into many parts is called soil separates. It begins with a fine gravel of 1 mm in diameter containing 90 particles per gram to clay which has less than 1/50th of mm in diameter containing 90 billion particles per gram.

Soils have a definite form and structure that is related to: 1. Climate 2. vegetative cover 3. age 4. parent material from which it has been derived

Gathering all the soil separates into a collection in which no single nor group of separates dominates would describe the soil we most admire - a loam. This would be a soil in which the stickiness of the clay and flour-like silt is balanced by the gritty fine to coarse sand separate.

By percentages, a loam would consist of 10-20% clay, 40-45% sand. An isosceles triangle is often used as the way to express the separates combining to form a named soil.

Visually, soils appear white as in sands to the black of peat soils which are very high in organic matter.

Now we will discuss the soil mixes- particularly those for Cacti and Succulents:

Maybe it would be best to say there are no perfect mixes. Ten growers would swear by 10 or more mixes.

The California wholesale growers use 60% pumice and a mix of 40% peat and fir bark. Then he adds the minerals he wants per plant or adds them in later doses for his heavy fertilizing program. Light weight mixes make lower shipping cost for them.

The desert outdoor gardner on a bed of caliche also encounters far different problems than those of an indoor window ledge.

Bravely, we will present one textbook mix and notes on each portion, knowing full well that if your present mix works, you will stay with it.

Three separates or portions as follows:

1/3 loam A good garden soil or deep desert soil.
Not a roadside barrow pit or roadway scrapings.

1/3 sand Good sharp, clean, coarse sand. Not blow sand or beach sand.

1/3 humus Peat moss, oak-leaf much, Baccto potting soil, mesquite litter if aged.

Avoid manure where possible. If in doubt, place in tightly closed can in sun all day. Carefully whiff for traces of ammonia. You will know.

Such a mix balances water retaining humus, sand for a good percolation and loam for minerals. If flowering age plants are growing in your present mix, flowered readily within a year of planting, have grown normally in color, spines, and plant body size, then your mix is probably good.

If plants sulk, wrinkle, elongate to a point, refuse to bloom, turn brownish on top, send out new parts reluctantly or diminutive in size, then we must start down a check list:

Too much peat moss or sand

Too little water

Too little light

Too little minerals (no fertilizer)

Too many insects

One last question, you say. How much is enough water? A five gallon bucket of soil can absorb one gallon of water, or about 20% of its volume when dry. Editors note: (A hydrometer is not costly and will tell you when the plant is dry. Or you can repot a plant and notice how far down in the pot the dampness goes.)

Some additional soil mixes as reported in several other articles.

University of California

1 part peat moss

1 part clean sand

Growers

1 part ^{a.} pumice or ^{b.} perlite

1 part humus or peatmoss

1 part sand

Charcoal may be added for special tupes of situation.

c. 34 parts lava cinders

30 parts composted bark

University of Arizona

1/4 sandy loam

1/8 sand

1/8 composted pine bark

1/4 perlite

1/4 vermiculite

PH adjustments and time release fertizer may be added.

This is an overview of how complex the subject

can become. It is like old fashioned cooking. Each uses his own recipe and adds a little of this or that to suit his purposes. If it works it is good so hang onto it.

One of our members is Helen Roubicek. She has one of the loveliest back yard gardens I have ever seen. Here are some of her thoughts:

WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT CACTI?

This question has occurred to many people. It is often prompted by the fierce defense of the spines. If one can set aside a stuck finger now and again, this interesting plant presents many challenges.

First of all, we live in the finest cactus country in the world. There is no better place to grow these plants. Many of them like it here in Arizona, even though they may not be natives.

Hardiness during the winter presents the biggest problem to the outdoor gardener. It is necessary to learn by experience what plants can take the borderline temperatures of the particular area where they are to be grown. Many are happy in the garden with glass jars, paper bags or boxes to cover them. The glass jars are best, of course, because they can be left on the cactus for months, enclosing them in little plant houses with both sun and warmth provided.

The window sill gardener finds cactus an interesting hobby also. They are beautiful miniatures available that are varied enough for all tastes. Robotias, sulcorebutias, chameocereus, lobivias,

and setiechinopsis are a few of the varieties which can be grown in small pots in a sunny window of an apartment.

The larger cacti are very useful landscape subjects. The older cactus plants become, the less likely they are to freeze. Choosing hardy varieties for landscaping with a good potential for growth and arranging them with this growth in mind can present an attractive yard with a minimum of work. One cannot get away from upkeep, but it is easier than watering, fertilizing and cutting grass.

Weeding around cacti is an activity to be avoided. One good way is spraying the weed seeds. A number of such sprays are available and they do not effect the cactus. They are seed specific.

Attractive cactus gardens are well pruned with no dead sections or weeds that detract from the beautiful shapes of the plants. Cacti can live happily with other types of succulents; so texture, colors, and shapes can be very artistically arranged, always keeping in mind the requirements of the individual plants.

Growing cacti from seed presents another fascinating approach. Watching the tiny plants appear as little green dots, seeing the tiny spines a bit later, noting the changes as weeks and months pass, is a very gratifying experience.

No mention has been made of cactus flowers for a good reason. Cactus flowers are short-lived, for some bloom for only one day.

While they are beautiful flowers, the cactus plant has its own charm and the flowers are really icing on the cake. For the most part, bloom periods are short, depending upon the year, few blooms may appear, so the true cactus lover likes the cactus plants for themselves.

Growing cacti from whatever one's standpoint, is a truly rewarding activity.

That's what is so great about cacti!

1982 has been a rather unusual year weatherwise. Arizona had a very mild winter while other areas had a large amount of cold and snow. Summer was cold in some places, rainy in other, extrat hot in still others. In September they had seven inches of rain where they usually only have $3/4$ of an inch. On Oct. 1st there was snow about $2/3$ of the way down the mountains and even some snow in spots of the valleys. The great-lakes area had an excess of rain. The east coast had a heat-wave yesterday and is bracing for a big storm to come through.

With all these varieties in weather we hope our friends will drop us a line and let us know how their plants come through this winter.

My husband, Earl, and I have attended the last three conventions of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America and we were surprised and delighted to find the large number of countries besides north and south America that are devoted to the culture and understanding of Cacti and Succulents. It was

a cosmopolitan experience to be chatting with folks from Australia, Europe, Africa and many other places. It is truly amazing how an interest in one little corner of life can unite such a variety of peoples together. It makes one wonder if all the potters, all the weavers, all the painters, all the sewers, all the plant growers, all the joggers, all the readers from all over the world could get together if they couldn't solve the problems that our politicians are making such a mess of.

Wherever you are, we wish you have very happy holidays this year and as many as possible will try to attend the convention.

I would like to leave you with this thought: In every religion throughout the world there is a saying, not the same words, but the same sentiment which goes like this:

Do unto others as you would like to have the others do unto you.

If all of us that love the same things could get together once a year or two and practice the above at all times, think of how we really could change this world. Someone once told me that when I did not receive a new thought from everyone I talked with, that it was my fault for not listening well or closely enough. Maybe if we all listen and quit talking we can make more of our lives and therefore the lives of those around us and they would do the same and like to ripples in a pond it will gradually spread.

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