

LACSS ZOOM MEETING, EVERY FIRST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH MEETING START TIME: 7PM, HOST WILL OPEN ROOM AT 6:30PM FEBRUARY 3RD, 2022

# BOARD DIRECTORS

### LACSS MISSION STATEMENT

The Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society (LACSS) cultivates the study & enjoyment of cacti & succulent plants through educational programs & activities that promote the hobby within a community of fellow enthusiasts & among the greater public.

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**POM PLANT DESCRIPTIONS** Kyle Williams

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# MESSAGE PRESIDENT

#### Hi to everyone!!

Again, with the weather talk – Warm? Cold? Wind? Humidity? It really keeps us on our toes. I think I lost a couple of succulents but my winter growers are loving it. The cacti couldn't care less. They got watered when it rained and seemed to enjoy the bath. I will know more in a few months.

January has been a quiet month. It took us a few days to get over the sadness of needing to cancel the in-person meeting but the zoom meeting was a lot of fun and everyone seemed to take the cancellation in stride.

A lot of the cactus & succulent clubs are gearing up for sales (and shows?) during 2022. The pandemic seems to be hanging on and our main concern is the safety of our members. The ONEGeneration is still using their main area to stage the supplies for their food bank project. Our attempts to locate a privately owned facility that is affordable have not been successful. So, we wait. In the meantime, we continue to provide fantastic programs, intriguing POMs and thought-provoking Q&As. We hope you will continue to join us - we are all in this together and together we are strong.

Even though it is the beginning of the year, it is not too soon to remind everyone that ALL clubs ALWAYS need the members to participate in club activities and processes. For example, do you know how to structure a sale event? What are the component parts? How do we staff these? Who do we contact? Where will it be? When? You get the idea!!! One of the biggest challenges now for our movers and shakers of events is not being able to recruit in person. We now depend on you to step up and make your interests known so we may continue to bring new ideas and energy to our efforts and ease the transition to new personnel. If you have a particular talent (no singing or tap dancing) that you would like to share with LACSS, please let us know!

We are pleased to announce that LACSS gained 34 new members during 2021 plus five more just this month for 2022! This is very encouraging as it reflects the continuing and growing interest in our favorite hobby. We welcome all of you and look forward to seeing you at our next meeting.

On an administrative note, I regret to announce that Artie Chavez has stepped down from his position on the Board of Directors. We appreciate all the work and support he has given LACSS. We thank him for his leadership and dedication to the Club. We look forward to his continued membership involvement.

Stay safe and healthy Joyce

## THIS MONTH'S SPEAKER JACKSON BURKHOLDER

Jackson Burkholder has been growing cacti and succulents for over twenty years. He grew up attending Colorado Cactus and Succulent Society events, and what started as one or two small plants every year has turned into an obsession with desert flora. Since middle school Jackson has been active in the Colorado Cactus and Succulent Society serving as Show and Sale Chair, Vice President, Show Chair, and has been a Show Judge for the past 6 years. Jackson is also an active member of Cactus and Succulent Society of America and has been on its Board of Directors since 2020.

Jackson recently graduated from Colorado State University with a degree in Horticulture and minors in Botany and Japanese. He is currently starting on Precision Cactus Growers, a nursery that will specialize in producing cactus seeds with specific location data. His plants are distributed between a small greenhouse and multiple cold frames where his current focus is on South American cacti that thrive in the high elevations and cool nights of Colorado as well as wintery hardy plants.

In addition to growing plants Jackson is also interested in restoring and using antique scientific equipment and experimenting with traditional scientific techniques. He combines both of his passions by studying plant anatomy and histology - making and examining microscope slides of different plant tissues and organs. He is currently working on finishing the research for his master's thesis in this subject on the anatomy of cactus extrafloral nectaries. He has many additional research projects coming up and is also working on a book about cactus biology and cultivation directed towards a hobbyist audience.

Jackson's presentation this month will begin by introducing the science of plant anatomy and histology by illustrating some of the tools, techniques, and terms used by plant anatomists to study plant tissues. The rest of the presentation will be filled with photos and micrographs that show the anatomy of cactus stems, leaves, and flowers and how they are unique compared to other plants.



### **POM Online Policies**

AS LACSS CONTINUES ITS ONLINE MEETING FORMAT FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL MONTHS, SOME SLIGHT MODIFICATIONS IN THE PLANT-OF-THE-MONTH (POM) COMPETITION HAVE BEEN ADOPTED BEGINNING FEBRUARY, 2021. WE HOPE THESE CHANGES WILL MOTIVATE MORE MEMBERS TO COMPETE IN THIS LONG-STANDING EDUCATIONAL TRADI-TION. BESIDES, IT'S REALLY FUN TO GET YOUR PLANTS READY FOR THEIR CLOSE-UPS.

• SUBMISSIONS WILL BE LIMITED TO A MAXIMUM OF 2 CACTUS AND 2 SUCCULENT SUBMISSIONS PER PERSON.

• WINNING POINTS WILL BE RECORDED AND ACCUMULATED FOR PRIZES AWARDED AT OUR YEAR-END HOLIDAY PARTY IN 2021.

• COMPETITION DIVISIONS (ROOKIE, NOVICE, ADVANCED, AND OPEN) WILL BE JUDGED TOGETHER, AS THERE AREN'T ENOUGH PLANTS FOR A COMPETITION IN EACH DIVISION.

• ONE POINT WILL BE AWARDED FOR EACH ENTRY, AND WINNERS IN THE CACTUS AND THE SUCCULENT AREAS WILL BE AWARDED 3 POINTS FOR 3 RD PLACE, 4 POINTS FOR 2ND PLACE, AND 5 POINTS FOR 1ST PLACE.

• PHOTOS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO OUR CACTUS CHRONICLE EDITOR : **NEWSLETTER@LACACTUS.COM** BY THE 20TH OF THE MONTH PRECEDING THE COMPETITION IN ORDER TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE JUDGING.

• MANNY RIVERA WILL SELECT THE WINNING CACTUS AND SUCCULENT BASED ON THE PHOTOS, TO BE ANNOUNCED DURING THE MEETING.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HAS PARTICIPATED IN THIS ACTIVITY!

## PLANT OF MONTH 2 0 2 2

**JANUARY** Frailea Adromischus

FEBRUARY Monotypic Senecio, Othonna

MARCH Mammillaria Clusters Aloe Clusters

**APRIL** Ecobaria, Acharagma Aizoceae Thickened Roots

### MAY

Cacti staged as miniature Succulent staged as miniature (Diameter of pot NO LARGER THAN 2")

> **JUNE** Favorites

**JULY** Discocactus Dyckia

AUGUST Thelocactus-Hamatocactus Bursera

> **SEPTEMBER** Gymnocalycium Euphorbia Millii type

> > **OCTOBER** Astrophytum Sanseveria

NOVEMBER Variegated Variegated

**DECEMBER** Holiday Awards Party

## PLANT OF THE MONTH MONOTYPIC CACTI BY KYLE WILLIAMS

This month's writeup is more about plant taxonomy than a particular cactus genus as the unifying feature is an artificial one rather than a genus or a biological trait like variegation. Before we get into that we need to figure out what the heck a monotypic cactus species is! Don't worry, it is pretty simple. A monotypic species is simply a species that is the only member of its genus. This is true for plants, animals, bacteria, etc. But this is the cactus Plant of the Month article so your plant needs to be a cactus that is the only species in its genus.

Let's take a step back and talk about plant classification and relationships. Plants are classified into hierarchical groups that reflect their evolutionary relationships with each other. The main categories going from top down is: Kingdom, Class, Order, Family, Genus, and Species. As cactus all belong to one family, the

Cactaceae, we can ignore everything but genus and species here. A genus is a group of closely related species that share common features among themselves that you won't find in other species outside the genus. It may not be some totally unique feature (though it can be!), just a unique collection of features these species share that no others do. In the past "similar looking species" was good enough to put plants in a genus together. But in recent times it has been nearly universally accepted that to be in a genus (or family, order, etc.) the plants must be closely related to each other and all plants that share this close relationship must be grouped together.

Taxonomists still have an important job to do in classifying plants as a DNA based family tree can only tell you how individual species are related, not what should be a genus, family, etc. A botanist will then take that information along with



Geohintonia mexicana



Leuchtenbergia principis

everything else we know about the plants to draw the line around the species that should be in a genus together. For the most species it will be the same genus they were always in, but sometimes species we'd never thought about will be brought in and others kicked out to ensure only related species are together.



Obregonia denegre

Sometimes we end up with a species so distinctive and unique that placing into an existing genus just doesn't make sense. In those cases, an entire new genus is created just for that species. A recent example of this would be Geohintonia mexicana. This is where we get a monotypic genus. Monotypic genera can also be formed when other species are removed. Imagine a genus with two species but one of them is found to belong to another genus. Once that is pulled out you are left with a single species, hence monotypic.

Keep in mind that sometimes a species in a monotypic species can be found to belong to a larger genus. In that case there is no longer a monotypic species, so it doesn't qualify for this Plant of the Month. A good example is Astrophytum. Up until the beginning of this century Astrophytum was a clear-cut genus of 4-5 species. Then in 2001 a strange new cactus was discovered and named Digitostigma caput-medusae. So, we had a new monotypic genus. Subsequent morphological and DNA studies proved it was actually an Astrophytum. It was

then moved into the genus and is now named Astrophytum caput-medusae. Another way to "lose" a monotypic genus is to discover more species. Aztekium was only known from one species from 1929 until 1991 when a second species was discovered.

### MONOTYPIC CACTI

ADAPTED FROM TOM GLAVICH

BERGEROCACTUS EMORYI (ECHINOCEREUS EMORYI) **BLOSSFELDIA LILIPUTANA BRASILIOPUNTIA BRASILIENSIS** BRACHYCEREUS NESIOTICUS CALYMMANTHIUM SUBSTERILE CARNEGIEA GIGANTEA CINTIA KNIZEI DENMOZA RHODACANTHA ESCONTRIA CHIOTILLA ESTOPSTOOPSIS DYBOWSKII (WAS AUSTROCEPHALOCEREUS) **GEOHINTONIA MEXICANA ISOLATOCEREUS DUMORTIERI JASMINOCEREUS THOUARSII** LEOCEREUS BAHIENSIS LEUCHTENBERGIA PRINCIPIS MAMMILLOYDIA CANDIDA MILA CAESPITOSA MIQUELIOPUNTIA MIQUELII **OBREGONIA DENEGRII ORTEGOCACTUS MACDOUGALLII** RAUHOCEREUS RIOSANIENSIS SAMAIPATICEREUS CORROANUS STETSONIA CORYNE STROMBOCACTUS DISCIFORMIS YAVIA CRYPTOCARPA YUNGASOCEREUS INQUISIVENSIS

## PLANT OF THE MONTH SENECTO & OTHONNA BY KYLE WILLIAMS

The two genera we are focusing on this month might not seem to have a lot in common, with one being a winter grower and the other a summer grower. They common thread is they are both members of the Daisy family, Asteraceae. The Asteraceae is the largest family of flowering plants with over 30,000 species. Only the Orchid family rivals it in size. As you'd expect in a family this large, species of Asteraceae can be found in every habitat all over the world. There are relatively few succulents for the size of the family, and the majority of these can be found in Senecio and Othonna.

Senecio is an enormous genus of over 1,250 species, making it the largest genus in the Asteraceae and among the top ten largest genera of all plants. While the genus is huge, only a fraction of them are true succulents. In fact, many Senecio are normal leafy herbs you'd see in a weedy field. However, it is the succulent ones that interest us. Among succulent Senecio there are to main "looks" or growth forms. The first are upright stem succulents with deciduous leaves (i.e. leaves that fall off after a short time). They often have bluish-green stems with interesting striped markings and generally (but not always) stay 1-2' tall or less. You may see these plants listed under the old name "Kleinia" by some sellers, especially the species with bright red flowers. Some, like Senecio anteuphorbium get taller and make an interesting succulent shrub. The other type are trailing plants with thin stems and succulent leaves that make great hanging basket plants for shadier spots. These plants usually have small white flowers.



Othonna, with over 100 species, would be considered a large genus in most circumstances but seems tiny compared to Senecio! They are winter growing plants from the winter rainfall areas of Namibia and western South Africa. They are variable in form, with the most popular kinds have attractive caudiciform bases. Other types have fat elongated stems while others are geophytes which make annual stems that come up in the winter and die to the ground in the summer. Most make nice yellow daisy-like flowers. Cultivation of the woody species is very similar to Tylecodon or other woody winter growers, while the geophytic species can be treated similar to winter growing bulbs such as Albuca.



Senecio rowleyanus



Senecio stapeliiformis





COLLIN O'CALLAGHAN OTHONNASP.

MATTHEW WILLIAMS OTHONNA PACHYPODA

ROXIE + JIM ESTERLE OTHONNA HERREI



**DONNA PACHOREK** CONOPHYTUM PELLUCIDUM



JOHN VAN UNEN OBREGONIA DENEGRII





CANDE FRIEDMAN DENMOZA RHODACANTHA

GRETCHEN DAVIS SENECIO HAWORTHII

# CSSA WEBINAR

### COMPANION PLANTS FOR SUCCULENT GARDENS ROD HAENNI

Join us Saturday, February 5th at 10:00 a.m. PST for the next in our series of webinars featuring Cactus and Succulent experts from around the world.

### Click here to register!

Cactus and other succulent gardens are objects of beauty all by themselves, but the tremendous palette of available (and everincreasing) non-succulent plants suitable for interplanting with succulents can add much interest to your garden, both for yourself and friends and visitors. Rod will share examples of these companion plants that he grows in various cactus and succulent gardens, as well as examples from other gardens. Many of these plants can be grown successfully in a variety of climates available.



Plant groups discussed will include, dwarf conifers, penstemons, geophytes, brooms, ephedras, and a potpourri of many other plants of all sizes. The goal of the presentation is to inspire viewers to experiment with plants unknown or little known and incorporate some of them in existing or planned succulent gardens. "I still, after over forty years of serious gardening with cacti and succulents, continue to look forward to adding new succulents and companions to my gardens each year, both from my own efforts growing from seed and from cutting-edge nurseries. Learning about and growing new plants well-suited for my climate has become a passion and helps keep me a young gardener.".

### Rod Haenni – Brief Biography

I was employed as a minerals exploration geologist in 1978, travelling the desert southwest and became intensely interested in cacti during my travels. I planted my first cold tolerant succulent garden in 1978 in Denver, and my interests since then have increased geometrically. I have searched throughout the western U. S., South Africa, Patagonia, and nurseries in Germany and Switzerland for new and rare succulents for my collections.

I have gardened on nearly one acre in Littleton, Colorado since 1991 and have substantial gardens featuring cold tolerant cacti and succulents. These gardens also include a rock and crevice garden and a recently established hardy mesemb garden where I continue to assemble both a seed-grown and nursery-purchased collection of South African succulents that surprise me with their cold tolerance.

I am an active board member of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America, currently serving as Vice-President. I am passionate about conservation, research and development for the CSSA, and I see this as a golden era for those of us interested in succulent plants. succulent trees and hybrid adeniums.

## LACSS MEMBER SPOTLIGHT SANDY CHASE

When Sandy purchased her home in Sylmar in 1976, there was a large potted cactus by the back sliding door. As she dragged it into the alley for trash, a neighbor asked to bring it home to his wife, who collected cacti. Sandy had no interest in seeing her neighbor's collection, thinking all cacti were columnar, prickly, and colorless. Years later, that neighbor insisted she come over to see a blooming "Queen of the Night" Epiphyllum oxypetalum flower, along with her Mammillaria collection. "All of these are cacti?!?" That moment triggered Sandy's obsession with succulent collecting.

Prior to collecting succulents and cacti, Sandy was an avid animal collector with natural curiosity and aptitude for the sciences. In junior high school, she got an after-school job cleaning the containers of Siamese fighting fish (Betta splendens) at a tropical fish hatchery. There, she ran into typical stereotypes against females in the sciences and was relegated to running errands. Undeterred, she enrolled in a preveterinary program at Pierce College. Again she encountered bias when the Zookeeper position offered to her at the LA Zoo was restricted to the Petting Zoo. When zookeeper positions opened up to women several years later, the zoo wasn't doing any hiring. She had a similar experience in



Always a popular workshop attraction at the Drought Tolerant Plant Festival

1964 when her new veterinary assistant job restricted her from hands-on work with animals.

n the meantime, Sandy attended reptile shows and was growing a substantial reptile collection: geckoes, bearded dragons, king snakes, corn snakes, rosy boas, and more. She was also developing her skills at breeding frogs and reptiles. She built a small business renting her animals to the studios and working with animal trainer Moe DiSesso, well-known throughout Hollywood. Sandy's film and TV credits include "Gone in 60 Seconds," "The Daniel Boone Show" and two appearances on "The Tonight Show" with Jay Leno. To these shows she brought (among other creatures) Egyptian fruit bats, red-tailed boas, ferrets, Pac Man frogs, prehensile-tailed skinks, and an 18 foot anaconda. She had also earned a solid reputation for good animal husbandry practices. As recently as four years ago, Sandy got a call from a TV director seeking help in finding homes for over 100 bull frogs used in the filming of "Fear Factor." Always eager to help, she successfully arranged for their adoption.



Aloe dichotoma getting ready for its new home Tat the Huntington

This is only a part of the crew it required to plant the 11 ton tree

Fast forward to1984, shortly after Sandy's descent into the succulent world, Sandy ventured off to Maleenee's Desert Gallery (now the acclaimed California Cactus Center) in Pasadena, where she purchased 18 "beginner" cacti for 50 cents each, a few succulents, and An Introduction to the Stapeliads" by Marlene Rainman. The book had 58 illustrations of different species of Stapelias, and Sandy intended to get one of each. She built a West-facing rock garden near her garage and planted all the cactus specimens, maintaining a strict watering regimen based on her monitoring of rain conditions in Arizona. Promptly, she dried out nearly all of them.

At Maleenee's, Sandy learned that there existed a Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA) and she attended their upcoming show and sale at the Huntington. This led her to join the Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society (LACSS). Sandy sat guietly in the back row during LACSS meetings at Prince of Peace Church in Northridge, absorbing information about succulents like a sponge. Nearby sat another quiet member about 20 years her junior, who seemed to be quite knowledgeable: Artie Chavez. They never spoke to each other. By the end of summer, Sandy was ready to enter a few plants into the first-ever Inter-City Show.

Being a member of LACSS was a game-changer for Sandy's emergent hobby. In 1987, Duke Benadom was president of LACSS. He took note of Sandy's passion for Stapelias and invited her to do an Asclelpiad presentation. Sandy was shy and lacked confidence, but Duke offered to provide her with a slide projector, his excellent photos, and the coaching she needed to make this presentation a huge success. Then, from Woody Minnich, Sandy purchased several flats of overgrown, mislabeled Stapelias that needed to be culled, cleaned, and repotted. Sandy offered any club member half the plants if he/she would help her in sorting and replanting them. A few weeks later, she got just one volunteer: Artie Chavez. That was the beginning of a life-long friendship.

Sandy immersed herself in all things LACSS, serving through the years as secretary, treasurer, director, librarian, membership chair, education chair, historian, and president from 1991 – 1993. She even recruited her young and computer-savvy daughter Shelley, twisting her arm to edit the newsletter, well before computers or Xerox machines become commonplace. In 2001, when LACSS hosted the CSSA Convention, Sandy was in charge of over 100 volunteers, receiving an honorary Life Membership for her contribution. Since then, she has attended 13 CSSA Conventions throughout the US.

One year after the opening of the Conservatory, Sandy began a nearly 40-year run of weekly volunteering at the Huntington Botanical Garden, where she has worked since 1986. At the Huntington, Sandy had the good fortune to be mentored by renowned Curator of Desert Gardens & Collections John Trager. She gained expertise in propagation techniques and overcame her fear of chopping the heads off her plants to alter their growth. It was here that she earned her solid reputation as an excellent and knowledgeable grower.

When world traveler and botanizer Frank Horwood passed away in 1987, Sandy purchased a 3 foot Aloe dichotoma in a 10" clay pot from his widow. A few years later, she planted it in the ground in her front yard in full sun and very sandy soil, where it flourished for over 30 years. Ultimately one of the largest Aloe dichotomas in Southern California, Sandy realized that this stunning 11- ton specimen needed to be seen by the public. She generously donated this treasure to the Huntington Botanical Gardens, where it will be featured at the entrance to the new succulent conservatory scheduled for completion in the upcoming year. Moving the plant from Sylmar to Pasadena was no small feat. The invaluable plant was delivered by an oversized crane on August 18, 2021. It is now uncrated and planted, and it will remain stabilized by adjustable metal stakes for a few years until it is fully acclimated and re-rooted.

Reflecting on her succulent hobby, Sandy treasures her life-long friendships with many of the iconic LACSS members who brought prestige, energy, and wisdom to the club. They include Artie Chavez, Bridgette Williams, Woody Minnich, Duke and Kaz Benadom, Karen and Martin Ostler, Roberta and Jim Hanna ,along with others who are no longer with us. With this adventurous group, she frequently traveled to Baja California, seeking and photographing the weird and wonderful bonsai Burseras, Boojum Tree (Fouquierias columnaris), and the sparkling Mesembryanthemum crystallinum. Sandy, a natural teacher, still gets excited just describing them.

Sandy's passion for succulents has not waned over the years, nor has her commitment to several cactus and succulent clubs throughout Southern California. Sandy is most concerned about the loss of plant and animal species in the wild, where she has personally witnessed their decline. She appreciates that CSSA is now taking the lead on conservation initiatives. She asks, "When was the last time you saw a Roly-Poly? A Jerusalem Cricket? A Dusty Miller? We need to pay attention."



Sandy couldn't resist a ride in the backhoe

The humble dweller in the bog, is something more than just a frog. The lizard and snake are just the same, bearing equal witness to His name. The huge, earthshaking pachyderm, is no more marvelous than the worm. The larvae in his earthly bed, the lion that roars above its head. The mountain range, the grain of sand, required the same Creative Hand.

Sandy penned this appreciation for the diversity of life over 50 years ago.

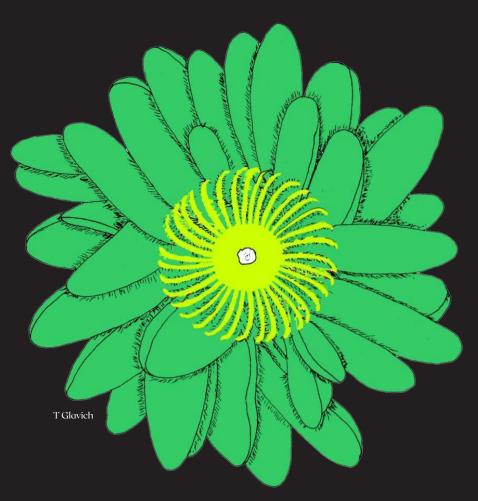


### IN MEMORIAM

IT IS WITH GREAT SADNESS THAT I MUST LET YOU KNOW OF THE PASSING OF SONIA VILLARROEL. SONIA HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF LACSS FOR MANY YEARS AND SHARED HER ENERGY WITH ALL WHO KNEW HER. SONIA BATTLED CANCER FOR SEVERAL YEARS AND SUCCUMBED TO THE DISEASE ON DECEMBER 18, 2021. SONIA'S SON, JOSE, WROTE "IF YOU HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO MEET OUR MOTHER YOU COULD ATTEST TO HER CHARACTER AND THE WAY SHE MADE EVERYONE FEEL WELCOMED AND LOVED." JOSE SERVED AS THE CACTUS CHRONICLE EDITOR FOR A COUPLE OF YEARS. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO OFFER YOUR CONDOLENCES, FEEL FREE TO CONTACT JOSE AT <u>JO.VILLA818@GMAIL.COM</u>

SONIA'S KINDNESS WILL BE FONDLY REMEMBERED AND MISSED.T

## 27th Annual San Gabriel Valley Cactus and Succulent Show and Sale



Glottiphyllum oligocarpum

### LOS ANGELES COUNTY ARBORETUM, 301 N BALDWIN, ARCADIA

### HOURS: 11 AM - 5 PM

SALE MARCH 4 – 6 | SHOW MARCH 5 – 6

### LIMITED TICKETS AVAILABLE

ADVANCED PURCHASE REQUIRED ONLINE AT WWW.ARBORETUM.ORG

ARBORETUM MEMBERS FREE

CASH REGISTERS OPEN AT 8:30AM

WWW.SGVCSS.COM