

# On the Dry Side

340+ FB MEMBERS!  
CLUB UPDATES & MEMBER  
PHOTOS

MAY 2015

## CCCSS April Meeting Recap

April 12, 2015

President Ken Byrne called the monthly membership meeting of the Central Coast Cactus and Succulent Society to order shortly after 2:00 pm on Sunday, April 12, 2015. Maybe a few of you were tempted by the beautiful weather ... we had close to a full house but fewer people in attendance than usual. Three of those people were first-time visitors who received a free succulent after introducing themselves. The thoughtful people who bring snacks always get to choose a free plant first. We love our treats and the people who bring and serve them!

Announcements began with Susan "Braids" Waidner's reminder to pay for the special t-shirts that were ordered previously. Our 2015 commemorative shirts will be available at the May meeting. Charles Varni announced that there will be special sponsored awards at the Show for "Best of" in nineteen categories. Sponsorships can be purchased from Christy Keeling for \$30. [ck@cristykeeling.com](mailto:ck@cristykeeling.com). NOTE: A list of sponsored awards (without sponsors' names), along with other important information about the Show and Sale, including Show Rules, Awards, and Show Classifications, can be found in the Show Schedule which is available to view and download on our website at [www.centralcoastcactus.com](http://www.centralcoastcactus.com). Rob Skillin, our CSSA Representative, discussed the upcoming CSSA Biannual Conference at Pitzer College in June. The CSSA Annual Show and Sale will be at The Huntington Gardens on June 27 and 28 and will be the destination of the CCCSS reward trip. Rob said that CSSA will sponsor an award at our Show with a special plaque if there are at least two educational entries. The plaque needs to be ordered in advance, so please let Rob know if you intend to enter an educational project concerning some aspect of succulents. Rob also mentioned that the Show includes a special ribbon for the Best Rookie Entry/Cactus and Best Rookie Entry/Succulent. Rookies are people who have never entered a plant in a show and they compete only with other entrants who have never shown before. There is a new category in this year's Show under Division III: Arrangements for entries with an inside pot diameter of 3 inches or less, Miniatures. Rob reminded us that entered plants must have been in the possession of the entrant for at least six months, unless purchased at the CCCSS December holiday party. Wayne Mills handmade a wooden Suggestion Box and put it on the back table. He also announced a plan for distributing the S&S announcement cards. All 5,000 were taken by members for distribution. Terry Skillin

### REWARD TRIP!

The Board selected the CSSA Annual Show & Sale at The Huntington, on Saturday, June 27, 2015, for the S&S volunteer reward trip. This event is limited to members of CCCSS or another CSSA affiliate because official name tags are required for admittance. Any volunteer who works at least a two-hour shift will pay a significantly discounted fee.

arranges our trips and asked for suggestions for field trips in the Suggestion Box. The Greenhouse Growers open house will be April 18 and CCCSS will have a table and representatives at the event (thank you Mary Harlow, Gene Schroeder, Kathy Matsuyama and Ken Byrne), and will contribute two dish gardens to the auction. Terry Excell announced a plan to encourage carpooling to our meetings. If you are interested in carpooling ... perhaps you lack transportation but would contribute towards expenses, or you have difficulty finding parking ... contact Terry Excell and she will try to set you up with someone in your area.

All of the plants on the Brag Table were Rob's. He brought in some that were in the midst of their spring flowering, including an unusual Pachypodium and a deep red Adenium – showing itself to be a cultivar because they are not normally red. Rob said it is best to not water either Adenium or Brevaflora for the four months when they are dormant. Be patient, and when you do start watering, keep them warm. Don't try to force them to bloom by watering too soon. Donna Duerk brought in some blooms from her yard ... beautiful blossoms of varied colors. Kathie Matsuyama described the Plant of the Month ... Crassulaceae. Kathie wrote an informative article in last month's newsletter, and she stayed at the front table during the break to discuss the subject further.

In response to comments on our recent survey, we had the break before our featured speaker. It seemed to be a welcome and popular change, and the Board is working on implementing more suggestions. As mentioned earlier, we now have a Suggestion Box, and we hope it will be used. (And notice how nicely made it is when you use it!)

After the break we had a lively, hands-on presentation by our featured speaker, Steve Frieze. Steve and his wife Phyllis have just opened a retail location (Desert Creations Nursery, 18161 Parthenia St., Northridge) after selling succulents from their home for a long time. Staging was the focus of Steve's presentation. He said there are two reasons for staging: competitive zeal and to bring out the plant's essence. He likes to stage a plant to suggest its appearance in situ by choosing the correct pot and enhancing it with rocks and top dressing. He demonstrated by potting up several plants, including a fabulous specimen owned by Jose Toll into a made-to-order Charles Varni pot. (Terry Excell posted a picture on our Facebook page.)



*Recap continued on page 2*

## CCCSS April Meeting Recap Continued

Steve prefers a lean soil that is 60-70 percent pumice. This encourages good drainage to avoid root rot but requires regular fertilizing to provide the nutrients missing from a mix with little organic matter. He recommends watering thoroughly once a week and including a diluted fertilizer. Once Steve has the plant in the new pot, possibly with some added rocks, he adds a top dressing to mimic the plant's natural environment. Besides creating a finished look, the top dressing helps keep the soil from drying out too fast. [He named John Matthews as someone who sells many varieties of top dressing.] Other random comments: the plant should be the focus of the entry; the container is not the center of attention. If you think you are over-watering, you probably are. Watering can be reduced in foggy areas. The pot shouldn't be too big for the plant ... don't plan on the plant growing into the pot. Staging is an art form and needs to be practiced. Don't stage plants when they are dormant; they need good roots to adapt to the new setting. Plants tend to go dormant as the days shorten and the nights get cooler, and they wake up when the weather starts heating up and water becomes available. Holes in pots should be covered with mesh or screen. When removing a plant from its pot, shake out the soil around the roots and spread them out. Items he uses for staging include rocks (added before top dressing), a big brush, lots of tweezers, expensive stainless steel scissors and lots of other assorted tools. Top dressing should be similar to the rocks. Usually center the plant in the pot, but there are always exceptions ... use your artistic eye. You can amend soil with volcanic rock (reasonably priced at AirVol Block in SLO), although Steve prefers pumice. Some materials contain boron that has to be washed out before adding to a soil mix or using as dressing. Spiny plants can be picked up with wadded-up newspaper. A lazy susan is handy for staging large plants. Hide flaws with rocks. Remember that judging is done using an imagined standard that is not how plants are in habitat. Water all around the plant, and water thoroughly. A repotted plant usually will be established and fully rooted, uh, rooted within two weeks to a month. Use a saturation nozzle or bonsai wand to water.

Besides giving us a great demonstration and discussion of staging, Steve's presentation was entertaining and very well received by the audience. The drawings followed the presentation and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol Harlow Moss, Secretary

**SHOW AND SALE: IMPORTANT TIMES AND DEADLINES:** On Friday, May 22, volunteers will set up the tables beginning at 1:00 pm. Vendors will set up their tables between 3:00 and 6:30 pm, or as soon as the tables are in place. For setup by special arrangement on Saturday morning between 8:00 and 9:30 am, contact the Sales Chair. Show plants **MUST BE** delivered on Friday between 3:00 and 6:30 pm. **LATE ENTRIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** Bring whatever props are necessary for display – saucer, stand, support, etc. Judging begins at 7:00 pm on Friday until completed. Only Show Judges and Clerks are allowed in the show area during judging. The entire gym will be devoted to sales, with the show and award tables in the adjoining rooms. The kitchen will be used for workers' and volunteers' snacks and meals. There will be a Plant Hotel on the stage for storage of both paid and unpaid plants for ease in browsing. Payment by cash, check or major credit card (MasterCard, Visa, AmEx). **ANY ITEMS RESERVED ON FRIDAY EVENING WILL BE PLACED IN THE PLANT HOTEL FOR PAYMENT DURING THE EVENT'S OPEN HOURS ON SATURDAY AND SUNDAY.** On Sunday at 1:00 pm there will be an auction of show-quality plants. Contact Show Chair if interested in entering items in the auction.

## ALL SHOW VOLUNTEERS/WORKERS

As you all know our 9th annual Show & Sale is just around the corner. I still have openings for volunteers and the more volunteers I have the easier and more fun it is for all of us. Our volunteers are who make the Show & Sale a success.

### Please note the following:

- 1. All working volunteers please park on the street and/or car pool if possible, so customers can use the parking lots.**
- 2. Please arrive 10-15 minutes prior to the beginning of your shift.**
- 3. The Saturday morning shift starts at 10:00 Am- Saturday afternoon shift at 1:30 PM-Sunday morning shift at 10:00 AM-Sunday PM shift at 1:00 PM.**
- 4. Check in with me, Pat Gilson or Carol Mortensen upon arrival, to learn your assigned location.**

-Most of the positions do not require expertise, just a smile and the ability to direct people to someone who can answer their question(s). There will be informational fliers at the greeters table.

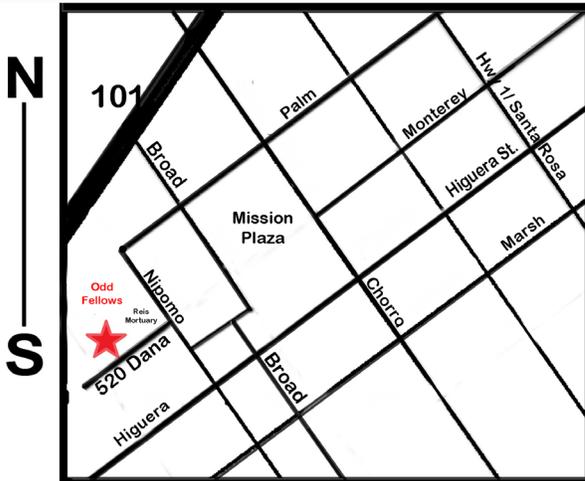
-Please wear a club T- shirt. If you don't have one, new shirts will be on sale at the May 10th meeting.

-The club will supply lunch for volunteers and vendors. If you would like to contribute some snacks, it will be appreciated by all.

-I will have the volunteers sign-up sheet at the next meeting so that you all can see what time you assigned to. Should you not be able to attend the meeting and wish to volunteer or check what time you volunteered for, please contact me at: [hupt74@yahoo.com](mailto:hupt74@yahoo.com) or call me 805-481-5596.

Thank You,  
Pat Gilson

## NEXT MEETING:



Sunday  
May 10  
2PM

**THE ODD  
FELLOWS  
HALL**

520 DANA ST.  
(off Nipomo St.)

## CCCSS MEMBERSHIP

If you cannot make it to the meeting,  
send your info to:

### CCCSS Membership

c/o Barbara Brooks  
441 Marsh St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

[barbarahbrooks@sbcglobal.net](mailto:barbarahbrooks@sbcglobal.net)

Membership: single-\$20 family-\$25  
business-\$40

## PARKING AN ISSUE? WOULD YOU LIKE TO CARPOOL?

We will have a signup box at the meeting on April 12. We will ask you to share your name, email, and area where you live with other members from your area. After you sign up, Terry (newsletter editor) will put together an email that has other interested members from your area and you will receive the information before the May meeting so you can make contact with folks from the list and arrange to carpool. Contact: Terry Excell [txlraiders@gmail.com](mailto:txlraiders@gmail.com)



## SPEAKER of the MONTH for MAY KAREN OSTLER

Karen's presentation will be about **Mammillarias: Everyone's First Cactus**

She will be discussing mammillarias and their classifications according to the NEW CACTUS LEXICON; she will have photos showing their sub genus and sections.

Sounds pretty boring, huh? It actually isn't!



**Karen's Bio:** I've been growing plants since I was about 10, one of my first plants was a 'snake plant;' Sansievieria; and I actually owned an offset of it until just a few years ago.

I got my first 'real' cactus; a Gymnocalycium in the 80's (I can't remember quite when; it was the year of the first Intercity Show). We then joined the Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent society. I am now a member of 5 local societies; LACSS, Gates C & S Society, San Gabriel C & S Society, Sunset Succulent Society and of course, Central Coast C & S Society. I am also a member of CSSA.

We made a huge move 8 years ago from the mild weather San Fernando Valley to the north-facing San Gabriel Mtns. at 4100'. The biggest challenge has been learning to grow the plants all over again.

## PLANT OF THE MONTH

### Mammillaria

by Kyle Williams



*Mammillaria hahniana*

Mammillaria is quite possibly the most popular genus of cacti, and is usually one of the first succulents a person buys. There are several reasons for this. With nearly 200 species, Mammillaria is one of the larger genera in the Cactaceae, which means there is an enormous amount of variety to choose from. Some species are fingernail size, others solitary globular plants, some are straight spined, some form sizeable clumps, while others are heavily spined with hooks. This month we are interested in those species that form nice clumps. The more common species are ubiquitous at any nursery, big box store, or even supermarket that sells plants. Most species are small, easy to grow, and have a “cute” factor that make even non-gardeners want to buy one for their patio or windowsill. The most commonly grown species are also quite tolerant of abuse and neglect.

One of the most distinctive features of Mammillaria is flowers born in the axils of the tubercles that as a group form a ring around the stem. They are usually small, but many can be open at once providing a nice display. Flowers range in color from white and yellow to pink and red. Other species have orange, salmon, or even bicolor flowers.

Mammillaria species range from Columbia all the way to Canada. Approximately ten species are found in the south western portion of the United States, including California. However, the true heart of Mammillaria diversity is Mexico. Most species occur there and you can see the full range of variation the genus has to offer. While some species are extremely hardy (particularly the North American species), others are more frost sensitive. Almost all Mammillaria will do just fine in Southern California, with little or no winter protection, as long as they are potted in a freely draining potting mix. If you live in areas that get hard frost in the winter (e.g. the Antelope Valley) be sure to check the frost tolerance of your species.

The secrets to good growth are a continual supply of water and fertilizer during the growing season (typically from March through October), strong light, intense heat if available, and maintenance of a clean and insect free growing environment. Many people starve and under water their plants, in attempt to avoid rot. Most Mammillaria will take quite a bit of water and fertilizer when in growth. During the summer heat growth slows for a time, picking up again when the weather cools, before stopping around Thanksgiving.

Propagation of Mammillaria is easy. Cuttings can be taken at any time during the growing season (April to early November), left to dry for a few days and replanted in a clean potting mix (pure pumice is even better). Rooting is rapid, with short white roots generally appearing after a couple of weeks. Mammillaria are one of the easiest species to grow from seed. The seeds are simply placed on top of a damp potting mix, covered with a light coating of gravel, placed in a plastic bag in bright light, but out of direct sun and allowed to germinate. Germination usually occurs in a week or 10 days. The seedlings can stay in the plastic bag for several weeks until they get large enough to survive unprotected, and should then be removed to a still shaded, but brighter and drier environment. Show quality plants can often be grown in just 4 or 5 years, and entries can be ready for seedling classes in as little as 6 months. Best results are obtained when the seeds are started in late March to late May.



*Mammillaria spinosissima ssp pilcayensis*  
displayed at the San Diego CSS Show

Reprinted from the February 5, 2015 Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society Cactus Chronicle

# Central Coast Greenhouse Growers

On April 18, 2015, Gene Schroeder, Ken Burns, Kathie Matsuyama and myself represented CCCSS at the the Greenhouse Growers Annual Open House. We were stationed at the Edward's Barn in Nipomo. Thanks to Wayne Mills we had a nice display table for plants and photos. Gene and Kathie brought interesting plants for the table. Gene's blooming Pachypodium succulentum was a crowd pleaser. We had a steady stream of interested people stop by to chat, pick up club information, plant care tips and show/sale postcards. We even had a few club members stop by.

Kathie and Gene each made beautiful dish gardens for the raffle table. Hopefully CCCSS will participate in this fun event again next year.



Submitted by Mary Harlow

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**May 16**

Santa Barbara Annual S&S 10am to 3pm [http://sbcactus.org/SBCSS/SBCSS\\_Show\\_%26\\_Sale.html](http://sbcactus.org/SBCSS/SBCSS_Show_%26_Sale.html)

**May 15 & 16**

Long Beach Cactus Club S&S ([www.lbscc.org](http://www.lbscc.org))

**May (22), 23 & 24**

**CCCSS Show and Sale**

**May 30 & 31**

Los Angeles C&S S&S, Encino ([www.lacss-show.com](http://www.lacss-show.com))

**June 6 & 7**

San Diego C&S S&S, San Diego (858-382-1797)

**June 14**

**CCCSS GENERAL MEETING**

**June 14-19**

CSSA Biennial Convention, Pitzer College, Claremont [www.cssainc.org](http://www.cssainc.org)

**June 27**

**CCCSS Bustrip to the CSSA Show**

**June 27-29**

CSSA Annual S&S, Huntington Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Rd. San Marino

**July 24-26**

Orange County C&S S&S (949-212-8417)

**August 8 & 9**

Intercity S&S, LA County Arboretum, 626-798-2430

CENTRAL COAST CACTUS  
& SUCCULENT SOCIETY

**ANNUAL  
SHOW  
& SALE  
MAY  
23 & 24**



**9TH ANNUAL CACTUS & SUCCULENT  
SHOW & SALE** Free Admission

Ludwick Center  
864 Santa Rosa Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA (corner of Mill St.)

Saturday, May 23rd — 10 am to 5 pm  
Sunday, May 24th — 10 am to 4 pm

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For more information log on to [www.CentralCoastCactus.org](http://www.CentralCoastCactus.org).



**Cactus & Succulent Society of America**

Join the CSSA <http://cssa.myshopify.com/collections/join-cssa>

## **Board of Directors**

**April 12, 2015**

After cleanup of the meeting area, the following members assembled for the Board of Directors meeting: Barbara Brooks, Ann Byrne, Ken Byrne, Pat Gilson, Mary Harlow, Kathie Matsuyama, Wayne Mills, Carol Moss, Gene Schroeder, Rob Skillin, Terry Skillin, Charles Varni and Maggie Wagner.

Pat reported the results of her research about a storage facility. None of the options available meet the club's needs so alternatives are being considered for storage of the club's ten tables and other large items that are currently being stored by members. Charles reported on the Election Committee. Open positions include both Members at Large (for which Terry Skillin and another member have volunteered) and a Second Vice President to coordinate Plant of the Month and Brag Table. The Elections Committee will present the slate of candidates to the membership at the May meeting, accept nominations from the floor, and conduct the election for the coming year's elected officers. Anyone who has been a member for at least six months is eligible to be a candidate.

The Board discussed suggestions from the recent survey. Ideas include the possibility of forming a committee to handle the Plant of the Month and Brag plants. Kathie will continue to write the article for the newsletter if no one steps up to volunteer for the Second VP position. Another option is to display the POM and Brag plants with a written description including plant name, age, how grown, etc., with their owners available for discussion at the break.

Charles reported that Woody Minnich will not participate in this year's S&S, and Peter Walkowiak will replace him. The remaining clerk positions have been filled. The next meeting of the S&S committee will be held on May 3. The post-S&S reward trip will be the CSSA Annual Show and Sale at The Huntington Gardens in June. Terry Skillin will have a sign-up sheet at the May meeting. A separate overnight trip to the Succulent Extravaganza in Castroville in September is also being considered.

Advertising for the S&S was discussed. Rob's greenhouse and Charles' garden will be featured in The Tribune in May and will contain information about our event. The decision on radio advertising was postponed until the next meeting. Arrangements will be made for an interview on the Dave Congalton show. Various members will bring top dressing to the next meeting for sale to the members. The Greenhouse Growers event on April 18 will include a CCCSS display and a donation of two dish gardens made by Gene and Kathie with plant contributions from Rob and other members. In addition to Gene and Kathie, Ken and Mary Harlow will represent us.

Maggie gave the Treasurer's report and reported that we have been authorized by the State to conduct raffles with a renewal deadline of October 1. In the absence of both the President and Vice-President, the May meeting will be conducted by Charles Varni.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol Harlow Moss, Secretary



## **Volunteer Opportunities**

- Volunteer to work a shift at the Show and Sale on Memorial Day weekend. Contact Pat Gilson at [hupt74@yahoo.com](mailto:hupt74@yahoo.com)
- Consider submitting your name for one of the two openings on the club's Board of Directors—member at large or vice-president in charge of plant of month and brag table. See Charles Varni for job description at [charles@varni.org](mailto:charles@varni.org)
- The club Treasurer and Hospitality Chair are looking for an assistant/trainee to help and eventually assume the position. Talk to Maggie or Pat.
- Come before or stay after monthly club meetings to help set-up or take down tables and chairs.

## Club Officers

### **PRESIDENT**

Ken Byrne  
[agaveken@msn.com](mailto:agaveken@msn.com)

### **VICE PRESIDENT**

Kathie Matsuyama  
[luvbigdogs@earthlink.net](mailto:luvbigdogs@earthlink.net)

### **SECRETARY**

Carol Moss

### **TREASURER**

Maggie Wagner

### **HOSPITALITY**

Pat Gilson  
[hupt74@yahoo.com](mailto:hupt74@yahoo.com)

### **AT-LARGE**

Loring Manley

### **AT-LARGE**

Harry Harlow

### **LIBRARIAN**

Gene Schroeder  
[Leschroeder@earthlink.net](mailto:Leschroeder@earthlink.net)

### **PUBLICITY**

Wayne Mills  
[wwmills50@hotmail.com](mailto:wwmills50@hotmail.com)

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Barbara Brooks  
[barbarahooks@sbcglobal.net](mailto:barbarahooks@sbcglobal.net)

### **CSSA AFFILIATE**

Rob Skillin

### **NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

Terry Excell  
[fxlraiders@gmail.com](mailto:fxlraiders@gmail.com)

(All submissions to the CCCSS newsletter **must be submitted two weeks prior** to the monthly meeting.)

## EXPRESS YOUR CREATIVITY

Charles Varni is offering hand building pottery classes where students make at least two planters in four hours. The classes are in June and July and cost \$90. Contact him at

[charles@varni.org](mailto:charles@varni.org) or

Ph. 459.6698 for more details and availability.



## Library Books MIA????

The library's list of outstanding/overdue books has grown quite large.

Please, everyone, have a look about and return any books so that they may become available for others.

Please contact **Gene Schroeder**

[Leschroeder@earthlink.net](mailto:Leschroeder@earthlink.net)

## Take in Some Nature and Enjoy Our Hobby

[Huntington Botanical Gardens, San Marino, CA](#)

[Anza-Borrego Desert State Park](#)

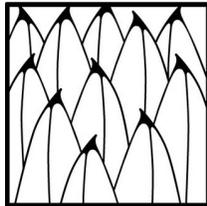
[Death Valley National Park](#)

[Joshua Tree National Park](#)

[Mojave National Preserve](#)

[The Living Desert Wildlife & Botanical Park, Palm Springs, CA](#)

[The Los Angeles County Arboretum, Arcadia, CA](#)



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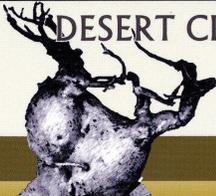


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1079 El Camino Real  
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805.489.5514 • FAX 805.473.7263

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artists designed for  
succulents

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Helpful and cheerful  
CCCSS volunteers  
and vendors

# MAY 23 & 24, 2015 CENTRAL COAST CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY

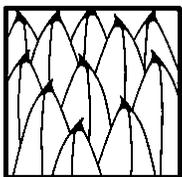
## Ninth Annual Show and Sale

Saturday, May 23, 10 am to 5 pm

Sunday, May 24, 10 am to 4 pm

**Ludwick Community Center**  
**864 Santa Rosa Street, SLO**

**FREE ADMISSION**



CCCSS meets on the second Sunday of each month at the Odd Fellows Hall, 520 Dana Street, San Luis Obispo, at 2:00 pm

Visit our website for more information  
[centralcoastcactus.org](http://centralcoastcactus.org)

SPECIAL  
AUCTION OF  
SHOW-QUALITY  
PLANTS ON  
SUNDAY AT  
1:00PM