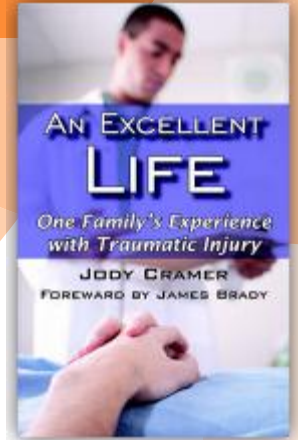


The Gardeners' Club

May 2011

Our May meeting will be a jam-packed one, ranging from “silly” to “seriously inspirational”. We’ll compete for diverse horticultural bargains at the Plant Table and share what’s in our gardens at the Blossom Table. We’ll partake in our traditional vase exchange (see below), and after snack we will welcome Jody Cramer to talk to us.

Our club is defined by a culture of caring; we always have an ongoing community service project. Last year, under the leadership of Monica Pieage and Sim Gilbert, we began helping the Assisted Living Project (Glenwood House) with regular workdays in their garden. Jody Cramer is the cofounder, and during her visit will tell us about how it came to be, and its purpose, goals and needs. She’ll share photographs with us. Jody has written an inspirational book, An Excellent Life, the compelling story of her family's experience with traumatic brain injury after her son Michael was in a car accident, an account of her family's journey and how her activism and involvement made a profound difference in the lives of her son and others. Jody says, “Begun in 1996, the Assisted Living Project's mission is to provide a housing option for young, indigent survivors of brain injury, a population which often ends up in nursing homes. After renting a house to use for three years, we were able to buy a lovely house with a huge backyard in Scotts Valley in 1999. At the Glenwood House, each of the five residents has his or her own room, all of which open onto the backyard. Glenwood House is a home, not a facility or an institution. Both back and front yards are important. The front needs to be appealing and blend in with the residential neighborhood. The backyard is a gathering spot, a recreation location, a food-growing area, a meeting sight and a highlight of the house. The Assisted Living Project receives very little government money and is managed by volunteers. We are most appreciative of support from The Gardeners' Club.” It's nice to be reminded about how volunteer efforts make a difference. To learn more about the Assisted Living Project, go to <http://assistedlivingproject.org>.



The Great Silly Vase Exchange Returns



Those of you who are long time Gardeners' Club members will recall the Vase Exchanges we had in 2002 and 2006, organized by Trician Comings. Well, Trician's at it again: this month, we're having another one! Go through your flower vases now and weed out a few to donate to the event. You know you've got too many; make room for more! Bring them to the meeting and drop them off at the table near the entrance. They will then be sorted on the sales tables.



Here's how it works: there will be three separate tables set up with signs on them marked \$4.00, \$2.00 and \$1.00. At the intermission (not before!) sales will begin. When choosing vases to purchase, be sure to take a price tag for each one from the table where you picked it up.

A timer is set and after 5 minutes, sales stop. The prices are cut in half at that time. The new prices on the tables will read \$2.00, \$1.00 and 50 cents. After another 5 minutes of shopping, the prices are cut in half once more. So, if you see a vase you love, the dilemma would be to buy it then or wait for a possible bargain! You take your chances! At the end, you will take the price tags you collected to the cashier's table and pay the total to our Treasurer.

May Meeting—Thursday, May 12th — 7:00 p.m.

Aptos Grange 2555 Mar Vista Drive

Thanks to Marcia Meyer for snack, Sim Gilbert for juice & Sirleen Ghileri for dessert

Cabrillo College Spring Plant Sale

Mother's Day Weekend

May 6, 7 & 8, 2011

Friday 3-7 p.m. (member presale);

Saturday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Sunday 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Cabrillo College Environmental Horticulture Center & Botanic Gardens

6500 Soquel Drive (top of campus), Aptos (831) 477-5671

Over 1000 different annuals, bedding plants, culinary and medicinal herbs, cut flowers, natives, perennials, salvias, species And hybrid fuchsias, succulents and vines. All plants are student grown. The sale funds the Environmental Horticulture Facility for the upcoming school year. A list of plants that will be available plants is at www.cabrillo.edu/academics/horticulture/plantsale.html.



PLANT SALE PARKING: Follow the signs to the top of campus.

Please park in parking lots F & G just off the upper perimeter road and take the shuttles up the hill.

Purchased plants may be picked up with your vehicle at the designated hold areas.

Looking for a creative gift for a mother who gardens (or for yourself, just because you work closely with Mother Nature)? Go to the online store of Hudson Valley Seed Library (www.seedlibrary.org/catalog/artpacks) and drool over their art packs. Each pack is designed by a New York artist, is full of seeds and unfolds to a piece of beautiful art you can frame.



Lo que es una hermosa rosa!



On Cinco de Mayo, you can celebrate that it is finally warm enough to plant cilantro seeds and set out your pepper and tomato plants—visions of salsa will dance before your eyes! You can also celebrate by planting this beauty in your rose garden—the prize-winning floribunda ‘**Cinco de Mayo**’. An offspring of the Julia Child rose, It has a non-stop display of flowers in an unusual color, a mix between smoked lavender and rusty red orange.

Aiming for cultural diversity in your garden? Try growing tomatillos (husk tomatoes). Grow them as you would tomatoes, although they are a lot less fussy. They are prolific — by the end of summer you'll be making chile verde for a crowd.



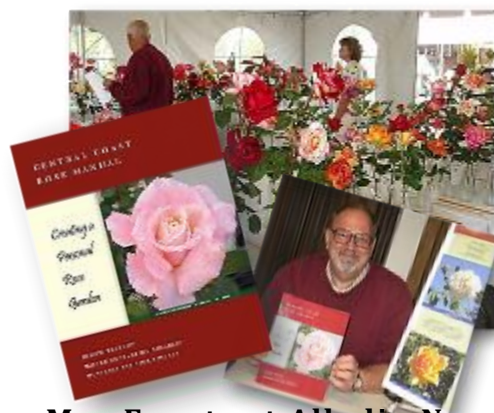
*Green thumb tip from
an old Kentucky farmer:*

Always put 3 match heads, a tablespoon of Epsom salts and a teaspoon of powdered milk into the hole when you are planting tomatoes.

Monterey Bay Rose Society 31st Annual Rose Show

May 7th, 12:30-5:00 p.m.
**Alladin Nursery and Gift Shop, 2907
Freedom Blvd, Watsonville, CA 95076**

Enjoy hundreds of home grown competitor roses on display, live classical music, and wine tasting by Pleasant Valley Vineyards. Free rose advice by ARS Consulting Rosarians. Meet Joe Truskot, author of the newly published Central Coast Rose Manual and purchase a signed copy of the book.



More May Events at Alladin Nursery

Fertilizer Class, Sat, May 14th, 11:00 am: Everything you need to know about fertilizers with Larry Byers of E.B Stone.

Nina's Interactive Potting Class, Saturday May 21, 11:00 am. In this hands-on class, Nina Broderick will teach you to create flower pots with colorful combinations. All materials provided with \$20 fee. Please RSVP, 724-7517.

Gray Water, Sunday May 22, 11:00 am and 1:00pm. Learn to collect and reuse rain water and gray water.

Horehound is a great companion plant. It stimulates tomatoes and peppers to produce fruit. It helps all other plants near it because its tiny, long-lasting flowers attract beneficial insects - Braconid and Icheumonid wasps, and Tachnid and Syrid flies. The larval forms of these insects parasitize or otherwise consume many other insects pests. The scientific name for horehound is *Marrubium vulgare*, and like all such binomials, tells you something about the plant when the name is translated.



Marrubium is the Latinized version of the Hebrew name for orehound, *marrob*; horehound is one of the five bitter herbs of Passover. Vulgare means it is commonly found.

Horehound is easy to grow. It does best in poor, dry soil, so you might want to plant it in a separate bed that receives less water, near your tomatoes and peppers.

Growing Summer Dahlias

by Colleen Goff, Elkhorn Gardens



It's May, and still time to plant dahlia tubers in the ground or in large pots for blooms in mid to late July. If you have never grown dahlias they are as easy as other flowering plants. We are very lucky in the Monterey Bay Area, because the climate is great for dahlias and the dirt is well draining. We have a longer growing season than most, so dahlias will bloom till the end of September, and then they will shut down for the cold season. Our area is rather wet in the winter months. Dahlias will either make it through the winter in the ground on their own or they may rot. Most experienced growers dig their dahlia tubers out of the ground, separate them, and store them in a cool place.

I say being a dahlia grower is the waltz of the dahlia. You have to watch the weather in the spring. Tubers hate wet cold dirt, rain, etc. This is when you will kill them by rotting. So you need to be aware of the end of the rainy season, and then wait a couple weeks till the dirt is on the dry side. This is when the ground temperature is approximately 60 degrees or warmer.

Dahlias need a full sun location. If there is any shade during the day, the plant will not produce as well through out the summer, and will put out few flowers with not a great form, and a shorter plant. If shade is all you have, they need at least ½ day of direct sunlight.

If your soil is heavy, you will have to amend it with sand and peat moss to help lighten it. To increase the nutrient in your soil, use a mushroom compost, or cow manure that has aged. It is best to do this sparingly. Too much nitrogen will produce tall spindly plants, small blooms, weak tubers and weak stems. If you are adding new soils to your bed, you must make sure that there are no types of weed killers [herbicides] and they must not be sterile. Hand weeding is

the only option for dahlias. The PH level should be 6.5-7.0 slightly acid. To adjust the PH level in your soil, you may add Lime to increase your PH, or sulfur (avoid Bonide brand) to decrease your PH level.

To plant your tubers, dig a hole about 4-6" deep and lay the tuber on it's side. Then cover it with dirt. If the sprouts are longer than 2-3" in length it would be best to bury them just barely showing out of the dirt surface. We suggest that you plant 2-2 1/2 feet apart. It's good to work a handful of bone meal into the hole at planting. We do not use garden stakes but if you wish to use them this is a good time to put in your stakes.

At this point, DO NOT WATER THE TUBER AT ALL after planting. You can start watering after the sprouts have appeared above ground. Once the plant is growing, it will need deep watering about 2-3 x a week, except during really hot weather, when you can water just until the soil is damp.

Don't cover your dahlia beds with mulch because it prevents the ground from warming up. If you have snails and slugs, you should apply snail/slug bait until you see your dahlias up and growing. Average time to see dahlia tubers sprout is 3-5 weeks.

We recommend a low nitrogen fertilizer. If you have amended your dirt, don't fertilize until the end of August. This is a good time to use a small amount of high bloom fertilizer 10-60-10. One of the biggest mistakes is to over fertilize. Remember, less is best.

To promote bigger, bushier plants and more flowers, pinch off the top of your plant when it is about 18-20" tall. There's a flower bud there and you'll want to see it bloom, but don't let it. At this point, you are about several weeks away from your plant being in full blooming season and you will be rewarded all summer with beautiful flowers. Dahlias like to have their flowers cut and the plant will continue to push out more buds for you until frost.

Dahlias are as unique as people. They will come in many sizes, shapes, and colors. With this in mind, their tubers will do the same in their shapes and sizes. Tuber size does not affect or control the growth or performance of the plants. Some of the largest dinner plate dahlias come from very small

tubers and will always produce the accurate variety and growth habits.

If you need to grow your dahlias in pots, they must be large enough. Half- barrels work well for one tuber. Please keep in mind that dahlias do not perform as well in a container.

I have grown dahlias for years and years; learning the world of dahlias is easier than roses or daylilies. Just try it. If the first year is for learning, keep trying. It's like baking bread; you will get better at it. When I met my husband, he had one dahlia and I fell in love with it. And in the beginning it was a trial and error situation. Gophers are in love with dahlias; you will have to protect your plants or they will eat every single one. Dahlia tubers are basically gopher cookies.

We grow 550 varieties of hybrid dahlias – look at the photos on our website. We've still got thousands of tubers available and we've lowered our prices to close out the season. I will also help you with questions -- just call! Let's face it, if there is dirt, there should be dahlias!

We are open in the summer on Sunday afternoons with acoustic concerts in the afternoon. You can come and roam the gardens on our 5 acres out in Elkhorn Slough area. You can obtain the schedule at www.thegardensong.com. Happy summer gardening to you! (Colleen Goff, elkhomg@earthlink.net, 763-9251, www.elkhomgardens.com).

Our club been talking about a field trip, and a visit to Jim and Colleen Goff's Garden Song Botanical Gardens & Flower Farm might be just the thing. They started 17 years ago with a 5-acre property near the Elkhorn Slough that had soft breezes and a native oak habitat, no flowers. Today in their show gardens they have 700 varieties of plants, including succulents, flowering bushes & trees, and collections of dahlias irises, roses, daylilies, camellias, butterfly bush, agastache, alstroemeria, canna, salvia, verbascum, crinum, echiums and much more. On Sundays starting June they have afternoon "Summer for Peace" concerts, with great musicians from all over California and garden walks. The Goffs also do plant rescue for unwanted plants & properties to be demolished.

The Hidden Gardens of Bonny Doon



Saturday, May 21 &
Sunday, May 22
10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

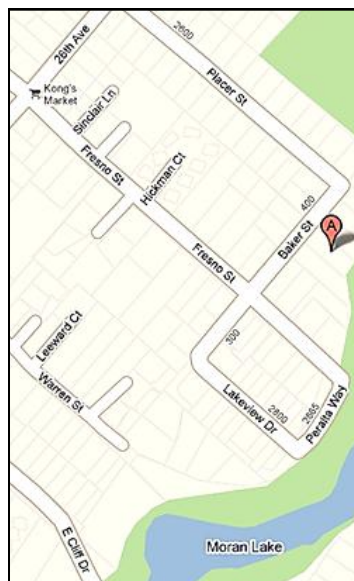
If you only go on one garden tour this year, consider this very special one. Discover eight beautiful, unique, winsome and eclectic gardens. Last year's tour was given rave reviews; three gardens are giving repeat performances, and five new and exciting ones have been added. Explore a 34-year-old hand-built garden, home and craft studio featuring flower and vegetable gardens, a night-sky viewing area, a "Skyroom" with a hanging bed, a natural campfire pit and a relaxing outdoor bathtub; a proteas-in-paradise garden, with deer-proof plants at the front of the house leading into wonderful back garden mix of pond, patio, trees, plants and flowers that has evolved over 24 years; water features, rose gardens, a tree house with zip line, a Japanese garden path featuring a

bonsai collection; wrap-around porches, gazebos, greenhouses, a one-of-a-kind Coop d'Cups chicken coop (decorated with egg cups, egg beaters, etc. at Lise Bixler's garden!); succulents, native plants, heirloom roses; found objects, unique welded metal sculptures, artisan weathervanes, mosaics, handmade planters, found objects; garden paths, decks, bocce ball, horseshoes; an all-organic, sustainable mountain garden with many formal and informal plantings, a venue for weddings and parties, with a cut flower production garden and an expansive redwood grove entertainment area; horses, llamas, birds, koi fish.

So much to discover --- make a day of it! Tickets are \$20 and may be purchased at local garden centers or at Bonny Doon Elementary School (1492 Pine Flat Road at Ice Cream Grade) at the day of the event. Plant sale and gourmet box lunches by Bonny Doon Caterings available for



purchase at the school. For more information, call 469-0688 or 423-7728. This event, organized by Club member Nancy Lambing and others, is presented by the Bonny Doon Community School Foundation to support programs at Bonny Doon Elementary School.



Board News, Board Meeting

A decision was made at the last Board meeting to change the spring plant sale from April to May, to give members more time to propagate, divide, transplant, etc. Also, we are going to have suggestion cards available at meetings so you can all let us know about resources, speaker topics and activities you'd like to have at meetings and other suggestions you have for the Club.

The next Board Meeting will be on Monday, May 23rd at Bill Patterson's home, 444 N. Baker Street, Santa Cruz 95062. You don't have to be a member of the Board to come. Join us at 6:00 p.m. to tour Bill's garden and admire his chickens and catchment basin. And...he's promised food!

Design Options for the Lawn-less Lifestyle

May 14th, 10am-1pm

Sponsored by the Ecological
Landscaping Association

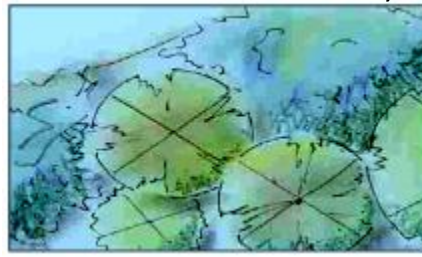
\$45 (\$35 ELA members)

Call 419-5994 or register at
www.ecolandscaping.org.



So you want to reduce or remove your lawn? Now what? The options can be confusing but you know you want some style, less maintenance and to avoid shapeless tangle of plants.

Whether you're interested in edible landscaping, native plants or stylish water-wise gardening, in this



workshop, geared toward the homeowner who wants a little help, you'll learn practical, sustainable principles and design guidelines for combining materials and creating spaces that suit your tastes and enhance your surroundings.

Bring the dimensions of your project area and take home a class-created plan to re-vitalize your landscape.

Presenter Joy Albright-Souza has a B.A. in Biology and Environmental Studies and is a member of the Association of Professional Landscape Designers. As an artist and garden designer she brings a discerning eye to landscapes and specializes in bringing sustainable principles and a water-wise plant palette to a variety of classic and contemporary garden styles.

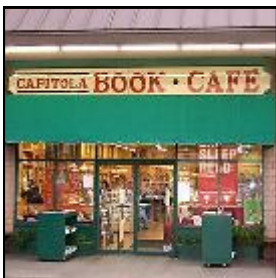
Help Needed

The Horticulture Learning Center at Cabrillo College, the 2000 volume



library, is in danger of closing because it doesn't have volunteers to sit in it to keep it open for students to use. Peter

Shaw, the Horticultural Department Chair, says they are looking for people who can be there any time or day Mon.-Fri. for even a couple of hours a day. But, ideally, there would be a dedicated volunteer who would serve as a coordinator – they used to have a volunteer who worked 4 days a week from 9 to 1, then students filled in other hours. Besides reading great books, this is a great way to have constant networking and contact with people in the horticultural field. There is also an opportunity to create and write a departmental newsletter. If you can help, contact Peter at peter.shaw@cabrillo.edu or 479-6241.



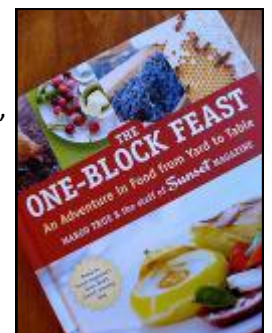
One-Block Feast

Tuesday, May 17 at 7:30pm

The Capitola Book Cafe has a strong and very enjoyable author series, events to meet writers and engage them with questions and comments (and, of course, buy their books and others you discover while you are browsing). The May 17th event is of particular interest to gardeners. You'll meet Margo True, the food editor at *Sunset* magazine, as she talks about the new Ten Speed

Press book, *One Block Feast: An Adventure in Food from Yard to Table*. Based on the James Beard

Award winning blog *The One Block Diet*, this all-in-one home gardening, do-it-yourself guide and cookbook shows you how to transform a simple plot of backyard space into a self-sufficient locavore's paradise. True and her committed staffers set an ambitious goal to learn chicken farming, bee keeping, home brewing, salt making, olive pressing, and more, and then prepare four seasonal feasts, using what could be grown or raised in their backyard sized plot. Their setbacks and successes are documented in a colorful and easy to read tribute to an urban bounty. This fun event features giveaways from local markets! Want more? Visit the ongoing Sunset blog <http://oneblockdiet.sunset.com> for all sorts of information, including incredible recipes.



Santa Cruz Baroque Festival 2011

& The UCSC Arboretum

jointly present

FLOWERS & MUSIC OF THE WORLD

Sunday, May 29, 2011 — 1-5 PM — At the UCSC Arboretum



An afternoon of 'Music in the Gardens' with live music and delightful food and drink. There will be guided tours of the Arboretum's extraordinary collection of plants. This fundraiser benefits both the Baroque Festival and the Arboretum. For tickets and information, visit www.scbaroque.org. Phones 459-2159 (tickets) or 457-9693 (info). \$40 general, \$30 for Arboretum members & Baroque subscribers, \$20 for youth (18 & under).



Perfect garden moments...
Favorite garden spaces...

It's spring, going on summer! This is the time you will be having "Ooh! Ooh!" moments, when you see beauty in your garden that takes your breath away. Why not pull out your camera and capture the moment, so that you can share it with us? Do you have a favorite place in your garden, one that you like to hang out in, one that you are particularly pleased with or one that people are always commenting on? Take a picture!

We are urging you to take photos because our November meeting is going to be a very special one. Marcia Meyer suggested we have a Virtual Garden Tour of our members' gardens, so we will! We'll compile the photos that all of you give us of your gardens for a presentation that will not only allow you to see the gardens of many of us in the Club without leaving your chair, you'll also be fortified against the winter gardening blues that will shortly follow. Lise Bixler will be coordinating the presentation, so if you have questions about how to share your photos, ask her (lbixler@sbcglobal.net or 457-2089). If you don't have a camera or would like someone else to take photos for you, ask Lise and she'll arrange for that to happen. Start clicking now!

LAMium by Louise Glück

This is how you live when you have a cold heart.
As I do: in shadows, trailing over cool rock,
under the great maple trees.
The sun hardly touches me.
Sometimes I see it in early spring, rising very far away.
Then leaves grow over it, completely hiding it. I feel it
glinting through the leaves, erratic,
like someone hitting the side of a glass with a metal spoon.
Living things don't all require
light in the same degree. Some of us
make our own light: a silver leaf
like a path no one can use, a shallow
lake of silver in the darkness under the great maples.
But you know this already.
You and the others who think
you live for truth and, by extension, love
all that is cold.

Poem from The Wild Iris. Photo: Raffi Kojian (<http://Gardenology.org>)

The Gardeners' Club

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pattyconnolerltr@aol.com
2nd position—vacant
3rd position - vacant

Refreshments

Dey Weybright, 426-3028
DEENART@aol.com

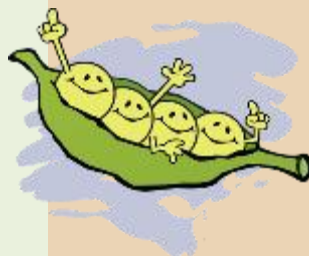
PSAs/Glenwood

Monica Pielage, 460-0215
mpielage@yahoo.com

Website

Kerry Skyles, 728-5076
KerrySkyblue@cruzio.com

www.thegardenersclub.org



It's easy-peasy to join our club!

Dues are \$12 per calendar year. Make check to "The Gardeners' Club" and mail to 1633 Quail Hollow Rd., Ben Lomond, CA 95005. Meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Thursday of each month at the Aptos Grange Hall, 2555 Mar Vista Dr., Aptos.

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