

The Gardeners' Club

Santa Cruz County, California

August 2013

Writer/Editor: Lise Bixler

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Presentation by Michael Craib

We are pleased to welcome Michael Craib to do a "show and tell" at our August meeting. He will talk about summer and fall color from California and other Mediterranean climates of the world. This will include Chile, South Africa, Western and Eastern Australia, the area around the Mediterranean Sea and California, of course. It will be a hands-on presentation of live plants and cut material. The plants will be from the extensive palette at Suncrest Nurseries, Inc., which grows over 3,500 plants in Watsonville.

Michael Craib has been a sales representative for Suncrest for the past seventeen years, selling to retail nurseries from San Francisco to San Diego. He studied Ornamental Horticulture and Botany at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. He also serves on the boards of the California Horticultural Society and the California Native Garden Foundation. Michael interned at Yerba Buena Nursery in San Mateo County and is interested in anything having to do with Mediterranean gardening.

Suncrest Nurseries started in 1989 on the grounds of a former California native plant nursery and still produces from those fields. After purchasing more land



in 2000, Suncrest Nurseries expanded its plant offerings to include unique hybrids, flowering ornamentals and a wide variety of landscaping plants. Suncrest is not open to the public, dealing with wholesale nurseries and landscaping professionals only. The entire nursery practices eco-friendly techniques from biodiesel to water reclamation.

The Suncrest website (www.suncrestnurseries.com) says, "We are devoted to broadening gardeners' experience with a wide variety of plants suitable for outdoor culture in coastal and near-coastal California. Major categories include unusual showy trees, trial and distribution of worthy new plants



Cordyline 'Red Sensation'



Flannel bush (Fremontia)



Chilean Lantern Tree (Crinodendron nockerianum)



Globularia sarcophylla 'Blue Eyes'

Thursday, August 8th

7:00

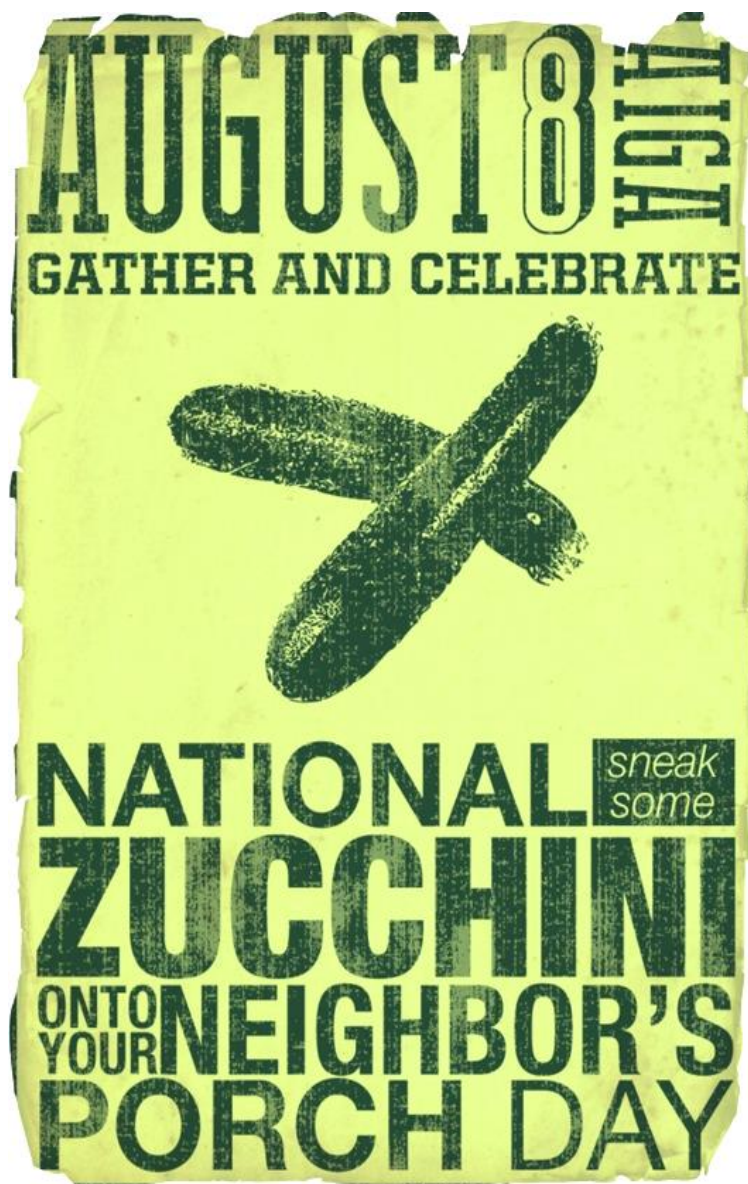
Aptos Grange

2555 Mar Vista Dr., Aptos

Refreshments will be served. Thank you to Marion Olson for snack, Marcia Meyer for juice and Kerry Skyles for dessert.

and on helping to revive interest in those which have been unfairly neglected over the years."

We look forward to having Michael share his latest favorites and recommendations.



If you have serious zucchini glut and you don't want to jeopardize your relationships with your neighbors, try this recipe, slightly modified one in Where There's Smoke: Simple, Sustainable, Delicious Grilling by Barton Seaver.

Zucchini with Dried Tomatoes and Mint



Seaver says, "Zucchini is a vegetable that plays very nicely with others. What I love so much about it is that zucchini works with an amazing range of flavors and can express itself differently, depending on how it's cooked and what it's partnered with. In this dish, I tend to slightly undercook

the zucchini so that it retains a slight bite and displays a hint of bitterness, which balances well with the sweet/smoky flavor."

- 1 ½ pound zucchini, ends trimmed
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Kosher salt
- 3 smoke-dried tomatoes*
- 1 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- Leaves from 8 sprigs fresh mint, torn

Cut each zucchini in half lengthwise. Cut each half into 1-inch triangle-shaped chunks. Toss the zucchini with the tomato oil and season it lightly with salt.

Place the zucchini in a grill basket directly over the coals of a small fire flavored with a few wood chips and cook for 5 minutes without moving. Gently toss the zucchini pieces and cook for another 2 minutes, then remove them from the grill.

Slice the dried tomatoes into thin strips. Toss the still-warm zucchini with the tomatoes, vinegar, and mint. Season with a pinch of salt and serve immediately.

*Seaver has a recipe for smoked tomatoes in his cookbook, or go to <http://www.virtualweberbullet.com/tomatoes1.html> for detailed directions. You can also purchase them ready-made, or substitute sun-dried tomatoes in oil (in which case, you can use that oil in place of the olive oil).



You can read an interview with conservationist chef Seaver and his take on sustainable grilling with heirloom veggies, humanely raised meats and suggested woods to use, AND discover more recipes at NPR's On Point with Tom Ashbrook (<http://onpoint.wbur.org/2013/07/02/the-sustainable-grill>).

If you buy your copy at <http://public-radio-market.tumblr.com/post/55885561657/where-theres-smoke-simple-sustainable>, your purchase will support National Public Radio.



Wow.

Sometimes that's all you can say about a garden that is splendid and varied and beautiful—wow. Wowie. Every month our Board meets at the garden of a different member. Cherry Thompson takes photos, and Joe Thompson post them on the "Featured Garden" section of our website (www.thegardenersclub.org). But we were so inspired by our visit last month to Melita Israel's Aptos garden we have to share more about it with you.

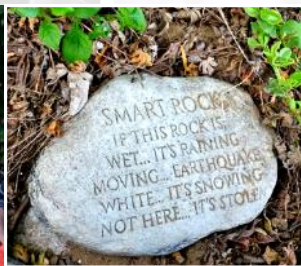


Melita and her late husband moved to her home in 1975. Most of the area around the house was covered with lawn. The orange trees and maples were planted by the former owner. They took out the front lawn and replaced it with a pond. The back of the house became her potting shed. The east side lawn was planted with ground cover and daffodils. The west lawn became artificial lawn.



Melita next to an astounding specimen of Harry Lauder's Walking Stick (Contorted Filbert).

Melita has been a Master Gardener since 1995. She has 2 acres, but she rarely gardens all of the area. As we were eating guacamole from her two varieties of avocado trees and her preserves, fruit juices and home-grown vegies, we pondered how she does this all. She says, "Occasionally my son helps me. For the most part I do all of it by myself. There is an automatic watering system which helps a lot. I don't have a lawn to mow. I use electric devices to trim hedges and blow leaves. I use tricagama wasp and lace wings to control pests and anything else I can find to make things easier to garden."



Melita is an adventurous gardener. Here Ilene Wilson marvels at a sapote ready to harvest from a well-established tree. In her vegetable garden, the yacón (Peruvian sunchoke) she bought from Cabrillo in May is growing well.



Melita doesn't water her tomatoes; she dry farms them. This year she's trying out red plastic mulch.



Trees laden with fruit abound. This is the easy method Melita uses to keep the birds from eating it all: bird netting is draped over easily-constructed pvc pipe frames.



Melita is a talented artist; here's a detail from a watercolor of Matilja poppies she has hanging in her home. She teaches a class in drawing and watercolor painting every Wednesday from 10:00 am-12:30 pm at the Mid-County Senior Center for all levels – public and walk-ins are welcome, and the fee is only \$10. (829 Bay Ave., Capitola, 476-4711, <http://mid-countyseniorcenter.com>)

Bean 'Mascotte'



Photo: All-America Selections

Harris Seeds sent me the 2014 All-American Selections Vegetable Award Winner, Mascotte Bean, to trial in my garden. This compact variety is perfect for small gardens, patio containers and window boxes. You will get your first pods 50 days after planting. These are dwarf upright plants 16-18" tall with pods held well outside of the foliage for easy harvest. They have a continuous set for high yields over a long harvest window, and the beans are extra-fine, stringless filet types. You can sow every two weeks until 50 days prior to first frost. The French 'Mascotte' (like its English translation "mascot") is a symbol of good luck and was chosen for this variety's gardener-friendly habit.



Let Us Wonder Together

Companions in Wonder: Children and Adults Exploring Nature Together.

Edited by Julie Dunlap and Stephen R. Kellert

Rachel Carson's classic 1956 essay "Help Your Child to Wonder" urged adults to help children experience the "sense of wonder" that comes only from a relationship with nature. It's clear we haven't succeeded in following her advice: eight-year-olds surveyed in the United Kingdom could identify more Pokémon characters than common wildlife species; and Richard Louv's recent best-selling book Last Child

in the Woods identifies a "nature deficit disorder" in children around the world. But today a growing number of environmentally minded parents, teachers, and other adults are seeking to restore nature to its rightful place in children's lives. This anthology gathers personal essays recounting adventures great and small with children in the natural world.

The authors--writing as parents, teachers, mentors, and former children--describe experiences that range from bird watching to an encounter with an apple butter-loving grizzly bear. Rick Bass captures fireflies with his children and reflects on fatherhood; Michael Branch observes wryly that both gardening and parenting are "disciplines of sustainability"; Lauret Savoy wonders how African American children can connect to the the land after generations of estrangement; and Sandra Steingraber has "the big talk" with her children, not about sex but about global warming.

By turns lyrical, comic, and earnest, these writings guide us to closer connections with nature and with the children in our lives, for the good of the planet and our own spiritual and physical well-being.

—The MIT Press

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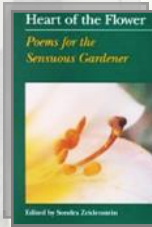
Native Revival Nursery (2660 Mar Vista Dr., Aptos) (www.nativerivival.com) continues its summer brunch series. You can start your day off with coffee and a baked treat, then shop for plants, including one free one. Mediterranean cuisine, live music, ice cream, plants—who could ask for anything more?

You must print this portion to receive the free plant with purchase. Please provide it at check out time. Thank you! Native Revival Nursery Summer Brunch Series

Offer Good: August 4th, 2013



Cynthia Pederson is a writer, with extensive publications for children and adults, who divides her time between rural northwest Missouri and her hometown, Topeka, Kansas. She has been an outreach storyteller and librarian at the Topeka Public Library, and a storyteller workshop instructor at the University of Kansas Museum of Anthropology. This poem was found in a used copy of the out-of-print book Heart of the Flower: Poems for the Sensuous Gardener (Ed: Sondra Zeidenstein).



webless august spiders

by Cynthia Pederson

hanging from liquid silk
hardening in the evening air
four o'clocks are open
even now, near midnight

while heavy-headed phlox
yes and no with every
indecisive statement
of the breeze

they lean over
searching for something
underneath themselves.

the glider swing creaks
competing with crickets
and the porchlight
gathers a following
of witless moths.

every august evening
ends like this:

on a webless porch
watching the phlox fall
face down on the front
walk
while crickets crowd out
any strand of silence.

Board Meeting

The next meeting of The Gardeners' Club Board will be at the home of Dee Weybright, in Bonny Doon. You don't have to be a member of the Board; come join us to tour Dee's magical garden at 400 Towee Drive at 6:00 p.m. on August 26th. If you need directions, Dee's contact information is on the other half of this page. Or contact Cherry about carpooling.



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www.thegardenersclub.org

The Gardeners' Club

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3rd position - vacant

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