

# The Gardeners' Club

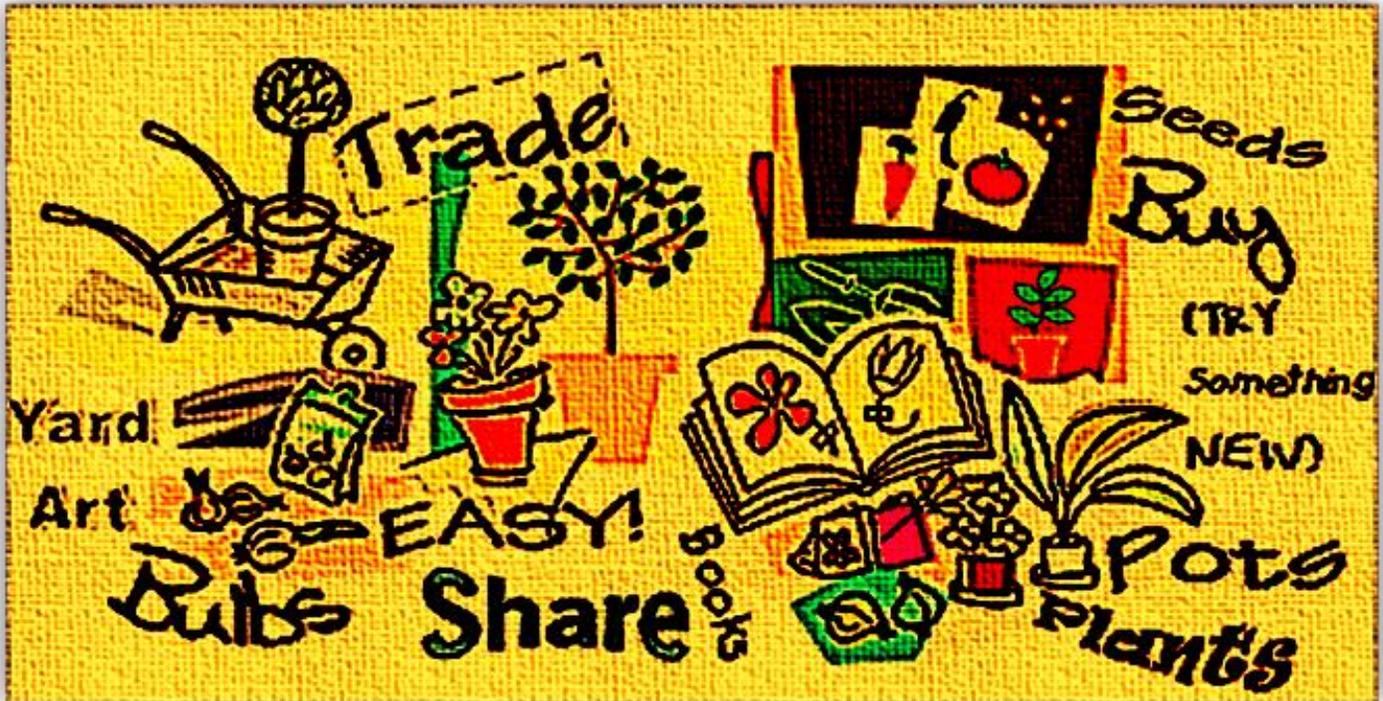
Santa Cruz County, California

May 2014

Writer/Editor: Lise Bixler

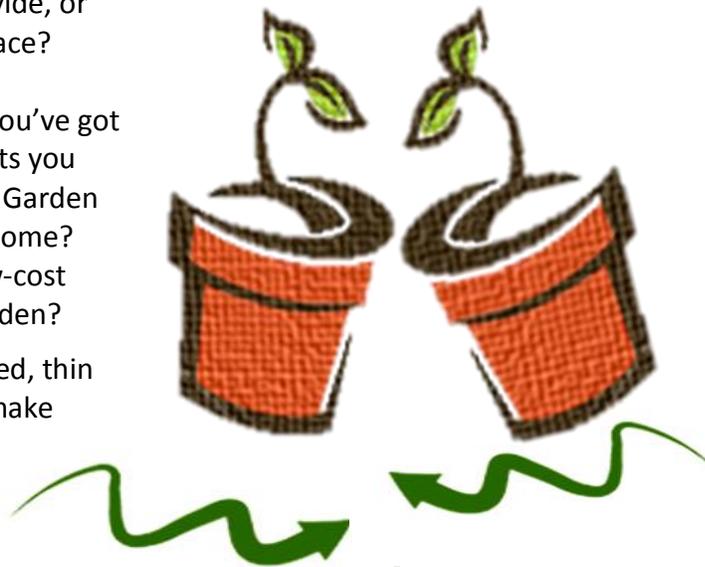
[lisebixler@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lisebixler@sbcglobal.net)

## Spring Plant Swap & Sale



Got plants ready to divide, or ones you want to replace? Been sowing so enthusiastically that you've got seedlings to share? Pots you don't need any more? Garden art that needs a new home? Looking for free or low-cost treasures for your garden?

Clean out your tool shed, thin your perennial beds, make space on your bookshelf, finish your garden crafts... and bring your



goodies to our amazing annual spring event.

Our members offer a limitless variety of bulbs, annuals, perennials, shrubs, seeds, small trees, tools, planters, knick-knacks and anything/everything garden. You'll find plants you've never heard of and plants you've always wanted to try.

See the inside back cover for more information. If you don't have plants to trade, bring cash or check to buy at bargain prices. Don't miss out – see you there!

**Thursday, May 8th, 7:00 p.m.**  
**Aptos Grange, 2555 Mar Vista Dr., Aptos**

## A Glimpse of Davis Gardens

Club Member Barbara Vorlop invited a couple of us to join us on her annual pilgrimage to the California Conference for the Advancement of Ceramic Arts in Davis. We were inspired about pottery and sculptures, especially, for we gardeners, the ones we might replicate for our gardens. Davis is a city full of public art, and community gardens. Here are a few pictures I took of what we saw when we roamed the town.

The entrance to the UC Davis California Native Plate GATEway Garden stunned us. It serves as a landmark to help people get from the city to the UC Davis Arboretum, and it was a collaboration between the city and the Arboretum. Here's a photo of our friends Marel Hurn and Nancy k Brown under the gateway to give you a sense of scale. It was made out of 400 shovels donated by community members.

As the sculptor, Christopher Fennell, explained before he constructed it in 2013, "...When you garden, you use shovels to move dirt around. I was looking at shovels one time and noticed they looked like a vine. If you could take a shovel and curve it, it would look like a vine leaf and it would look like an arrow. So in the gateway you have all the shovels, all these arrows, all pointing the garden, that are moving around".

On our way to the Davis Farmers' Market, we walked through the Central Park Gardens. Established in the early 1990s, the gardens are maintained by volunteers in partnership with the City of Davis, striving to create beautiful demonstration gardens and engaging educational programs that will motivate local gardeners to adopt more sustainable gardening practices.

This beautiful, ceramic mosaic sculpture called "Flutter and Hum" by Mark Rivera is the focal point of the Rose and Flower Garden. The sculpture was designed to support garden educational goals and uses



hand-sculpted tiles to depict native hummingbirds and butterflies visiting garden plants. The three plants represented on the sculpture (Purple coneflower, California pipevine and Western columbine) were chosen for their value as nectar or larval food sources for butterflies and hummingbirds and for their ability to thrive in Davis gardens. The three

featured plants also grow in the surrounding flower beds.

"Mediation" by Donna Billick is a terrazzo sculpture dedicated to Thomas H. Frankel, a mediator for Yolo County, for his many years of service. It depicts a pair of hands in a protective form, suggesting conflict resolution. Another interpretation could be that of a gardener (with a green thumb!) protecting and nurturing plants.

This monarch caterpillar is called Bellapede, which comes from the French "belle à pied", or "beauty on foot". The artistic duo of Faducci created the piece out of sculpted, colored cement and it is meant to be a climbable, interactive installation. It features seven different pairs of shoes and socks. The sculpture is located at the north end of the park next to the Vegetable Garden.



It's impossible to share all we saw—to learn more about these gardens and art, go to [www.centralparkgardens.org/](http://www.centralparkgardens.org/).

It is probably too late for most of you to consider this, but you might want to remember it next year. The Pence Gallery will celebrate its 23rd annual Garden Tour on Sunday, May 4, from noon to 5 p.m., where visitors will enjoy a picturesque look into six spectacular gardens in the rural and semi-rural areas of North Davis, including North Davis Farms. For more info, go to [www.pencegallery.org](http://www.pencegallery.org)

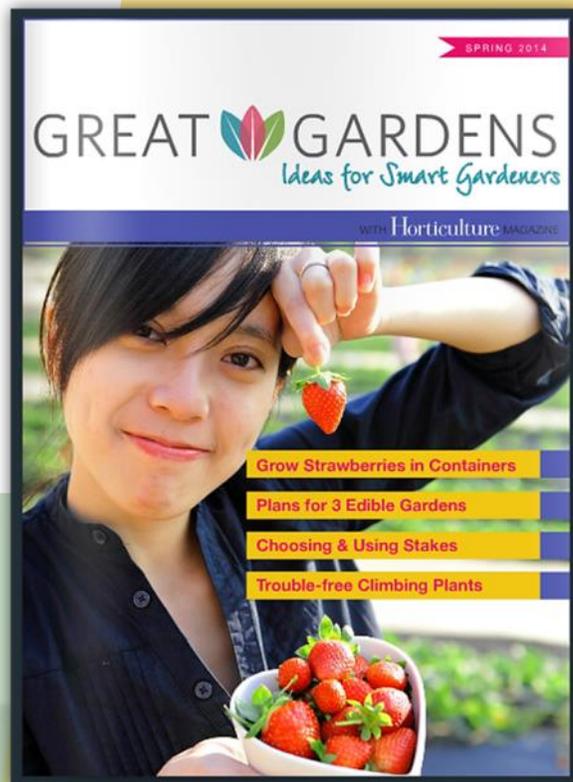




John O'Connor, wood-engraving for Here's Flowers anthology, 1937

After our lovely walks through Davis gardens yesterday, I thought I'd be joyful while writing this newsletter today. But this morning I didn't hear the rooster crow, and when I went outside I found him dead, prey to something that had gotten into the run or coop. He was a gorgeous Black Copper Maran, so we named him Ali, after Mohammed Ali, who famously said, "I'm so pretty". Oscar Wilde said, "All bad poetry springs from genuine feeling". So please indulge this bad poem, as spring reminds us of the cycle of death and regrowth, and I grieve our rooster.

*"Here's your pullet" they said as they handed us  
the young bird  
But soon its legs grew long announcing it was  
no hen, this one  
He became a grand upstanding cock  
Flaming feathers  
Fearsome spurs  
"I'm the rooster! I'm the rooster! I'm the rooster!"  
he'd shout every morning, and occasionally  
throughout the day, if the spirit moved him  
If I wanted chicken manure for my garden, I  
made sure he was in the coop before venturing  
into the run, pitchfork in hand  
Last night some critter got him, but, true  
warrior, he was valiant to the end; he saved all  
six of his hens  
Ali, you beautiful bird, brave and fierce, we  
thank you.*



Club Member Marcia Meyer alerted us to this free e-zine, which you can read at <http://issuu.com/horticulture/docs/greatgardensspring2014/1>. Of particular interest is the article on growing strawberries in containers. Did you know that strawberries are very shallow rooted, and only need to be planted in containers 6-8" deep? The advantage of planting strawberries in containers is that they are easier to protect from squirrels, gophers and snails. They elevate the plants, making them less prone to disease.

Those of us who have tried planting strawberries in traditional terra cotta strawberry pots and failed (it is so hard to keep the plants adequately moist!) may be interested in a new product called Stack-A-Pot, widely available resin potting system that is self-watering.

A whiskey barrel cut lengthwise is also an ideal container option for strawberries. Plants should be spaced at least 10 inches apart. You can fill the bottom of the barrel with packing peanuts, empty soda cans or other fillers, since they don't need deep soil. You can also grow strawberries in hanging baskets, window boxes and other containers with drainage holes.



## Spring Green soup with scallions & cheddar dumplings

Cabot Creamery Cooperative has a wonderful collection of recipes at [cabotcheese.coop](http://cabotcheese.coop). Here's one that looked particularly enticing. Although actually, the recipe was developed by Katie Webster, who has an even more wonderful recipe website (you can subscribe and she'll send you seasonal recipes that are incredible). Go to <http://www.healthyseasonalrecipes.com/> (beautiful food, healthy life).



### Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1 bunch scallion, sliced, white and green parts separated
- 1 large sweet onion, diced
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 2 carrots, diced
- 2 sticks celery, diced
- ½ teaspoon dry thyme
- ¼ cup dry sherry
- 8 cups reduced-sodium vegetable or chicken broth
- 4 cups fresh spinach leaves, stems removed and chopped\*
- ½ cup whole wheat or all-purpose flour
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- 1/3 cup buttermilk
- 1 egg white, lightly beaten
- 3 ounces Cabot Seriously Sharp Cheddar, shredded (about ¾ cup)

\*(Ed. Note: Betcha you could add or substitute chard, kale, Asian greens, or a combination of other greens)

### Directions:

1. Heat butter in a large heavy-bottomed soup pot over medium-high heat and cook until melted. Add scallion whites,

onion, salt and pepper and cook, stirring often until the onion is softened and starting to brown, 8 to 10 minutes. Add carrots, celery and thyme and cook, stirring often until the carrots and celery are starting to soften.

2. Add sherry and cook, stirring until liquid is almost evaporated, 2 to 3 minutes. Add broth, increase heat to high and bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to maintain a gentle simmer and continue cooking until the vegetables are starting to get tender, 3 to 5 minutes.

3. While soup simmers, prepare dumpling batter: Stir flour and baking soda in a medium bowl. Add buttermilk and egg white and stir thoroughly until it forms a thick batter. Stir in cheddar cheese and 2 tablespoons chopped scallion greens. Stir spinach and the remaining scallion greens into the soup and return to a simmer. Drop dumpling batter into the simmering soup, using two spoons, about one teaspoon at a time. They will sink at first but will rise as they cook. Cover and continue cooking, undisturbed until the dumplings are puffed and cooked through, 4 to 5 minutes.

*Read*



We've all seen gorgeous perennial gardens packed with color, texture, and multi-season interest.

Designed by a

professional and maintained by a crew, they are aspirational bits of beauty too difficult to attempt at home. Or are they? The Know Maintenance Perennial Garden by Roy Diblik (Timber Press) makes a design-magazine-worthy garden achievable at home. The new, simplified approach is made up of hardy, beautiful plants grown on a 10x14 foot grid. Each of the 62 garden plans combines complementary plants that thrive together and grow as a community. They are designed to make maintenance a snap. In fact, the entire garden is mowed down at the end of the season! The garden plans can be followed explicitly or adjusted to meet individual needs; size can be altered by treating the grid-like design as a modular building block that can be halved, doubled, or tripled as needed. This complete garden system makes a gorgeous perennial garden available to everyone, no matter their skill or the size of their space.



Extra produce from your garden can feed families in need.

It's easy to help, just plant, harvest and donate!



Launched in 1995, *Plant A Row* is a public service program of the Garden Writers Association. Gardeners are encouraged to plant an extra row of produce each year and donate their surplus to local food banks, soup kitchens and service organizations to help feed America's hungry.

There are over 84 million households with a yard or garden in the U.S. If every gardener plants one extra row of vegetables and donates their surplus to local food agencies and soup kitchens, a significant impact can be made on reducing hunger.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1 in 8 households in the United States experiences hunger or the risk of hunger. Many frequently skip meals or eat too little, sometimes going without food for an entire day. Approximately 33 million people, including 13 million children, have substandard diets or must resort to seeking emergency food because they cannot always afford the food they need. The demand for hunger assistance has increased by 70% in recent years, and research shows that hundreds of hungry children and adults are turned away from food banks each year because of lack of resources.

For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/PlantARowfortheHungry>.

## Board Meeting

Want to give your ideas or feedback to The Gardeners' Club Board? Want to have an evening of excitement and snacks with an extra-avid group of gardeners? Want to tour an exceptional garden? Come join us at our May Board meeting Ilene Wilson's, 100 Howell Lane, Watsonville at 6pm on Monday, May 26th. You don't have to be a Board Member—all are welcome.

## UCSC Farm & Garden's annual spring plant sale set for weekend of May 3, 4th

The Farm & Garden's spring plant sale offers the region's largest collection of organically grown herb and flower starts, vegetables, and beautiful



perennials. This year's sale features many "water-wise" varieties of food and landscape plants, along with information on water-conserving crops and practices, and a free seed exchange hosted by UCSC's Demeter Seed Library. The spring plant sale will take place Saturday, May 3, and Sunday, May 4, in the Barn Theater parking lot at the base of the UCSC campus, near the intersection of Bay and High streets in Santa Cruz. The sale will be open on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., and on Sunday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Flower offerings will include asters, bachelor's buttons, hollyhocks, Mexican sunflowers, snapdragons, stock, and a large selection of sunflowers, many grown from seeds generously donated by Renee's Garden Seeds. Also available are particularly water-thrifty options, including amaranth, poppies, marigolds, mignonette, and cosmos. Tomato fans will find plenty to choose from, with 30 heirloom, slicer, cherry, and paste varieties available. Plenty of perennials will also be available, including salvias, butterfly bushes (Buddleias), yarrows, and ornamental grasses, Peruvian lilies, lavenders, rosemary and marjoram varieties, native Ribes, Baccharis, and coast silktassel, blackberry starts, and many other favorites.

This sale benefits the UCSC Farm & Garden Apprenticeship, a six-month training course in organic farming and gardening. On-line lists of plants available at the sale are at [http://casfs.ucsc.edu/news-events/events/Annuals\\_2014.pdf](http://casfs.ucsc.edu/news-events/events/Annuals_2014.pdf) and [http://casfs.ucsc.edu/news-events/events/Perennials\\_2014.pdf](http://casfs.ucsc.edu/news-events/events/Perennials_2014.pdf).

While we're talking about container planting, did you know that certain varieties of sunflowers do well



in pots? This one to the left is the dwarf 'Double Dandy'.



The one in the blue pot is the All-America Selection award-

winning 'Suntastic', one of the smallest on the market. Gardeners will love the number of flowers each plant produces: up to twenty 5-6 inch flowers per plant in three successive blooming periods. Suntastic will bloom in less than 65 days after sowing.

There are many other small sunflower choices—'Elf' - 4 inch blooms on 16 inch plant; 'Sunny Smile' - 5 inch blooms on a 12-15 inch plant; 'Choco Sun' - Less than 12 inches with multiple blooms per plant; 'Sundance Kid' - 2 feet tall with six or more 5 inch blooms per plant; 'Sunspot' - 10 inch blooms on a 2.5 foot plant. Territorial Seed (territorialseed.com) has many more.

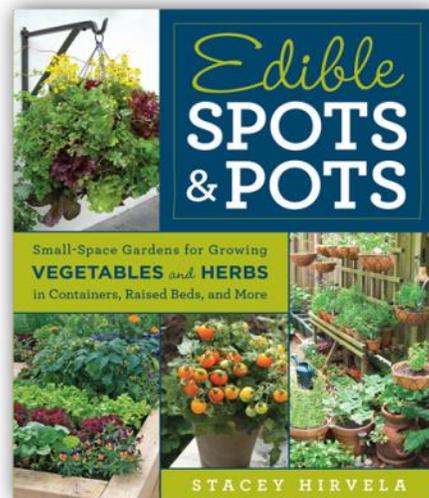
## Read

Guess we have a theme this month—gardening in smaller spaces. This book is another recommendation by Club Member Marcia Meyer, and I think if I only bought one gardening book this year, it would be this one.

Rethink the traditional garden and explore the wide variety of options for growing edibles in "anywhere" gardens—from decorative pots and raised beds to unusual growing bags, hanging pouches, and tomato rings. These contained gardens are more manageable than long rows or plots and require much less work—yet yield just as much bounty. Featuring dozens of preplanned planting recipes, based on space or container sizes, *Edible Spots and Pots* allows readers to mix and match vegetables, herbs, small fruits, and edible flowers to create a plant-style patchwork based on the "thriller" (dramatic, focal-point plants), "filler" (midheight, bushy plants), and "spiller" (vines and twining plants) formula for creating interesting and botanically sound gardens. Plot-free gardening offers practical solutions for any circumstance a gardener may encounter (challenging spaces, soils, or weather), while also taking into account budget, time, and aesthetic goals.

Author Stacey Hirvela shares many other interesting concepts, like One-Minute Veggies (foods that go from patio to plate in less than a minute) Doubly Delicious Crops that give two flavors from one plant, and space/yield ratios (vegetables worth their footprint). Gardeners will also find an enticing array of 60 edibles that grow well in a defined space for productivity and beauty.

Marcia especially liked the many DIY trellis, climbing and support ideas, with clear directions. She



commented that this book was valuable for gardeners at any level—those who've been doing it for years, and those who are just starting.

One section of the book that really stood out for me was about reusing potting soil. How many of us replace our potting soil with fresh bags from the nursery every year, without thinking of the impact that has on the environment (not to mention our budgets)? Hirvela suggests dumping your used potting soil on a tarp, and adding a 1/4 ratio of compost (or organic fertilizer, worm castings, etc.), mixing it well, and then using it again. This replenishes its nutritive value. Equally important, since most potting soils contain peat, it is a method that benefits the environment. Peat contributes to the problem of global climate change. Whether used as a soil amendment or a fuel source, peat releases its stored carbon when it decays or burns. And because peatlands must be drained of their water before the peat can be mined, the bogs also release carbon during the mining process.

If you'd like more ideas for compact plants for smaller gardens, including flowers, shrubs and trees, read the inspiring suggestions from the National Garden Bureau at <http://us1.campaign-archive2.com/?u=6b87cbdca7a158540d881d9e&id=77cd711486&e=98f474e568>.



Aw, you just KNOW you have to make some of these succulent and cacti cupcakes. Learn how at <http://alanajonesmann.com/2013/04/diy-house-plant-cupcakes/>

# Tally Sheet & Instructions for Plant Sale & Swap

You can take plants home by either paying bargain prices in cash, or by bringing plants and other items for trade tickets to use instead of cash. Fill out this form before the meeting if you are going to trade.

You may bring plants, seeds, bulbs, harvest bounty, books, tools and any other miscellaneous items of use or interest to gardeners. This is what you'll get for what you bring:

- 2", 3" & 4" pots: 1 ticket each
- 6" pot or 6-pack: 1.5 ticket each
- 1 gallon pot: 2 tickets each
- 2 gallon pot: 3 tickets each

Miscellaneous items are priced at the meeting.

Label your plants with their common or botanical names, and put your name on them in case purchasers have questions.

Please don't bring loose, dirty plants that

would make a mess, or plants you wouldn't be proud to put your name on.

We appreciate all of you who come early to help set up – it's a lot of work! And if you can, plan on staying to help with clean-up.

We'll start accepting plants at 6:40 p.m. The purchase prices are:

- 2", 3", or 4" pots: 2 tickets or \$1 each
- 6" pot or 6-pack: 3 tickets, or \$1.50 each
- 1 gallon pot: 4 tickets or \$2.00 each
- 2 gallon pot: 6 ticket or \$3.00 each

**Plant etiquette:** When there are multiples of the same plant available, please take only one until other members have had a chance to buy one. If there are multiples left over, then you can grab them! Plants that don't get sold or given away go home with the person who brought them.

Good luck, and have fun!



**Please complete this form at home and bring it with you to the meeting.**

Number of 2, 3 or 4" pots: \_\_\_\_\_ X 1 = \_\_\_\_\_ tickets

Number of 6" pots or 6-packs: \_\_\_\_\_ X 1.5 = \_\_\_\_\_ tickets (round up to whole number)

Number of 1-gal. pots: \_\_\_\_\_ X 2 = \_\_\_\_\_ tickets

Number of 2-gal. pots: \_\_\_\_\_ X 3 = \_\_\_\_\_ tickets

Miscellaneous items (to be priced at meeting): \_\_\_\_\_ tickets

**TOTAL TICKETS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL:** \_\_\_\_\_

Cabrillo College

36th Annual  
Mother's Day Weekend

# Plant Sale

May 9, 10 & 11

## Pre-Sale Fri. 3-7

Friends of the Garden pre-sale,  
silent auction and refreshments.  
\$25 memberships available  
at the gate.

## Public Sale

Sat. 9-5

Sun. 10-2



All proceeds directly benefit the Horticulture Program.



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[www.thegardenersclub.org](http://www.thegardenersclub.org)

## The Gardeners' Club

P.O. Box 3025, Ben Lomond CA 95005

### President

Cherry Thompson, 475-0991

[cherrytea@comcast.net](mailto:cherrytea@comcast.net)

Vice President & Publicity

[ilene.wilson.724-4609](mailto:ilene.wilson.724-4609)

[mygardensup@aol.com](mailto:mygardensup@aol.com)

### Secretary

April Barclay, 688-7656

[ABarclay@aol.com](mailto:ABarclay@aol.com)

### Treasurer

Sim Gilbert, 475-8162

[simgilbert@baymoon.com](mailto:simgilbert@baymoon.com)

### Membership

Suzanne Mercado, 609-6230

[SuzanneBottomline@gmail.com](mailto:SuzanneBottomline@gmail.com)

### Hospitality

Debbie Kindle, 462-6296

[poppy-54@live.com](mailto:poppy-54@live.com)

Newsletter Writer/Editor

Lise Bixler, 457-2089

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

### Members-at-Large

Pat McVeigh, 566-4553

[pmcveigh@baymoon.com](mailto:pmcveigh@baymoon.com)

Joanna Hall, 662-8821

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

### Plant Table

Patty Connoie, 335-4134

[pattyconnoiertr@aol.com](mailto:pattyconnoiertr@aol.com)

Lupe Allen, 24702705

[lupaa@ucsc.edu](mailto:lupaa@ucsc.edu)

3rd position - vacant

### Refreshments

Dey Weybright, 426-3028

[DEENART@aol.com](mailto:DEENART@aol.com)

### Website

Joe Thompson

Computer Frustration

Specialist

[joe@joehometech.com](mailto:joe@joehometech.com)

### It's easy-peasy to

Join our club! Dues

are \$12 per calendar

year. Make check to

"The Gardeners'

Club" and mail to

P.O. Box 3025, Ben

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