

The Gardeners' Club

Santa Cruz County, California

December 2015

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It's that time of year when we gather, not to trade plants or hear a speaker, but instead to celebrate our gardening friendships. And, bonus time—December is when the White Elephants visit. What special something will YOU bring that one of us MUST have?

First we'll have sumptuous potluck dinner. Bring a dish to share, labeled for the benefit of our vegetarian/vegan members or those with dietary restrictions. Please bring a serving utensil, and if you have hot dish, have it already heated. We'll provide plates, utensils and beverages.

After good eats and grand conversation, the liveliest part of our meeting will start. We'll browse the silent auction tables and discover items we didn't know we needed, and find perfect gifts for family and friends (and maybe ourselves). In the past, we've had all kinds of marvelous things, including

jewelry, special plants, clothing, gardening items, good things to eat, books, chotzkes, antiques, crafty things—every year there is something new! We'll have cards available for you to put with your items with a one-line description and minimum bid.

Brings your friends, especially those who might be interested in joining our club, and family or significant others. We won't have the plant sale or business meeting.

Thursday, December 10th,
7:00 pm—Aptos Grange,
2555 Mar Vista Dr., Aptos

Gift Ideas

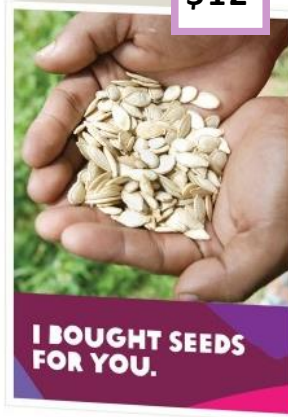


\$30

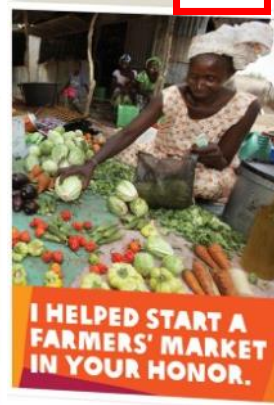
Oxfam America is a global organization working to right the wrongs of poverty, hunger, and injustice. Oxfam works with people in more than 90

countries to create lasting solutions, saving lives, developing long-term solutions to poverty, and campaigning for social change.

To learn more, go to oxfamamerica.org. As a gardener, I use every opportunity to nurture growth, and these donations and cards, in the names of friends and family members, are my perfect holiday gift solution.



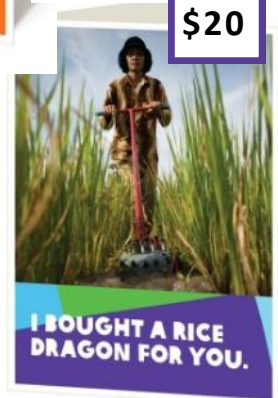
\$12



\$25



\$60



\$20



Support the Homeless Garden Project by visiting their downtown store at 110 Cooper St.. Suite 100G, Santa Cruz or shopping online at www.store.homelessgardenproject.org/.

Featuring products made in their training program from herbs and flowers grown at their organic farm. A wide selection of birch hearts, soaps, lavender bath salts, chocolates, hand dipped beeswax candles, wreaths, baking mixes, preserves, soap, gift cards,

their popular salves and other body products, books and much more.



Caabrillo Horticulture Department Open House & Poinsettia Sale

Wednesday, December 2nd

3:00-6:00 p.m. at the Cabrillo College Environmental Horticulture Center Greenhouses, Room 5300, "Top of the Campus"

Come see the wonderful poinsettia cultivars grown by student assistant Rachel Golden. There are 8 varieties in 6" pots for \$5 each. Parking at the nursery.



This year, given all of the recent world events, and a time of heightened fear, it seems particularly important to remind ourselves that peace begins with each of us. Gardeners know that peace comes through growth, not destruction.



Gardeners for Peace

Artist Alisa Burke (<http://aliaburke.blogspot.com/014/12/peace-wreath.html>) likes to make holiday wreaths using materials she can collect from her yard. For the peace sign wreath above, she used a large embroidery hoop as the circle base, and used hot glue to attach sticks to it to create the peace sign. She used pine tree clippings, lots of rosemary, wild salal, ferns and branches from other shrubs and bushes. She grabbed a small bunch of greens, held them against the hoop and then wrapped floral wire around the greens until they were secure, then overlapped a second bunch, etc. She then fluffed the whole thing, and voila! She also makes small rosemary peace signs for present toppers and place settings.

Shallow Peace Sign Dish Planter
from Garden Supply Company



<http://www.gardeners.com/buy/shallow-peace-sign-dish-planter/8591388.html>



Planting peace in agave by SoCal Guerrilla Gardening



Guerrilla Garden in Lincoln Park, Long Beach

Learn more about the clean-up and greening efforts of SoCal Guerilla Gardening at <http://socalguerrillagardening.org/>.

Peace is but a single word



when echoed by many it becomes a rallying cry for harmony in this world.

Kalettes

Kalettes are a brand new vegetable that are a fresh fusion of sweet and nutty. Not only do they have great flavor but Kalettes are also incredibly versatile and can be cooked in a variety of ways—sautéed, roasted, grilled or eaten raw.



Kalettes are the product of 15 years of hard work and dedication (using traditional breeding techniques) from the British vegetable seed house Tozer Seeds. Kalettes are a non-GMO vegetable developed through traditional hybridization and not genetic modification. The inspiration behind Kalettes came from a desire to create a kale type vegetable which was versatile, easy to prepare and looked great. Crossing kale with brussels sprouts was a natural fit since they are both from the Brassica Oleracea species which also includes cabbage, cauliflower and broccoli. The result is a brand-new vegetable which looks a little like a tiny cabbage with green frilly leaves and streaks of purple.

You can get Kalette seeds from Johnny's Selected Seeds (<http://www.johnnyseeds.com/>). Kalettes' three bicolor varieties are specifically slated for sequential harvest slots. Autumn Star is first to produce for early season harvest, Mistletoe for the mid season harvest slot, and Snowdrop to meet late season demand. Plant all three for an extended harvest program. The early crop requires a minimum of 110 days to mature, from time of transplanting. "Kalettes grow best in cooler weather, especially when forming florets, but will perform well in areas with mild summer weather prior to floret formation," notes Steve Bellavia, Product Technician at Johnny's. "In areas with hot summers, the crop can be transplanted in late summer for successful fall, winter, and spring harvest." From seed to edible floret, total time requisite for crop production ranges from 15 to 19 weeks.

The PhotoBotanic Guide to Photographing Roses

If you endeavor to capture the beauty of your roses with a camera, you'll be happy to hear that Saxon Holt is creating another of his fantastic e-books specifically about photographing roses. You can

preorder this book, available Dec.15, at <http://photobotanic.com/store/books/ebooks/photobotanic-guide-to-photographing-roses/>



Look at this photograph of one of Saxon's favorites, the Eden rose. The first thing he says is to fill the frame. Think of the four edges of your camera viewfinder as a canvas that you can fill up as

a painter would. Don't waste any space – work with intention.

Besides giving tips on lighting and composition, Saxon urges photographers to "tell a story." For example, he shares this photo, saying "On a rainy morning this rose, 'Young Lycidas' was falling over under the weight of the raindrops, and I found it against some blue pansies in the distance. An unexpected view, intriguing, fun to look at."



You can see a more extensive preview of the book, including more tips by Saxon, at <http://gardeninggonewild.com/?p=29398>.

The PhotoBotanic Guide to PHOTOGRAPHING ROSES

by Saxon Holt



Understanding Light
Working in the Garden
Composition and Balance
Macro and Close-ups
Studio and Illustration

The National Garden Bureau released an informative article on growing amaryllis. (<http://us1.campaign-archive1.com/?u=6b87cbdbca7a158540d881d9e&id=bfbc0da128>). The content and photos are from <http://www.longfield-gardens.com/>.

Expert Tips for Growing Amaryllis

An amaryllis may be the easiest and most impressive plant you'll ever grow. No gardening talent or experience is required because everything that's needed to grow a living bouquet of big, beautiful flowers is already right inside the bulb.

Amaryllis are tropical bulbs and in frost-free climates (zones 9-11) they can be grown outdoors year-round. In most of North America the bulbs are planted indoors for winter blooms.

"As with most flower bulbs, the larger the bulb the better the results," says Hans Langeveld, co-owner of bulb supplier Longfield Gardens in Lakewood, NJ. "With a jumbo, 34/36 cm amaryllis bulb you'll get 3 stems with 4 to 5 flowers per stem. A 26/28 cm bulb is about half the size and will put out 1 or sometimes 2 stems with 3 to 4 flowers."

Most amaryllis bulbs sold in the U.S. come from Holland, Brazil, Peru, South Africa or Israel. Bulbs that are grown in the southern hemisphere usually flower in early winter, between December and January. Bulbs grown in Holland flower a bit later, from January through March.

Here are instructions for growing amaryllis indoors. "An amaryllis bulb needs very little moisture," says Langeveld. "In fact, the bulbs can bloom with no water at all. Overwatering is one of the only ways you can go wrong with an amaryllis." Growing the bulbs in pots (rather than in water) helps protect them from excess moisture and also encourages strong root growth.



Choose a pot that's just big enough to accommodate the bulb. There should be at least 3" of space under the bulb for the roots, and 1 to 2" on the sides. When amaryllis bloom, the flowers are

top heavy, so using a sturdy pot will help anchor the plant.

Fill the bottom of the pot with pre-moistened growing mix and settle the bulb on top. Tuck more growing mix around the sides, leaving the shoulders and neck of the bulb exposed.

Water to settle the bulb in place and put the pot somewhere that's cool (60-70°F) and bright (direct sunlight isn't necessary). Water sparingly.

You can tell that the bulb is waking up, when you see a green tip emerging from the neck of the bulb. "The flower stalk usually comes out before the foliage," says Langeveld, "but this varies. Sometimes the foliage comes first and sometimes it comes out at the same time as the flowers." The timing of the flower stalks can be equally variable. Two stalks can come out at the same time or there may be several weeks in between.

As with all indoor flowers, the blossoms will last longer if you can keep them away from direct sunlight and heat. As

the individual flowers fade, snip them off with scissors. Eventually the whole stalk can be cut back to about an inch above the bulb.

"Many people don't realize that amaryllis are great cut flowers," suggests Langeveld. "Though it's daunting to cut that big stem, the blossoms will last just as long." Langeveld recommends a tall, clear glass vase to accentuate the elegance of the stem and flowers. "Another option is to make a tabletop arrangement by cutting the stem to about 4" and displaying the flowers in a low vase – with or without greens."

Most people treat amaryllis bulbs as annuals, but with proper care you can get them to bloom again the next year. After flowering, cut off the stems and put the pot near a sunny window. Treat the bulb as a houseplant, watering lightly and fertilizing regularly so the leaves stay lush and healthy.



In summer, the potted bulb can be moved outdoors to a sunny, protected location. Continue watering and fertilizing. Bring the pot back indoors in late summer or early fall,

moving it to a relatively cool (55-60°F) location with low light and no water. The leaves will dry up and the bulb will go dormant. After 2 to 3 months, you can repot the bulb and start over.

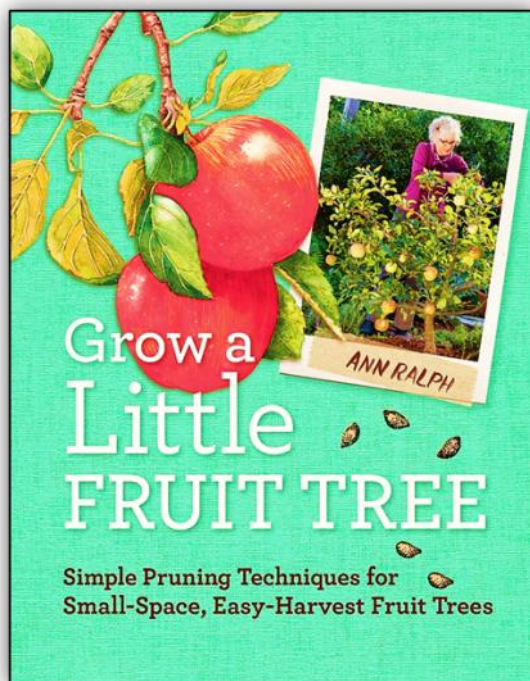
Some of you in our club are expert orchardists, but I've never had much success with fruit trees, and others of you are constrained by lack of space in small yards or gardens. Ann Ralph gives us hope for luscious and plentiful fruit in her radical new book, Grow a Little Fruit Tree: Simple Pruning Techniques for Small-Space, Easy-Harvest Fruit Trees (Storey Publishing).

She begins by making the case for the benefits of keeping fruit trees small as opposed to following the practices adopted by commercial agriculture. Small trees can be pruned quickly and without ladders. Fruit can be thinned easily, resulting in larger, better quality harvests that have fewer pest issues and are less likely to be overwhelming or wasted. Small fruit trees are perfectly suited for urban gardens, allowing more trees to be planted in small spaces (some as close as 18" apart) without shading out too much of the garden.

With that groundwork laid, Ralph guides readers through selecting fruit tree varieties and planting them. She scoffs at buying trees that are grafted to semidwarf or dwarf rootstock, stating they will grow huge anyway with a less vigorous root system and less tasty fruit. She advocates choosing fruit trees grafted to standard root stock (she gives a run-down on the pros and cons of different ones)—emphasizing that it's thoughtful, determined pruning, particularly summer pruning, that will limit the overall size of your trees.

Ralph's method is to start with giving your new bareroot tree a dramatic heading, a hard-pruning which cuts 2/3 off of your new tree. "The hardest pruning cut you'll have to make," she says.

Ralph lists four reasons to make that first cut, which can often reduce your newly purchased tree to a knee-high stub (18-24"): 1) It removes upright growth that hormonally reduces the development of lower limbs; 2) It lets the tree grow its own natural leader (the vertical trunk); 3) It creates a lower scaffold of spreading branches that support the tree and make it more



fruitful; 4) It creates lower branches, making harvesting easier.

Ralph gives clear and complete pruning instructions, with an emphasis of the important role summer pruning plays in fruit tree health. Ralph addresses most of the issues surrounding planting and caring for fruit trees, including soil issues, watering, fertilizing, and pest management.

When choosing a bareroot tree, don't go for the biggest branched one you can find. Small is good; you'll have more success with a young fruit tree whose trunk measures about the width around your thumb when you purchase it.

Also, consider the chill factor. Varieties have different

requirements for the number of winter chill hours necessary for fruit production. Bay Laurel Nurseries has a great list of low chill varieties (<https://baylaurnurseries.com/about-ordering/low-chill-bare-root-varieties.html?tmpl=component&print=1&page=>).



Our local resource, Matthew Sutton's Orchard Keepers, provides a list of fruit trees that do well in Santa Cruz County (http://www.orchardkeepers.com/fruit-tree-care_page.php?id=18&keywords=

"Why not go out on a limb? That's where the fruit it." - Will Rogers

"The four attributes of Heaven — yuan, heng, li and zhen: sprouting, growing, blooming and bearing fruit."—I Ching

Oo, how I love the
rainy days
And the happy way I
feel inside

-Neil Sedaka



*"The best kind of rain, of course, is a cozy rain. This is the kind the anonymous medieval poet makes me remember, the rain that falls on a day when you'd just as soon stay in bed a little longer, write letters or read a good book by the fire, take early tea with **hot scones** and jam and look out the*

streaked window with complacency." ~Susan Allen Toth, England For All Seasons

Come to Board Meetings for Gourmet Eats

Mmmm, eating hot scones sounds good, whether it is raining or not. At a recent Board meeting, Joanna Hall served us delicious Cheese and Chive Scones. Those of you who ignore our invitations to join us at Board meetings even though you aren't on the Board don't know what you are missing. We thought sharing her recipe might encourage more of you to join us.

We don't usually serve High Tea, but we have really good food and conversational exchanges, as well as viewing exceptional gardens.



Scone recipe



This is the basic recipe found in many British cook book and one I learned from my Mom.—*Joanna*

8 oz. self raising flour(2 cups)
1/2 level teaspoon salt
2 oz. butter (half a stick)
1/4 pint milk
extra milk for brushing
1/2 teaspoon turmeric
1/2 teaspoon of baking powder
1/4 cup dried chives
1/2 cup finely shredded cheese
Tablespoon of parmesan cheese

Heat oven to 450 degrees. Mix dry ingredients together and add butter. Rub butter into flour until texture is like bread crumbs. Add cheese and mix. Add milk and mix with knife 'til dough binds

and is not sticky. Turn onto floured surface and knead quickly till smooth. Roll out to 1/2ins thick and cut into rounds using 2 1/2 " cutter. Place on greased metal tray and brush tops with milk. Bake for 7-10 mins in top of oven.

You know that I don't always follow the recipe!!! You can easily substitute a vegetable fat like Earth Balance or use all purpose flour and add more baking powder. All the added

ingredients are approximate as I did not measure!



Note from our President Cherry Thompson: Just want to update you on the latest Board news, as we enter this season of giving. We approved the awarding of two \$300 High School student scholarships in April 2016, using funds donated in the name of Pat Williams. Marcia Meyer will work with County Office of Education on the selection process. Two \$300 Cabrillo College Horticulture student scholarships will also be awarded in April, with Bill Patterson as the liaison with Cabrillo. There is no Plant Table in December but the Board would like to encourage the membership to donate plants for the monthly Plant Tables, as well as contribute to the Blossom Table and refreshments. This will earn them a raffle ticket for the drawing of a special plant, starting again in January.

Join us for our Annual Holiday Open House

Sat. December 5th 5-8 PM

Festive Shopping with
Small Bites + Wine

10% off everything in store!

I DIG  PLANTS

420 Water St., Santa Cruz 466-3444

- DIGGARDENS.COM -

DIY Terrarium Bar - Ongoing Workshop at the store!

Design a one-of-a-kind inspiring terrarium at the Dig ongoing DIY Terrarium Bar. Start by purchasing one of their wide selection of glass vessels then add air plants, mosses, pebbles and other natural adornments to create your very own miniature world under glass.

Dig's talented terrarium designers are always available to help. Just think of all the beautiful terrariums you can make for your family and friends this holiday season! \$5-\$8 fee includes moss, lichens, rocks, feathers. and dried flowers. Terrariums, air plants, crystals and shells are always available for purchase.



sarrycurrydesign

The Gardeners' Club Membership

The time has come for membership renewal. Annual membership dues, which include all benefits, are still only \$12.00, due by is January 1st. The membership year lasts through the end of December, 2016. Dues entitle members to all club educational programs , our special events, plant trades and our awesome monthly newsletter. The "green" option is to receive an electronic PDF **FULL-COLOR** version of the newsletter by checking the



Come grow with us!

newsletter e-mail option below.

Ours is a club celebrating the joys of gardening, friendship, community, learning, nature and growth. Renew your membership now so you won't miss a thing...you'll be glad you did.

And...with gift-giving season almost here, consider sharing your passion for gardening, and supporting our club, by giving your favorite gardening enthusiast an opportunity to connect, share and learn with us. A gift membership is a gift nobody will want to return!

Your Membership

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address _____ Email: _____

Newsletter Preference (check one): ☐ Full color PDF via e-mail ☐ Paper copy (B&W) via snail mail

Gift Membership

Name: _____ Phone: _____

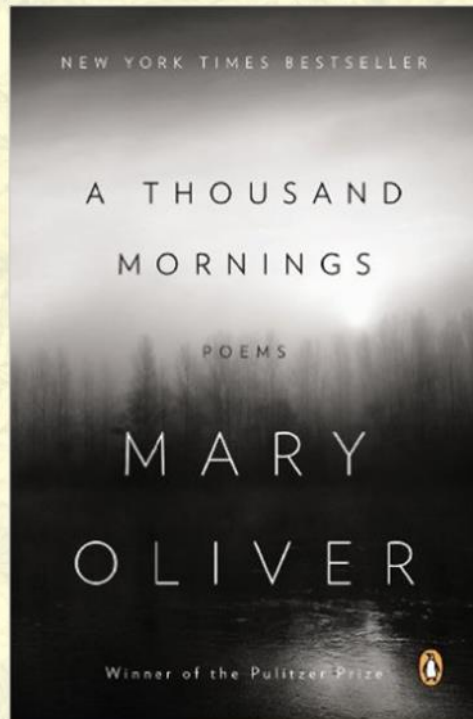
Address _____ Email: _____

Newsletter Preference (check one): ☐ Full color PDF via e-mail ☐ Paper copy (B&W) via snail mail

Enclose check for \$12 per member made out to *The Gardeners' Club* . Mail to

The Gardeners' Club c/o Suzanne Mercado, P.O. Box 3025, Ben Lomond CA 95005

A book of good poetry is a perfect gift . Consider Mary Oliver's 2012 collection, A Thousand Mornings;, which includes this poem:

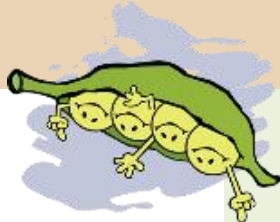


THE GARDENER

Have I lived enough?
 Have I loved enough?
 Have I considered Right Action enough, have I
 come to any conclusion?
 Have I experienced happiness with sufficient
 gratitude?
 Have I endured loneliness with grace?
 I say this, or perhaps I'm just thinking it.
 Actually, I probably think too much.
 Then I step out into the garden,
 where the gardener, who is said to be a simple
 man,
 is tending his children, the roses.

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 Lomond,
 CA 95005. Meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Thursday of
 each month at the Aptos Grange , 2555 Mar Vista Dr., Aptos

Printed on 100% recycled paper



The Gardeners' Club

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