

The Gardeners' Club

Santa Cruz County, California

November 2013

Writer/Editor: Lise Bixler
lisebixler@sbcglobal.net

*"Symbolizing eternal hope, the wreath goes 'round and 'round,
And where it starts or ends cannot be found. Woven of things that grow - for life..."*

Wreath Making Demonstration

We are pleased to welcome to our November meeting two skilled wreath makers to demonstrate for us how to make decorative wreaths with natural materials. Lesley McShean has volunteered at the Arboretum for over 10 years, making wreaths and dried -flower arrangements for the annual November sale (for more information on the sale, see the next page). Janet Schwind is a former Arboretum volunteer who has led the docents at Wilder Ranch State Park for years at their annual wreath-making project every December. They hope their demonstrations will give our group some ideas and suggestions

Wreaths have been used to decorate further back in time than we can imagine. In the historical cultures of Persia the word for wreath was derived from the Greek diadem, which means a thing bound around. The Greeks used leaves to make head garlands that were awarded as prizes during the Greek Olympics. As time evolved,

other countries were creating headdresses or crowns. It was in the fifteenth century that the working class began wearing wreaths to honor religious holidays and commemorate different occasions.

Nature's abundance of plant life was the source of supplies. Most ancient cultures paid homage to trees. They were a symbol of divine energy and therefore arrangements were created to encompass the society as a whole. The practice of hanging wreaths on walls came from people who liked them so much they chose not to discard them but to hang them for all to see. Wreaths seem particularly popular and significant around Christmas for those who celebrate that holiday, but they are used for decoration, and to honor nature, round the year. Join us to learn the many forms and methods of creating wreaths.

As from a large heap of flowers many garlands and wreaths are made, so by a mortal in this life there is much good work to be done *-Buddha*

Thursday,
Nov. 14th, 7:00 PM

Aptos Grange

2555 Mar Vista Dr., Aptos

Refreshments will be served. Thank you to Edna Lindquist for snack, Lupe Allen for dessert and Melita Israel for juice.

Arboretum at UC Santa



ARBORETUM HOLIDAY GIFT AND WREATH SALE, INCLUDING NORRIE'S GIFT AND GARDEN SHOP OPEN HOUSE

**Saturday, November 23, 2013—10am-4pm
Sunday, November 24, 2013—10am-4pm**

Featuring beautiful art pieces and holiday wreaths from natural materials. As always, there will be handmade wreaths made from unusual Arboretum dried materials. Volunteers have lovingly assembled living wreaths of succulents as well. There are pods and dried flowers that you won't see elsewhere in the U.S. in a garden or on a wreath.

There will also be succulent planted art pieces and wreaths, dried flower wreaths, potted succulents, landscaping plants, jewelry, scarves and hand-crafted gift items by local artists.

An assortment of succulent-topped pumpkins have been created that are the perfect non-spooky decoration or centerpiece for after Halloween. These one-of-a kind pumpkins are low maintenance and transition to the garden after the pumpkin softens.

The Arboretum is known for its unusual plants, but some of the plants for sale will be old favorites, just as some of the wreaths won't be exotic, but will have traditional flowers, fruits and leaves gathered by volunteers from their home gardens.

Norrie's gift shop -- with more plants, gardening books, jewelry, local crafts and fair trade items from distant countries -- will allow you to get a jump on purchasing holiday gifts at their Open House. While you are browsing, sip on hot chocolate or broth and munch on home-baked goodies.

All proceeds of this volunteer fun event benefit the self-supporting Arboretum and its educational and conservation programs. This event, formerly known as the Dried Flower and Succulent Sale, is in its 29th year.

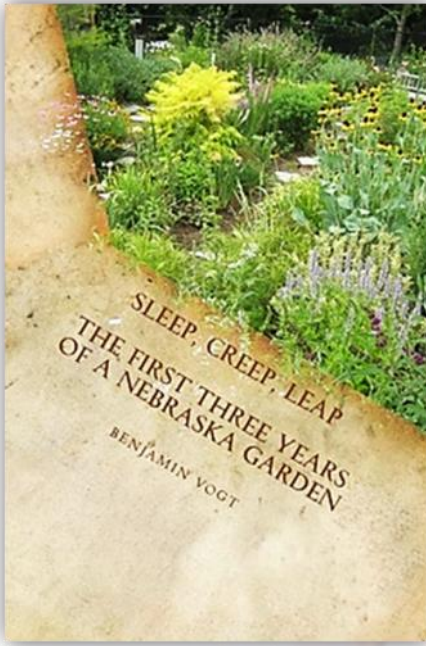


Evening Lecture: Sudden Oak Death Ecology and the Means by Which it Spreads



**Thursday, November 14, 2013
Potluck 6:00 pm, Talk at 7:00
Arboretum's Horticulture Building**

Evidence of disease tolerance and the possibility of replanting tan oaks in hard hit areas. Lecture presentation by Dr. Matteo Garbelotto.



I Succumb to You, Autumn, Like a Memory

The morning glories have died. Their stems and leaves are wilted and limp this morning. The bright green of those heart-shaped leaves is a mass of forest green, nearly a rich black soil--of which they will now become.

It was not a hard freeze, but it was another 30 degree night. At 11pm I almost went outside to cover them, as I did two weeks ago, but I was tired. I wanted to give in to my body after a long day, a long week. I wanted sleep. It was time to let go.

I move my hand into the damp silk of foliage, no longer careful like I was yesterday when hidden bumble bees would emerge like smoke from the long throats of blooms. In the wind I let one leaf rest on the back of my hand until it lays flat. It is like my grandmother's hand. Clammy, limp, tired, and ready to say something final we don't need to say--the touch is a thousand words, a synapse that fires from neuron to neuron and passes on the memory. And the memory of memories.

Each spring it takes me longer than I'd expect to start morning glories. I plant unique varieties after soaking the seeds overnight. I wait for 14 days. Nothing. I soak and plant again. I wait 14 days. A leaf, like a mushroom, here and there. I wait for the vines to wake slowly, as they always do, a millimeter a day. Then an inch. Then one day a foot or three. Which plant will it be?

But the only morning glories that bloom are self-seeded 'Grandpa Ott,' the same dark purple as last year. No chocolate or white, no blue. But they come. The vines come like an olfactory sense and cover the deck railing, then hide the deck, the window, shade a part of the wall. Butterflies pupate in the deep, thick shadows. Tree frogs shelter from afternoon sun. A preying mantis feasts on a skipper, its body parallel to a thin, curled shoot diving out into the negative space of air and sky.

The morning glories have died. The birch leaves are down. The amsonia is sunlight unto itself. The shadows of cedars cover half the garden. The asters are a week gone. Nothing is left, yet everything is here, still, dug in and

waiting. Like the purple morning glory seeds I planted only once, years ago, and that will come again in May. I'll wait. I give myself to the winter now so that I might earn the spring and come into the balance of seasons, and if I'm lucky, myself. I remember my mother's morning glories. She remembers her grandmother's. And so the morning glories remember us all.



About Benjamin:

He has an M.F.A. from Ohio State University and a Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He is also the author of *Afterimage* (poems).

Benjamin's poetry and creative nonfiction have both been nominated for a Pushcart Prize and have appeared in *American Life in Poetry*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *Creative Nonfiction*, *Diagram*, *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *ISLE*, *Orion*, *Sou'wester*, *Subtropics*, *The Sun*, and *Verse Daily*, as well as anthologies, textbooks, and gardening books.

He blogs at *The Deep Middle* (Living and Writing in the Prairie Echo—<http://deepmiddle.blogspot.com/>) as well as *Native Plants and Wildlife Gardens* (<http://nativeplantwildlife.com/>), and writes a Great Plains gardening column for *Houzz.com*. Benjamin is a board member with the *Wachiska Audubon Society*, a prairie conservation and education group. He lives in Lincoln, Nebraska where he tends to his award-winning 2,000 square foot prairie garden, and runs a native plant consulting and coaching business, *Monarch Gardens*. He is fascinated with monarch butterflies and works hard to promote conditions that support them.

Visit Benjamin at his author website, <http://bevogt.com>.

I bought *Sleep, Creep, Leap: The First Three Years of a Nebraska Garden* by Benjamin Vogt, and when it arrived I read it cover-to-cover in one evening. Here's a description of the book:

Peeling off sheets of skin from a sunburned back. Spending \$1,000 at five nurseries in an afternoon. Raising 200 monarch butterflies. Hearing the wing beats of geese thirty feet overhead at sunset. How one piece of mulch can make all the difference. These are the stories of Benjamin Vogt's 1,500 foot native prairie garden over the course of three years. After a small patio garden at his last home teases him into avid tinkering, the blank canvas of his new marriage and quarter acre lot prove to be a rich place full of delight, anguish, and rapture in all four seasons.

Full of lyrical, humorous, and botanical short essays, Sleep, Creep, Leap will leave you inspired to sit a while with your plants, noticing how the smallest events become the largest—and how the garden brings us down to earth so that we can come home to our lives.

I was so moved by one of the chapters that I contacted Benjamin and asked him if I could share it with you, and he graciously consented. I hope it resonates with you as much as it did with me.

November Gardening

There's still time to plant spring flowering bulbs in the ground but don't wait too long! Garlic is a bulb, too—it is fun to plant them with your roses.

Continue fighting slugs and snails. Sluggo is all natural and safe to use around edibles, pets and children.

Cooler weather and, hopefully, the coming of rain, makes this ideal planting time for trees and shrubs. Evaluate your garden's need for evergreens or plants with winter interest. Visit garden centers, arboretums and public gardens for ideas and inspiration. Continue to plant and transplant until the end of this month.

Trim chrysanthemums to 4-6 inches tall after they finish blooming but leave ornamental grasses up for the winter to add texture to your garden as well as food and shelter for birds and wildlife.

Burn off those extra Thanksgiving calories by mulching your garden beds after a frost.

Think about summer blooms—this is the very best time to plant them. They'll love the deep watering they'll receive from rains and grow large, vigorous root systems, not so easily achieved by hand watering or even drip irrigation. Spring blooming perennials like campanulas, columbines, delphiniums and nicotianas will be two or three times the size of those you plant in the spring and will give you far more blooms over a longer season. Grasses, too, will fill out by spring. Plant away!

Grow herbs over the winter. Many herbs are perennial here where the temperatures are not too nippy through the winter. And others can also be protected from cold spells if they are kept in pots and brought into a chilled but frost-free area, or are mulched heavily out in the garden, or even draped with burlap. Bay leaf, curry, lavender, mint, rosemary, sage, savory and tarragon are probably the most popular examples of herbs that survive winters. If you grow them in containers, provide shelter November through March by moving them closer to the house or into a garage or greenhouse. If you cover them with burlap, remember to check frequently to water so they don't dry out.

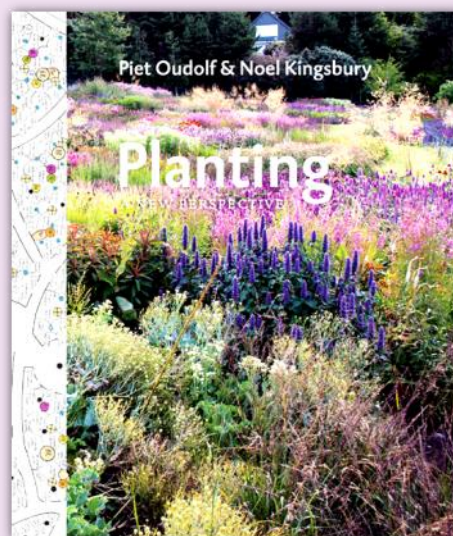
Hurry up, tomatoes!

If you have green tomatoes taking their sweet time to ripen and you are worrying about frost, you can try hurrying them up by root-pruning. Insert a spade just 6 inches or so into the soil in a circular pattern, all around the plant 1 foot away from its main stem.



Oudolf-esque?

There's a new adjective I keep hearing when people describe landscaping or gardens that are naturalistic, with interlacing species tightly planted, plants allowed to go to seed to feed wildlife—"Oudolf-esque". I recently heard someone complain about such gardens as messy or unkempt. It is true that if you take naturalistic landscaping to an extreme, your meadowy-lawn might look pretty dead some times of the year. But, if you value biodiversity and contributing to a healthy ecology, you can earn to revel in skeleton-like dried remnants of plants like veronica that give structure but not color to the winter garden. Piet Oudolf and Noel Kingsbury, in their latest and rather revolutionary book Planting: A New Perspective, don't tell you that you have to turn your whole outside space into a prairie, and you can keep your flower beds. You are encouraged to mingle shrubs and perennials, and to try the Oudolf-Kingsbury "70:30" rule. It means that in most plantings, 70 per cent of the plants should be "structure plants" and only 30 per cent should be flowery ones. If that's your goal, there is no better time of the year than late fall and winter, when the annuals are mostly done, to evaluate the structural plants in your garden, and think about adding others if they are needed. This means that even when there is not much color in your garden and it may be looking seedy or half dead, the overall composition is still strong. Do you have plants that provide visual structure, produce attractive seed heads, maintain a distinct winter shape and provide plenty of multi-season interest? When I look at my dead sunflowers, still feeding the birds, and the remnants of snakeroot, salvias, asters and Jerusalem sage that will continue next year, I remember that mine is a "wabi sabi" garden, one that celebrates imperfection and accepts visually prominent reminders of the ever-continuing cycles of life and death.



Harvest a Bounty of Ideas at this Web Site

Reading Benjamin Vogt's blog and website I uncovered all sorts of links to other resources. I know, I know, we live in coastal California, but that doesn't mean we can't garner ideas from other parts of the country, such as the Midwest. Go to <http://www.midwestliving.com/> (you can even subscribe), which is full of ideas and inspirations for gardening, decorating, cooking and more. For instance, look at



this idea for a Thanksgiving centerpiece—a branch partially painted white, placed in a vase of nuts, and hung with paper leaves for your guests or family members to write what they are grateful for this year. I don't think you really would have to even paint it, and I'm going to fill my vase with acorns instead of nuts and save the leaves in a scrapbook—won't it be nice to look back in the future to each year at the changing leaves of gratitude?

Here's another one of their ideas—garden art that anyone can do. Bundle together sticks to make a post, top with a flat rock and garnish with a round rock. How simple and stunning!



White Elephant On Its Way



This is a reminder that another of our traditional annual events is nearly upon us—our wildly enjoyable White Elephant Potluck Party and Silent Auction in December. Gather your treasures for this crazy sale. And set aside pennies from your holiday gift-buying budget for this event—who knows what

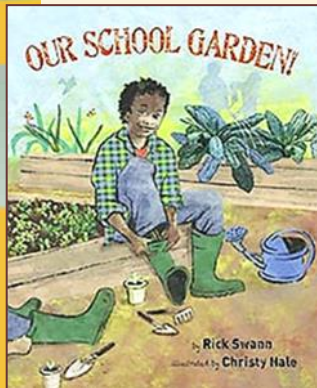
you'll find? Bring jewelry, dishes, pottery, special plants, clothing, gardening items, gourmet goodies, birdfeeders, tools, chotzkes, bricabrac, vases, books, objets d'art and objets d'junk. The bidding competition will be fierce but friendly! More details to come in the December newsletter.

Board Meeting

The next meeting of The Gardeners' Club Board will be at the home of Debbie Kindle, 3320 Putter Drive, Soquel. You don't have to be a member of the Board; come join us for a light meal and discussion of Club activities and goals. Monday, November 25th, at 6:00 p.m.

Books

If you are thinking about holiday gifts, you might want to think “books”. The “Growing Good Kids – Excellence in Children’s Literature Award” has been bestowed on these books by the American Horticultural Society and the International Junior Master Gardener program. The reward is for children’s books that effectively promote an appreciation for gardening, plants and the environment.



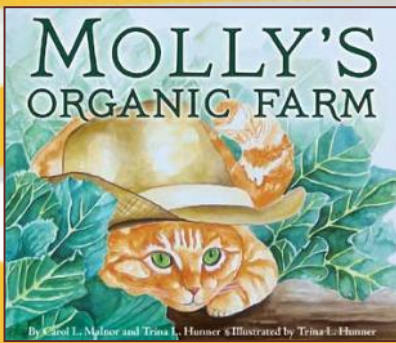
Our School Garden!
by Rick Swann
illustrated by Christy Hale

Ages 8-12
New city. New school. Michael is feeling all alone—until he discovers the school garden! There’s so many ways

to learn, and so much work to do. Taste a leaf? Mmm, nice and tangy hot.

Dig for bugs? “Roly-poly!” he yells. But the garden is much more than activities outdoors: making school garden stone soup, writing Found Poems and solving garden riddles,

getting involved in community projects such as Harvest Day, food bank donations, and spring plant sales. Each season creates a new way to learn, explore, discover and make friends.



Molly's Organic Farm
by Carol Malnor and Trina Hunner
illustrated by Trina Hunner

Ages 8-12
Whoosh...the wind blows open a creaky gate. Inquisitive and mischievous, a homeless little cat scampers through—and

suddenly finds herself in the wondrous world of an organic farm! Affectionately named “Molly” by the farmers who discover her, she romps, naps, and hunts among the vegetables. Seen through Molly’s eyes, the reader discovers the interplay of nature that grows wholesome food. But

what will happen to Molly when winter comes? Based on a true story, Molly will touch children’s hearts while introducing them to plants and the key elements of growing food organically. Standards-based science concepts and activities at the end of the book expand the message of the story.



First Peas to the Table
by Susan Grigsby
illustrated by Nicole Tadgell

Ages 8-12
Maya loves contests, so she is excited when her teacher announces that her class will plant a garden like Thomas

Jefferson's. They'll also have a First Peas to the Table contest just like Jefferson and his neighbors had. Maya plants her pea seeds with a secret head start—found in Thomas Jefferson's Garden Book. But her friend Shakayla has plans of her own for winning the contest.

November 8th 5:30pm - 8:30pm:
Members Only Night!
Or become a member at the door and enjoy wine and music while you shop.

November 9th
10:00am - 12:30pm,
1:00pm - 5:00pm
Open to the public



Be green and buy and gift gently used books at the Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries Book Sale. Club Member Dee Weybright, who volunteers for the Friends, says there are lots and lots of gardening books! It’s a two-day sale, the first for members of the Friends group, but the second day for all of you. Books are sold by the pound, and you can negotiate for

bargains, say Dee! The sale is at the Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium.



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 January 1st. The membership year lasts through the end of December, 2013. 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 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 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!

Come grow with us!

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

Advice From a Tree

Stand tall and proud
Sink your roots deeply into the earth
Reflect the light of your true nature
Think long term...

Go out on a limb
Remember your place among all living beings
Embrace with joy the changing seasons
For each yields its own abundance
The energy and birth of spring
The growth and contentment of summer
The wisdom to let go the leaves in the fall
The rest and quiet renewal of winter

Feel the wind and the sun
And delight in their presence



Crocheted "Tree Cozy" by artist Carol Hummel (www.carolhummel.com)

Look up at the moon that shines down upon you
And the mystery of the stars at night
Seek nourishment from the good things in life
Simple pleasures
Earth.. fresh air.. light

Be content with your natural beauty
Drink plenty of water
Let your limbs sway and dance in the breezes
Be flexible
Remember your roots.. and
—Enjoy the view

—By Ilan Shamir

Printed on 100% recycled paper
www.thegardenersclub.org



The Gardeners' Club

P.O. Box 3025, Ben Lomond CA 95005

President

Cherry Thompson, 475-0991

cherryviea@comcast.net

Vice President & Publicity

Ilene Wilson, 724-4609

mygardensup@aol.com

Secretary

April Barclay, 688-7656

ABarclay@aol.com

Treasurer

Sim Gilbert, 475-8162

simgilbert@baymoon.com

Membership

Suzanne Mercado, 609-6230

Suzanne.bottomline@gmail.com

Hospitality

Debbie Kindle, 462-6296

poppy-54@live.com

Newsletter Writer/Editor

Lise Bixler, 457-2089

lisebixler@sbcglobal.net

Members-at-Large

Pat McVeigh, 566-4553

pmcveigh@baymoon.com

Joanna Hall, 662-8821

jhaveclock@sbcglobal.net

Plant Table

Patty Connolet, 335-4134

pattyconnolet@aol.com

Lupe Allen, 24702705

lupea@ucsc.edu

3rd position - vacant

Refreshments

Dey Weybright, 426-3028

DEENART@aol.com

Website

Joe Thompson

Computer Frustration

Specialist

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 Lomond, CA 95005.