



Here's the Dirt

A publication of the River Valley Garden Club

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....., Nancy Compton, Editor

Rooting for You.....by Deb Rooney, Co-President

Well, the party is over — at least mine is! I'm just returning from a lovely 19-day trip and , boy-oh-boy, I'm glad to be home.

Glad to see my home, my kitchen, my refrigerator, my couch, and sleep in my own bed! Glad to have more space to stretch out in than a cruise cabin — and especially glad to see our dear Finn!

We had a lovely time, visiting family in Naples, Florida, cruising for eleven days to so many “St.” islands, and visiting more family in The Villages (boy, let me tell you about “The Villages”).

And here I sit in the backyard on a lovely, sunny winter day — it's supposed to be about 70 degrees today. I'm waiting for the atmospheric river that's coming, and looking around my garden and having “flash forwards” of this coming spring and summer. The past few years my sweet yard has been a bit neglected, but this coming year I have high hopes.

My goal — just to get it back in blooming shape! So here goes, I'm making my list and checking it twice — of my garden “to-do's”

- ◆ Prune and trim
- ◆ Weed, visualizing where I want to “rip out and replace”
- ◆ Get my mojo back on a fertilizing schedule
- ◆ Measure and price out new cushions and new shades
- ◆ Etc., etc., etc.
- ◆ All this planning makes my heart happy — now I have to Just Do It!
- ◆ Take care! Be safe!



Deb & Pat Rooney



P.S. Now I know where Santa goes for vacation!

Deb



River Valley Garden Club Fun.....at Hollandale Nursery



Rosann Stevenson found a poinsettia to match her outfit at Hollandale Nursery



Proprietor Al—always cheerful and helpful—and funny!



Raise your hand if you're surprised Berniece Jones has picked out yellow poinsettias



Judith Embree found some beauties!



No, Deb. They are not all going to fit in your trunk!



Oh the stories these rickety old barns could tell....

Hollandale Nursery has become one of our club's favorite destinations for poinsettias in the winter, and spring flowers during the warmer weather.

Garden Club Fun....this time at the Christmas Party



Partiers Isabel Whaley, Carol Prinzo, and



Ellison Cowles, Donna Hansen, Sharon Wagner, and Margaret Watson-Hopkins



Looks like Joyce won the prize!





Program Schedule for 2024

Date	Speaker	Topic
January 23	Roxy Jones, Master Gardener	Developing Wildlife Habitats
February 27	Jan Fetler and Vivian Sellers Master Gardeners	Lawn Begone!
March 26	Paul Anderson, Professional Photographer	A Photographic Journey of Rancho Murieta and surrounding area
April 23	Marlene Simon, the Plant Lady U.C. Davis Arboretum	Houseplants: Bringing the Garden Inside
May 28	Greg Gayton, Green Acres <i>Back by popular demand!!</i>	An Encore Evening with Greg Gayton
June 25	Laura Halpenny Landscape Designer and RVGC Scholarship Winner	Building Your California Garden



Green Thumb Trekkers after December hike

Green Thumb Trekkers Keep on Hiking.....

Those who attended the December hike were surprised at how lovely the view was over the meadow area. And what was that tumbledown historic building? So many interesting things in our community to explore — nature, history, beauty — and all within just a couple of miles of our homes.

Although it appears that someone sent out a memo reminding everyone to wear blue clothing, this was just a coincidence.

The January hike explored the Gnome Trail, where the garden club has a happy gnome at the start of the trail.

Maria Lopez, Hike Leader, has announced the February hike will be on Wednesday, February 7, at which time we will hike the Lakeview Trail, unless it's too wet, in which case we will hike around Lake Calero. Watch for an email on this.

Sacramento River Valley District Meeting on Tuesday, February 13



*Taylor Lewis, U.C. Davis Arboretum
and Public Garden Manager*

This is an invitation for all club members to attend the Sacramento River Valley District meeting on Tuesday, February 13 at the Shepard Garden & Art Center near McKinley Park in Sacramento. These meetings are always interesting and provide an opportunity to meet gardeners from all sixteen clubs in the district.

In Addition, the District has scheduled a very interesting speaker for this meeting — Taylor Lewis, U.C. Davis Nursery, Arboretum, and Public Garden Manager. Mr. Lewis graduated from UCD in 2009 with a B.S. degree in Environmental Horticulture and Urban Forestry, and he now has fifteen years of nursery management experience. His passion is growing drought tolerant and California native plants. He has a solid knowledge of plant propagation and nursery operations.

Our club will be providing the table decorations which are Valentines Day-themed wicker containers planted with little succulents. Lunch will be prepared and served by the Clarksburg Garden Club. The cost of attending this meeting, including continental breakfast items and lunch is \$15.



*A walkway at U.C. Davis among stunning
examples of native trees and bushes*



Northwest Flower & Garden Festival

Here's a garden-themed trip to knock your socks off — the annual Northwest Flower & Garden Festival to be held in Seattle February 14-18—the second largest garden show in the country.

The show has three major components: (1) Twenty display gardens built in three days; (2) Over 350 exhibitors selling high-quality garden-related products; and (3) Over 90 seminars on three stages, including a do-it-yourself demo stage.

The show's speakers include garden writers, authors, and garden design experts from across the U.S. and Canada. The show will also feature ten city-living balcony gardens, an Ikebana display, and a floral design competition. And how about a live reality show held daily in front of show audiences which includes friendly competition and education? This will be there, too.

In 2020, Better Homes & Gardens magazine rated the Northwest Flower & Garden Festival as the #1 garden show in the U.S.

(RVGC already has five members who plan to attend. If you wish further information, you may contact Nancy Compton at ncompton43@att.net.)



New Discovery on the Natural Resilience of Plants!



One of the most amazing, and I believe exciting things about gardening and nature is that new discoveries are being made seemingly every day.

A recent article published in *Mother Earth* magazine reveals that plants have the ability to remember droughts. This means that crops that experience drought early in their growing season adapt to better handle drought later on. Researchers drew on data over a 20-year period, covering soybean and maize crops in



Illinois, Indiana, and Iowa, a region expected to experience more extreme wet and dry seasons because of climate change.

This discovery is important for understanding the impact of climate change on crops, but it also presents an opportunity for creating new plant cultivars. Thus, if certain crops have the innate capacity to become more drought-resistant, researchers suspect that this trait may be enhanced through breeding.

The group behind the research, Realizing Increased Photosynthetic Efficiency (RIPE) formed in 2012 with the stated goal of helping food production keep pace with this century's population growth. It will be interesting to see if this characteristic in agricultural plants will cross over into the horticultural world as well.



Marianna Hashorva pulling weeds at the first school garden workday

Help Wanted — Come and help out with the Cosumnes River Elementary School Garden!

Berniece Jones, Chair of Community Outreach projects, announces two upcoming School Garden workdays:

- ◆ **Sunday, February 18th.** On this day we will be laying down ground-cover material and fixing sprinklers.
- ◆ **Sunday, February 25th.** On the 25th we will be adding mulch (large bark chips) for the ground, and replacing sprinklers and drip lines.

The time for both days is 1 p.m. Please bring your gloves, trowels, and any weed-pulling equipment you may have, although the focus of the workdays will be as shown above.

Once again the Boy Scouts from Troop #633 will be helping us accomplish wonders with the school garden.

This will be a great community involvement project, a chance for some great outdoor exercise, and an opportunity to make a difference in our community.



The crew at the first school garden workday

Community Service Team Plants the Local Bean

In an effort to keep the planter boxes at the Local Bean planted with lively, seasonal plants, Berniece Jones & the Community Service Team spiffed up the plant displays by adding flowering kale to the mix. It's quite amazing how so many of the lantana and Johnny-jump-ups have survived the winter weather, and the flowering kale just added to the appeal.



Donna Hansen, Maria Lopez, and Berniece Jones



Rosann Stevenson and Genevieve Sullivan



Employees and customers alike continue to comment on the lovely flowers and how much they enjoy the ambience they add to the morning coffee experience.

The sign to the left was designed by Jamie Fox, a former garden club member who now lives out of state. In case you don't have your reading glasses handy, it reads:

The delightful plantings are brought to you by the creative and muddy hands of the River Valley Garden Club.

Yes — that's us. Gardeners live for days when they can be really creative and get their hands nice and muddy.

And now...a message from Deb.....

Let Your Plants Sleep In!

Wait to tidy up your old flowers, stems, and plants until spring and until weeks of 50 degrees or above.

There are little pollinators still sleeping in those plants! Let them sleep!

