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HERE'S THE DIRT

Rooting for You

Jamie Fox, Newsletterer

There is an old saying that goes: "If you want happiness for an hour, take a nap. If you want happiness for a day, go fishing. If you want happiness for a year, inherit a fortune. If you want happiness for a lifetime, help somebody."

Happiness was at work during our September general meeting when the RVGC helped the Cosumnes River Elementary School (CRES), with a one thousand dollar grant. Receiving the check was first grade teacher Melissa Fite, and school principal, Sheila Caruthers.

Ms. Fite and the students of CRES, under the guidance of RVGC's Debbie Kolmodin, Nancy Compton, and Irene Slavens, have been instrumental in resurrecting the existing 1,700 square foot childrens' garden that had been neglected for years. Currently, nine of the twelve garden beds are producing vegetables and flowers. Five classes are cultivating the gardens with more classes expected to join as the year progresses. Students and teachers are working together to plant, weed, maintain, and harvest vegetables in harmony with the growing season.

The long-term vision at CRES is to start an after school garden club and create a garden classroom where students can grow seedlings under lights and use microscopes to view petals, flowers, and the hidden world in the soil.

To that end, RVGC's grant will allow the the intrepid gardeners at CRES to purchase a shed, tools, grow lights, biodegradable trays, irrigation supplies, material to make seed sifters, and improve the garden fencing.

As outdoor activities go, gardening is hard to beat for promoting well-rounded development in youngsters. Studies have shown that gardening encourages kids to eat better, provides engaging moderate exercise, builds a sense of confidence, positively impacts mood and psychological wellbeing, and improves focus & memory.

Watching Ms. Fite and Ms. Caruthers receive a thousand dollar check from our garden club made me happy. I think of the trickle down effect that check will have on the students and teachers at CRES. I see wonderfully dirty young hands, little bodies crouching in the soil, and wide eyes looking through microscopes, and it makes me smile.

How lucky we are to be part of an organization that fosters dirty hands and wide eyes?

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Pam McCabe, Nancy Clark, Melissa Fite, Sheila Caruthers

For it is in giving that we receive — Saint Francis of Assisi

Club News and Events

Welcome New Members

Irene Slavins, Vice-President, Membership

Welcome to our newest members. We're delighted you joined us.
Everyone take a moment at our next meeting to say hello to our five new members:

Margie Coffman
Cathy Corcoran
Kathy Pifari
Nancy Miller
Alexis Blaisdell (Jack's sister - now our youngest member)

We had a lot of you renewing memberships at the September meeting. For those who still need to renew, it's only $25!

Raffle Donations Needed

Vivian Baier, Raffles

This year our raffle will consist of items donated by garden club members. You are invited to bring a raffle item (which doesn't have to be garden related) to our meetings. Let's make it interesting! We all have items that we are tired of but could be a treasure to someone else. Please bring your donation by 6:30 p.m. so there is time to include it in the raffle that evening. If you have any questions, call Vivian Baier at (586) 930-2105.

Photography Contest: The Votes are In!

Fran Hawkins, Chair

This year's Photo Adventure has come to end. A big thank you to my fellow committee members Inge, Irene, Sandy, and Ruth, for making the adventure possible, and to our husbands for helping with the judging. Most of all, my thanks to those of you who took the time to enter. We truly have some talented photographers in our community.

There are a limited number of 2019 calendars for sale, at the bargain price of $10 each. The calendar features all the photographs that were entered in the competition. The calendars will be on sale at the October meeting and at the December Christmas party if the supply lasts.

Plans are already afoot for next year. The adventure will continue and we will be asking you to join us on a Safari Adventure and share photographs of "Wildlife" in your garden. Stay tuned. Full adventure details will be available in the January Newsletter.

Congratulations to:

Berniece Jones - Overall Winner

Nancy Compton - 1st Place - Garden Visions (Returning Adventurer)
Ellison Cowles - 2nd Place - Garden Visions (Returning Adventurer)
Debbie Kolmodin - 3rd Place - Garden Visions (Returning Adventurer)

Jamie Fox - 1st Place - Garden Visions (First Time Adventurer)
Berniece Jones - 2nd Place - Garden Visions (First Time Adventurer)
Chris Strutz - 3rd Place - Garden Visions (First Time Adventurer)

Ellison Cowles - 1st Place - Landscape (Returning Adventurer)
Debbie Kolmodin - 2nd Place - Landscape (Returning Adventurer)
Jamie Fox - 3rd Place - Landscape - (Returning Adventurer)

"Hibiscus"
1st place, Garden Visions
Nancy Compton

"Tulips"
2nd place, Garden Visions
Ellison Cowles

How the Overall Winning Photo Came to Be
by Berniece Jones

Last winter I was feeling sorry for myself because I was unable to make a trip to Holland for the Tulip Festival. I was reading the AAA magazine when I noticed that there was a tulip festival in Utah at a park called Thanksgiving Point. So I loaded up my husband, went to Schwab's tire center, and bought chains for the car. It happened to be snowing as we left town, but the snow let up as we went over the pass and thankfully I didn't have to use the chains.

When we arrived in Salt Lake City, there was snow all over but a few miles down the road to the park the snow was melting in the sunshine.

We bought our entrance tickets and the cashier asked if we wanted to rent a golf cart. Thankfully, we said yes. The park is huge and we never would have be able to see even one-third of its riches without the cart.

Sadly, there were few tulips in bloom. The opening of the festival had been the prior weekend and I know many people were as disappointed as was I. Due to the weather, this year the tulips were opening later than usual.

But as we came around one corner there were those glass balloons hanging from the trees. I jumped from the cart and took three quick photos. I never had the intention of entering the photo into our contest, but since the committee kept asking for entries, I figured, why not? So thank you for loving my picture as much as I do.

Berniece Jones
Overall Winner
"Balloons"

RIVER VALLEY GARDEN CLUB

ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY!

Yes, I know – it's only the beginning of October! But our annual Holiday Party is only 2 months away and we need to get busy planning.

Holiday Party Date: Sunday, December 2nd

Time: 3pm – 6pm

Place: RMA Building

Party Committee sign ups were at the September meeting. Thank you all who volunteered! If you weren't at the September meeting and would like to join us, please contact Carol Prinzo at reprinzo1962@gmail.com, or 354-9688.

Our first, and likely only, committee meeting will be held:

Wednesday, October 17 10am

Carol Prinzo's house: 6531 Chesbro Circle

Thank you everybody for your help! Its always a lot of fun and we have great parties!!

Carol Prinzo, Chair

Bill "the Bulb Baron" Welch

Jamie Fox, Newsletterer

Part mad scientist, part jumping bean, Bill "The Bulb Baron" Welch wowed our crowd with his energy, vast knowledge, and buckets of uncommon bulbs. Focusing on Amaryllis and Narcissus, Bill is the rock star of hybridization of these two genera.

If you weren't at the meeting, you missed something special.

Passionate about hybridizing and being solely responsible for over fifteen new varieties of Narcissus, Bill reeled off more information than we could process as he jumped from bucket to bucket of flowers and bulbs. He educated us with the history, care and feeding (they are drought-resistant), and planting schedule (NOW) of his Amaryllis and Narcissus bulbs and stressed that, basically, you can "plant them and forget them".

Best news of all? Most of Bill's bulbs are DEER PROOF. Not just resistant – but deer PROOF. The flowers are POISONOUS and deer won't eat them, he says.

Bill stressed that Narcissus are as easy to grow as weeds and ideal for the worst soils. (Think Rancho Murieta.) Be it clay/adobe, rock or gravel, sandy, too hot or too dry, or if you're cursed with a brown thumb and are simply a casual gardener, his bulbs are for you.

Bill's bulbs are nothing like the prepackaged Amaryllis and Narcissus found in the big box stores, and I am thrilled to be a new owner of some of his offerings. However, if you're like me, I am now kicking myself for not purchasing a greater sampling of bulbs when Bill spoke at our meeting. However, there's hope. According to his website, Bill can be found at:

- Cabrillo Farmers Market (Aptos) -- (July/August thru March/April), Saturdays, 8:00 a.m. - noon
- Menlo Park Farmers Market -- (July/August thru March/April). However, if early in the season, specifically before November, contact Bill first to confirm he will be there. Sundays, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
- Santa Cruz Community Farmers Market -- (July/August thru March/April) Again, if early in the season, contact Bill first to confirm he will be there. Wednesdays, 2:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Road trip anyone?

Bill Welch

RVGC 2018 - 2019 Speaker Schedule

Nancy Compton, Programs Chair

DATE	TOPIC	SPEAKER
October 23, 2018	Gifts from the Garden	Jennifer Kahl, The Secret Garden
January 22, 2019	Landscaping Design and Outdoor Living Space	Andrew Rogers, Owner, Rogers Landscaping
February 26, 2019	Garden Photography at its Best	Jan Fetler, Master Gardener and published photographer
March 26, 2019	The Importance of Monarch Butterflies in our World	Eltha Hannum Butterfly Chair, California Garden Clubs, Inc.
April 23, 2019	Garden Myths	Marlene Simon, The Plant Lady
May 28, 2019	Japanese Maples	Greg Gayton, Green Acres Nursery

October Speaker: Jennifer Kahl, Owner, The Secret Garden

Nancy Compton, Programs Chair

Calling herself an Outdoor Living Space Enthusiast, Jennifer Kahl, owner of The Secret Garden in Elk Grove, will present ideas and inspirations for “Gifts from the Garden” at our October 23 meeting.

A favorite garden store for many of our members, The Secret Garden has grown from a house in the old town of Elk Grove to an ample nursery and garden center just off the #99 freeway in Elk Grove. The Secret Garden features the best selection of fountains, pottery, statuary, and garden décor in the region. It also features an indoor showroom offering hundreds of unique gift ideas.

Jennifer enjoys getting to know her customers, which is why she offers so many interesting events, which include, winter garden parties, girls night out gatherings, and workshops on a wide array of topics. Her lighthearted presentation style ensures that she is a favorite speaker for many garden groups, as well as our district meetings.

Be sure to attend our meeting on Tuesday, October 23, and leave with many gift ideas for the holidays.

Sacramento River Valley District Fall Sale, October 6 & 7, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Berniece Jones, District Liaison

The annual fall sale for the Shepard Garden and Arts Center is arriving early this year. SRVD will have a booth again this fall.

I am collecting donations of any plants, garden art, or items you may want to donate to the sale. I will be taking the donations down on Friday morning, Sept. 5th. Each club in the District is asked to donate and help with the sale. Debbie Kolmodin and Sharon Barton have volunteered to work a shift at the sale on Sunday afternoon.

I will pick up items from you if you need me to. Call 354-2873, or you can drop them off at 7465 Colbert Dr.

Come on by the sale and see the booth and pick up some bargains also.

Sacramento River Valley District Meeting, October 9, 9:30 a.m

Berniece Jones, District Liaison

Our District meeting will be held on Tuesday Oct. 9th at the Shepard Gardens and Arts Center at 9:30 AM.

The speaker for this meeting is Barbara Daly, of the Delta Protection Commission. She will discuss the proposed delta tunnels and their impact on the environment, recreation, and residents of the Delta area.

Lunch will be served and the cost is $10.00. There will be gifts for the raffle and many plants to buy at bargain prices. I need a head count by Thursday, Oct. 4th of those who are coming with us to the meeting.

Our club is responsible for supplying gifts for the Raffle this time. This is our only job this year, so I will not be begging again. If anyone has something nice they would like to re-gift, I would appreciate the donation. Call me and I will pick it up.

DID YOU KNOW?

The California Redwood, Coast Redwood, and Giant Sequoia, are the tallest and largest living organisms in the world. However, it doesn't mean they have a lot of years in their roots.

Consider Methuselah, an ancient Bristlecone Pine, which until 2013 was considered the oldest known non-clonal organism on Earth. In 2018 Methuselah still stands at the ripe old age of 4,850 YEARS OLD in California's Inyo National Forest. Interestingly, another bristlecone pine in the same locale rustled its branches and was discovered to be over 5,000 YEARS OLD. Methuselah and its currently unnamed senior's exact locations are a closely guarded secret in order to protect these wonders of nature. Although you can visit the grove where Methuselah hides, you will have to guess at its identity.

The Llangernyn Yew resides in a small churchyard of St. Dygain's Church in Llangernyw Village, north Wales. About 4,000 years old, the Llangernyw Yew came to life sometime in the prehistoric Bronze Age. The amazing thing? It is STILL GROWING.

Methuselah?

Llangernyn Yew

If only these tree could talk. What would they say? They who have felt millenniums blow through their branches and have witnessed historic events across the centuries. Who would we be as humans if we could hear the advice of trees? Would we be wiser? More patient and compassionate? Would we go out on a limb?

It is hard to perceive how the Yew tree above has its roots in the Bronze Age and yet is still growing. It makes me ponder... As humans, are we?

As the holidays approach, and the hustle and bustle starts to encroach, I bid you to make like a tree. Stand tall and proud. Sink your roots into the Earth. Be content with your natural beauty, enjoy the view, drink plenty of water, and of course, always be grateful that there is something that feeds you from above and below.