

# RIVER VALLEY GARDEN CLUB

## A PLACE TO GROW

NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2018

VOLUME 16, ISSUE 3



### HERE'S THE DIRT

#### Rooting for You

Nancy Clark, RVGC President

#### Why Donate to Penny Pines?

At each of our General Meetings, we collect money for Penny Pines. The money we contribute is ultimately combined with federal funds that go toward national forest reforestation. Penny Pines is both a meaningful, and practical conservation project, serving to replant replacement trees indigenous to a particular damaged area.

Whether by fire, or by natural catastrophe, pine trees and other trees are replaced. The Forest Service does the planting on burned-over and brush-covered areas which are potentially productive timberlands. These "plantations" provide soil protection, watershed protection, soil stabilization, future harvestable timber, as well as beauty and shade for recreation.

Some of us recently had the opportunity of touring a site in the El Dorado National Forest where seedlings used in the reforestation program are cultivated (see article on page 4). When we took this tour, I'm sure none of us ever imagined that our visit would become so relevant, so soon.

As I write this article, over 142,000 acres have burned in the Camp Fire, located in the Plumas National Forest. *The Woolsey Fire in Southern California, which has burned over 98,000 acres, is not in a national forest.* Knowing that our club contributes to Penny Pines, some members have asked if it would be possible to direct our contributions to a particular area such as the Camp Fire. IT IS. The National Garden Club, Inc., to which our Club belongs, has a form on their website that provides a means for directing Penny Pines contributions to a particular forest.

If you would like to contribute to the reforestation of the Plumas National Forest, a printable form is available here: [Penny Pines Donation Form](#). *Donations must be in increments of \$68.*

More information about the Camp Fire can be found at the US Forest Service wildland fire website at: [US Forest Service fire incidents](#).



Holly  
Beautiful but Poisonous

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## 2018-2019 Programs

*It's not polite to keep an adventure waiting....*

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

### Gifts From the Garden - October Speaker

#### Nancy Compton, Programs

Jennifer Kahl, proprietor of the Secret Garden in Elk Grove, provided a lively presentation at our October meeting focused on "Gifts from the Garden."

Previously a stay-at-home mom, fifteen years ago Jennifer and her husband took a leap of faith and decided to open a business that would satisfy their passion for anything related to outdoor living. Thus, the Secret Garden was born, and it has been a gardener's destination ever since.

Jennifer explained that there is almost no limit to the number and variety of gifts we can make and share by just using the natural bounty from our gardens.

Herbs and fruits are best enjoyed in season, but we can extend that season by making herbal jelly, or drying our herbs to make an herb bouquet. Lavender is especially well suited for sharing, as it may be bundled and tied with an attractive bow. Air drying herbs works best for those that do not have a high moisture content, like bay, dill, marjoram, savory and thyme. Another way to preserve fresh herbs is to make herbal oil or vinegar, which are attractive as well as tasty.

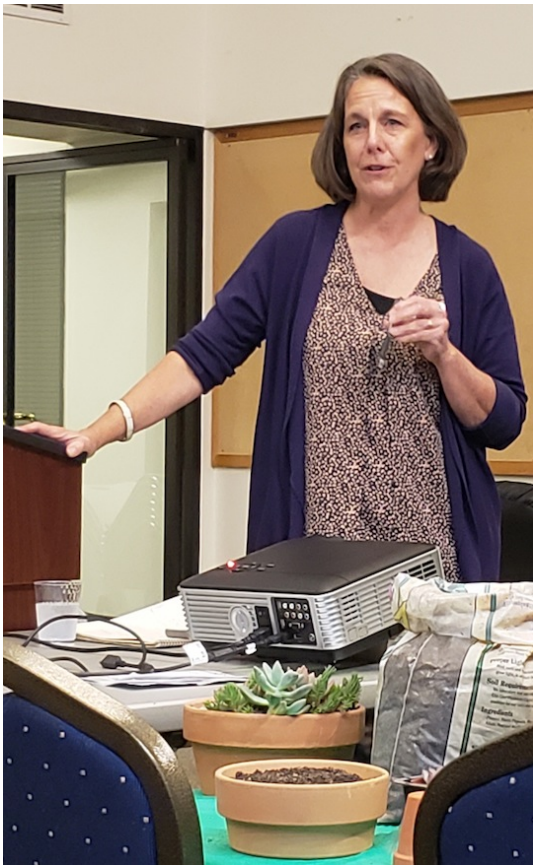
Dried flowers and petals saved from bouquets and arrangements may be tossed together in a pretty jar or bowl for a potpourri mix.

A favorite for almost endless sharing are succulents, the cuttings for which may be used to start new plants, make delightful wreaths or framed succulent arrangements, or other creative displays. To demonstrate this idea, Jennifer invited six club members up to a table at the front of the room to create potted succulent arrangements using small clay pots and cuttings from other succulent plants. The project took no more than fifteen minutes, after which those who participated had a finished product, ready for holiday gift-giving.

The Secret Garden offers a wide range of products in their lively gift shop from wind chimes to fountains, plants to lip balm, candles to fairy garden décor. Jennifer invited all members to shop for holiday gift-giving at the Secret Garden.



Gifts From the Garden, Cont.



Jennifer Kahl



Jennifer Kahl overseeing the crafting of a succulent arrangement.



Nancy Clark creating a succulent arrangement.



Completed succulent garden.





## October Field Trip

### Sharon Barton, Tours

On October 19th, members of the RVGC went on a great field trip! The first stop was [Sherwood Gardens](#) in Placerville, which includes 16 beautiful demonstration gardens designed and maintained by the Master Gardeners in that area. Our tour guides were very interesting and informative and the weather was gorgeous!

Next stop was a delicious lunch at [The Farm Table](#) on Main Street in Placerville.

Our final destination was the El Dorado National Forest Nursery in Camino where seedlings are planted for reforestation. Many of you attended the May meeting where Gary Cline was our speaker and explained the process. It was interesting to see how they collect, clean, store and plant the seeds. Now we know where our "Penny Pines" money goes!



Enjoying the tours and luncheon were Nancy Clark, Nancy Miller, Roseanne Stevenson, Ellison Cowles, Toni Mayer, Jeannie Holler, Berniece Jones, Helen Mary Scheinert, Marianna Hashorva, Sharon Barton, and guest, Paula Swanson.



## **RVGC Tour to Sandhill Crane Festival**

**Nancy Compton**

Long before Lodi existed, Sandhill Cranes descended into the rich Delta wetlands at the end of a long migratory journey, most coming from Alaska, but some flying the incredibly long journey from Siberia.

Visitors are provided bus transportation to the wetlands area where they stand quietly under a shelter to observe these magnificent birds as they fly in, mainly at dusk, with their prehistoric-sounding call and easily identifiable silhouette against the early evening sky.

Sandhill Cranes are large birds with a wingspan of 5-6 feet. They fly with both their long neck and feet straight out, cutting a remarkable profile. The birds are slate grey in color, with adult members of the species having red skin on the top of their heads.

Club members who attended this tour enjoyed learning about the cranes from knowledgeable and enthusiastic guides who also offered homemade cookies as we stood under the shelter waiting for the birds to arrive. Standing there in the Delta wetlands surrounded by the peace and serenity of nature, it wasn't hard to picture California's native population enjoying the same tranquility as they, too, awaited the arrival of the cranes.

As one can imagine, a person can work up quite an appetite while they are bird-watching. Thus, a dinner at Wholey Ravioli in Galt was just the ticket for a lovely evening spent with garden club friends.

## **About the Sandhill Crane**

**Pam McCabe**

Seven RVGC members and a member guest traveled to Lodi to view the seasonal Sandhill Crane migration. We joined a tour that provided bussing from downtown Lodi to the Woodbridge Ecological Reserve. Our very knowledgeable guides from the Department of Fish and Wildlife provided insights about Sandhill Cranes. The viewing area looked out on a shallow waterway. Just at dusk, groups of cranes began descending into the water to roost for the night.

Sandhill Cranes mate for life, choosing their partners based on dancing displays. Displaying birds stretch their wings, pump their heads, bow, and leap into the air. Although each female usually lays two eggs, only one nestling typically survives. Mated pairs and their juvenile offspring stay together all through the winter, until the 9- to 10-month-old juveniles finally separate from their parents the following spring. During migration and winter the family units group together with other families forming loose roosting and feeding flocks—in some places numbering in the tens of thousands. Sandhill cranes have one of the longest fossil histories of any bird. A 10-million-year-old crane fossil was found in Nebraska.

The adult cranes are gray overall and typically weigh about ten pounds. As adults they have a red forehead, white cheeks and a long, dark pointed bill. In flight, their long legs trail behind and their long necks keep straight. They produce a loud, trumpeting call and can be heard from a long distance. Their wingspans are typically 5 feet





## Sandhill Crane, Cont.

In case you missed the Galt fly-in, and want to see these exquisite birds in flight, [click here](#)



*Pam McCabe, Jeannie Holler, and Doris Lighty awaiting sunset and arrival of the cranes.*



*Tour group at Wholey Ravioli after an evening of birding.*







**RIVER VALLEY GARDEN CLUB**  
**PLEASE JOIN US AT OUR ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY**  
**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2018**  
**3:00PM – 6:00PM**  
**RMA BUILDING**

Members are asked to bring:

- ☒ A guest or guests
- ☒ Either a side dish (to go with the ham), or salad, or dessert
- ☒ Adult beverage of your choice
- ☒ A garden-related gift for the gift exchange not to exceed \$15

The committee is providing ham and rolls with condiments,  
hot mulled cider, and coffee.

Please **RSVP** no later than Monday, November 26<sup>th</sup> to:

Carol Prinzo at [rcprinzo1962@gmail.com](mailto:rcprinzo1962@gmail.com), or 916-354-9688. Please indicate  
number of guest(s) and your choice of dish to share. Plan on feeding 8-10 with  
your offering.

**SEE YOU ALL THERE!**





## **Tour of Filoli Mansion and Gardens with Begonia Society**

**Nancy Compton**

Several of our members joined the Sacramento Begonia Society on a tour of the widely-renowned Filoli Mansion and Gardens located in Woodside on the San Francisco Peninsula.

This property, located on 654 acres, is listed on the National Registrar of Historic Places and was built for Mr. & Mrs. William Bourn, prominent San Franciscans, in 1917. The Bourns' chief source of wealth was the Empire Gold Mine in Grass Valley, which our club toured about three years ago.

Although the name "Filoli" sounds like an Italian surname, it is actually a word contrived of the first two letters from the key words of Mr. Bourn's philosophy:

Fight for a just cause.....Love your fellow man.....Live a good life = Filoli

The Filoli gardens were designed to include many of the elements you would expect to find on an English country estate. In addition to a formal garden, ample space is allocated for a large working kitchen garden with espaliered fruits, berries, vegetable gardens, cutting gardens, and a greenhouse. The gardens also include large expanses of green lawn which was prized by the English and imitated later by American suburbanites as they planned their landscapes.

Much to the delight of Begonia Society members, the gardens featured absolutely enormous and beautiful begonias. A lovely brick wall led to an extensive rose garden and cutting garden, then meandered to the mansion past a formal row of Lombardy poplars. The Bourns cherished the native live oaks which flourished at Filoli, even planning the estate around existing groves to ensure that the oaks were not harmed.

In 1975 Filoli was given to the National Trust for Historic Preservation and opened to the public. Changes were made to accommodate the needs of visitors, including the addition of a parking lot and access for visitors with disabilities, but the integrity of the gardens was not compromised.

The mansion and gardens are open to the public for the enjoyment of its beauty and serenity. Filoli also provides opportunities for the community for learning and professional development in a wide range of subjects including history, art, architecture, design, landscape preservation, conservation, botany, and horticulture.

And much to the delight of garden club members, there was also an area that featured plants for sale, some of which traveled to Rancho Murieta and are now thriving in local gardens.

Click [here](#) for your own personal tour of this stunning estate.





## Filoli Mansion and Gardens, Cont.



*The stunning formal gardens at Filoli.*



*Nancy Clark and Debbie Kolmodin*



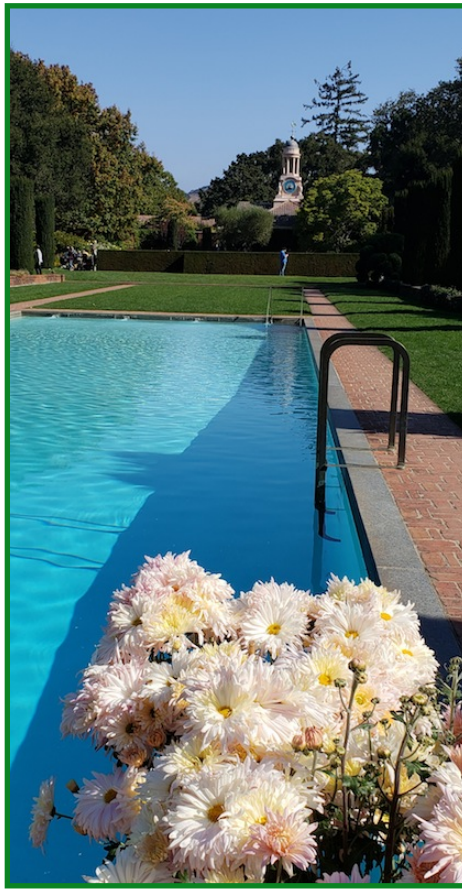
*A gate inviting visitors into the gardens.*



## Filoli Mansion and Gardens, Cont.



*Sweeping lawns.*



*Filoli has many stunning pools.*



*The begonias were huge!*

### Welcome New Members

**Irene Slavins, Vice President, Membership**

**There is still time to Renew Your Membership and Enjoy a Great Holiday Party.**

We have forty-five members to date with three more coming on board at the Holiday Party. So don't miss out. Come to the Holiday Party on December 2nd and bring your fistful of dollars. It's only \$25.00 for a whole year of access to great speakers, workshops, field trips, and camaraderie with like-minded friends. What else can bring you that much fun for a year for only twenty-five dollars?

We welcome new members:

Carrie Dodson, Ann Wolf, Muriel Zetter, and Eileen Erickson

### 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.





## Looking for the Perfect Christmas Gift?

### Kathy Nuttal, Penny Pines Chair

Need a great gift idea for that special one (or more) on your Christmas list who has everything? A gift you don't have to wrap? A gift that keeps on giving?

Then how about a gift of new life to the [Eldorado National Forest](#)?

Eldorado is the forest that lies between Placerville and Lake Tahoe. Your donation of \$68.00 is used to grow seedlings, prepare the ground, plant the new seedlings, and maintain the reforested areas to ensure the growth of the seedlings. The reestablishment of forests is not just simple tree planting. Forests are made up of communities of species which build dead organic material into soils over time.

A major tree-planting program, such as Penny Pines, enhances the local climate and reduces the demands of burning large amounts of fossil fuels for cooling in the summer. Your gift can be 'in honor of' a living individual, or 'in memory of' a deceased individual. It is a great gift that truly keeps on giving!

To obtain one (or more) of these unique gifts, you can either give it to Kathy Nuttall (Penny Pines Chair) or Carrie Dodson, 916-834-5059 (Treasurer), or you can mail your \$68.00 check, payable to RVGC, to:

River Valley Garden Club  
Post Office Box 711  
Rancho Murieta, CA 95683

\*\* Please include your name and address, and the name(s) of the person(s) you are honoring or memorializing. Each donor will receive an official USDA acknowledgement certificate. *The certificates take at least a month to arrive*, so if you desire to frame and wrap the certificate as a Christmas present, hop to it!



# DID YOU KNOW?

## International Christmas Traditions Japan

Forget the suckling pig and cranberry sauce. In Japan, Kentucky Fried Chicken is the traditional Christmas feast in Japan -- thanks to great marketing in the 1970s. The restaurant is so popular on Christmas Day that reservations are required.

## Ireland

While American children famously leave milk and cookies for Santa Claus, Irish kids put out mince pies and a bottle of Guinness.

(Santa loves delivering presents in Ireland)

## Slovakia

Before dinner can get started, the head of the family takes a spoonful of food and throws it at the ceiling. Usually it's Loksa, a traditional Christmas dish made from poppy seed filling, bread and water.



## IT'S NOT ONLY PRICKLY. IT'S POISONOUS.

In the days of yore, holly trees with their pointy leaves were traditionally considered as lightning rods. To that end, they were planted near a house as protection from lightning strikes. In European mythology, holly was also associated with thunder gods such as Thor and Taranis. Thanks to modern science, which sometimes provides explanation for what once was dismissed as superstitious lore, we now know that the spines on the distinctively-shaped holly leaves *can* act as miniature lightning conductors, thereby protecting trees and other nearby objects.

But beware of this helpful plant.

Boughs of holly are fine, but the berries are not. Holly leaves, branches, and berries are beautiful holiday decorations, but the berries are poisonous to people and pets. Swallowing holly berries can cause vomiting, diarrhea, dehydration, and drowsiness. Children have had symptoms after swallowing as few as TWO holly berries. Holly leaves might also cause symptoms if eaten but, because they are prickly, children usually leave them alone.

To prevent poisoning, remove the berries *before* decorating with fresh holly. Even if the holly is placed out of reach, the berries quickly dry out at indoor temperatures. Then, they fall to the floor where children and pets find them. To prevent poisoning, remove the berries *before* decorating with fresh holly. If you can't conceive of a holly wreath without its striking red berries, try stringing some fresh cranberries and substituting them in!

## Recipe for a Merry Christmas

1/2 C. Hugs  
4 tsp. Kisses  
1 C. Special Holiday Cheer  
3 tsp. Christmas Spirit  
2 C. Goodwill to Men  
1 Sprig of Mistletoe  
1 Medium-size Bag of Christmas snowflakes (the regular kind won't do!)  
4 C. Peace on Earth

May you be blessed, and be a blessing this holiday season.

## HERE IT COMES!

