



Volume 23—January 2026

Issue 1

Here's the Dirt

A publication of the River Valley Garden Club

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Rooting for You.....Jayne La Grande, President....

Dear Members:

Now that the holidays are over, I've decided to organize the closets full of things acquired over time. It's funny how we collect items and store them as treasures in cupboards and closets, reorganizing the storage when new additions are acquired, but rarely those no longer needed.

Things we acquire along life's journey hold memories from past travels and experiences for us to reflect on. The margarita glasses still stored in their original box, the framed awards and pictures, the ornaments that I don't remember acquiring....It's time to let go and free up the clutter. I've come to realize it's more important to live in the present and treasure experiences over material objects.

As I write this, I'm looking forward to my next big travel adventure in 2026. Greece, Scandinavia, Egypt — who knows where I'll land. One thing is certain — I'll be acquiring experiences rather than objects d'art.

Wishing you all fabulous experiences in 2026!

See you at the next member meeting.

*Jayne La Grande, President
River Valley Garden Club*



Full disclosure: This is NOT Jayne's closet—just a photo from the Internet.



*Organized closet = more time for gardening!
(This is also not Jayne's closet)*



Plant Sale.....Saturday, May 9.....

The Plant Sale core team has already begun the planning process for this year's lallapoluza Plant Sale scheduled for Saturday, May 9 at the RMA parking lot from 9 a.m.—2 p.m.

The ever-popular children's table and Master Gardener table will return again this year. New this year will be a Front Yard Contest and a flower arranging workshop. More details to come — be sure to save the date - and think about how you can jump in to help with this gala event. More details to follow. Stay tuned...



Pot of flowers from 2025 plant sale

2025.....and what a year it was!



Roger Steel explained the art of bonsai



Chris Strutz, RVGC member and proprietor of Strutz Ranch

March....Chris Strutz provided a presentation on using environmentally friendly strategies to keep our gardens strong and healthy.



Member Linda Beagle, Karen Hoberg, and Alexander Hoberg

At the same meeting the club awarded a grant to Boy Scout Alexander Hoberg for his project of enhancing the school garden at Cosumnes River Elementary School.



LoriAnn Asmus

February.....In honor of National Houseplant Appreciation Day, LoriAnn Asmus provided a lively and humorous presentation on how best to take care of our houseplants. Several audience members were awarded plants to take home.



Wreath workshop participants showing off their lovely creations



Debbie Orlando creating her spring wreath



A beautifully creative

April.....workshop on creating a spring wreath using natural materials...twelve participants created beautiful wreaths to hang on their doors or feature on their entrance walls to their homes.



May.....when all our energy was focused on the Garden Stroll and Plant Sale.

Pictured at left: Donna Hansen, Deb Rooney, and Cathy Critz at Planting Day .

On the following page, please enjoy the photos of the lovely plants and flowers we offered our community...





Greg Gayton to speak at January meeting

On Tuesday evening, January 27, Greg Gayton will start the garden club new year as he provides information on the growing and care of Sacramento's signature flower: the camellia.

Greg is a nursery professional with more than forty years in the industry who loves to share his knowledge and inspire people to get out in the garden. He is part of the community outreach team at Green Acres and produces the Green Acres garden podcast.

Spring 2026 Program Lineup.....

January 27, 2026: Greg Gayton, Nursery Professional, Green Acres Nursery. Greg will talk about the growing and care of camellias. Greg always provides an interesting talk. Sometimes he even brings things to give away. Greg is well-known throughout the region for his expertise and light-hearted presentation style.

February 24, 2026: Master Gardener Susan Muckey will share her expertise on enriching our soil for a healthier garden.

March 24, 2026: Dr. Jamie Kneitel, Chair of Environmental Studies at CSUS, will speak on the importance of seasonal biodiversity throughout our region.

April 28, 2026: "Building upon the Legacy of our Indigenous Peoples." A speaker from the Effie Yeaw Nature Center will share information about the indigenous peoples. How did they handle water resources? How did they sustain their families? Most importantly, what can we learn from them?

May 26, 2026: Our own RVGC floral design experts, Rosann and Cathleen, will demonstrate how to create five gorgeous bouquets which will be raffled off at the end of the meeting.

June 23, 2026: Summer Picnic Celebration! Grazing table, refreshing liquids, reminiscing, conversation, celebration, and fun.

Snottygobble — A Strange and Unusual Plant

One day while scrolling around looking for something interesting in the plant world, I saw the heading "Strange and Unusual Plants." Thinking that this would be instructive, I clicked the heading and found a list of the ten most unusual plants in the world, my favorite of which was a parasitic low-growing shrub that grows in the forests of southwest Australia called Snottygobble. Yes, you read that correctly.



On the plus side, this plant apparently shows promise as a potential biological control agent against the introduced weeds that cost millions of dollars every year to control. Perhaps the first order of business should be to give this plant a more appealing name.

Snottygobble