



Sacramento Perennial Plant Club Newsletter

NOV/DEC 2013

FOUNDED IN 1988 • CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

NO MEETING IN NOVEMBER

Happy Thanksgiving

DECEMBER MEETING

Annual Potluck Holiday Gathering

WEDNESDAY — DECEMBER 18, 2013 • 7:00 P.M.

SHEPARD GARDEN AND ARTS CENTER

The Perennial Plant Club invites all our members and families to attend our **Annual Potluck Holiday Gathering** on Wednesday, December 18. The club will furnish ham, bread and butter, drinks, eating utensils and plates. We would like everyone to bring something to share and are asking those whose last names start with letters:

- **A thru I** to bring a **salad**
- **J thru Q** to bring a **hot side dish**
- **R thru Z** to bring a **dessert**

In order to assure that there is an assortment of dishes we are asking that you RSVP to either **Peggy Weseloh, 916-486-8387** or **Madeleine Mullins, 916-455-7815**.

Gardeners are good cooks—the food is always wonderful. Please join us for a fun evening and a chance to become better acquainted with members of the club, share good food and perhaps win one of the many door prizes, which will include garden tools and other garden related items. We have a wonderful time singing carols as **Noelle Anderson** plays the piano. Hope to see you at the party.

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Calendar

November 13

SPPC Board Meeting
Bobby Frieze (916-383-8054)
5 p.m.

November 23

Garden Tour
Pauline's Garden
3781 Dell Road, Carmichael
10 a.m.

November 28

No meeting in November
Happy Thanksgiving

December 7

Rose Pruning Class
Historic Rose Garden
10 a.m. (rain cancels)

December 18

Annual Potluck Holiday Gathering
Shepard Garden and Arts Center
7 p.m.

December 23

Garden Tour
Fall Color in the Rose Garden
Historic Rose Garden
10 a.m. (rain cancels)

UC Davis Arboretum

Upcoming Guided Tours: *Walk with Warren*

November 13—Exploring oaks
from around the world

December 11—Winter wonders
of the west side gardens

(Contact the Arboretum for
times and where to meet—
530-752-4880)

President's Message

Saul Wiseman

Three items for the *Newsletter*, each important and involving you.

First, we all know that Daisy Mah has retired from the WPA Rock Garden. That means that she will not be presenting her “Daisy’s Dozen” at the monthly meeting. “Horticultural Forum” will take Daisy’s place. I’m asking each of you who attend the monthly meeting to bring one sample of a plant in bloom or of interest in a vase or container. We need to share something about the plant. Also, as part of the forum, we will have a question and answer time.

Second, we have relied on Emma Ahart to provide plants for both the spring and fall SG&A sale. Emma will continue to provide plants for the SG&A spring plant sale in 2014. However, Emma will no longer provide plants for the fall 2014 sale. Therefore, I am asking members to help provide plants for the fall sale. This could be done now by division or cutting. One easy way to help in the late summer is to grow seeds for winter vegetables. Also, at the fall sale we need to recycle our extra garden tools and other garden related items not being used. This is an opportunity for all of us to make a contribution that will benefit the club.

Finally, in my opinion, the big event for the club is the vendor sale in March each year. In 2014 this will be our 13th annual sale. A number of members are already preparing for the sale, which involves inviting past and new vendors to participate. I’m the one responsible for getting the guest speaker for the sale. Each year I try to find a speaker who can be entertaining while provide interesting information. I’m still searching for the guest speaker for 2014. If you have a suggestion, please contact me.

I’m hoping to see you at the holiday pot luck party in December. We will have some great door prizes this year.

Have You Seen This Insect?

Already found in downtown and midtown Sacramento and in Citrus Heights, brown marmorated stink bugs (BMSB) wreak havoc on dozens of crops and shade trees. BMSB is a strong flyer and stealth hitchhiker so it will only be a matter of time before it spreads further into the Sacramento region.

To identify BMSB go to:

<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/pestalert/pabrownmarmorated.html>

For various ways to report a finding, go to:

http://ucanr.edu/sites/sacmg/Insect_problems/Brown_Marmorated_Stink_Bug/Report_BMSB_Finds/



Photo courtesy of UCCE Sacramento Master Gardeners



IRVIN FARIA

November Garden Tour

Pauline's Garden

SATURDAY — NOVEMBER 23, 2013
3781 DELL ROAD, CARMICHAEL
TOUR STARTS AT 10:00 A.M.

When we visited *Pauline's Garden* last spring and walked down the peaceful paths under the hundreds of Japanese maples, oaks, dogwoods and other trees, we knew we had to visit in the autumn and see the fall color. Fifty years ago, Irvin and Pauline Faria bought a beautiful lot and began designing and developing their hillside garden before they built their home. This year is also their 60th wedding anniversary. To celebrate both anniversaries, at the garden entrance they replaced an old flowering quince bush with a new glazed pot and a Cordyline 'Electric Pink' transplanted from the garden. The glaze tones complement the hues of the exfoliating bark of the river birches in the entry garden. Irvin and Pauline also added two Lyman Whitaker* wind sculptures to the garden. This garden is Irvin and Pauline's passion and labor of love. They do all the gardening themselves.

Directions: Pauline and Irvin Faria's Garden at 3781 Dell Road, Carmichael. Dell Road goes south off of Fair Oaks Boulevard and is located between San Juan Avenue and Hollister Avenue. If coming from the direction of San Juan Avenue, you will turn left on Dell Road and proceed to 3781. If coming from Manzanita Avenue, turn right on Dell Road.

*To see examples of Lyman Whitaker's sculptures, go to:
<http://www.whitakerstudio.com/index.html>

Welcome to the following new members:

Eileen Heaser
Linda Holmes

SPPC Board Meeting. The next Perennial Plant Club Board of Directors meeting will be held Wednesday, November 13th at the home of **Bobby Frieze** (916-383-8054). As always, board meetings are open to all members. Meetings begin at 5 p.m. and start with a potluck dinner—informative *and* delicious

Historic Rose Garden Tour. Anita Clevenger will be leading a free *Fall Color in the Rose Garden* tour on Saturday, November 23, in the Sacramento Historic City Cemetery at 10 a.m. Parking is across the street from the cemetery. Enter the main gate at 10th Street and Broadway. We'll be looking at late blooms, rose hips, foliage and other colorful autumn plants.

Save the Date

Bus Trip to SF Flower Show

Heads up! Make a note on your 2014 calendar to reserve Wednesday, March 19 for the 16th annual SPPC bus trip to the San Francisco Flower & Garden Show. A flyer and registration form will be in the January/February Newsletter. Read more at www.sfgardenshow.com.

Help Needed for Vendor Sale

The Vendor Sale will be held at Shepard Garden and Arts Center on March 29, 2014. Helpers are needed for various jobs. If you'd like to help set up on Friday, March 28, call **Bobby Frieze** (383-8054). Also on that Friday, we will set up our display of "What's Blooming in Our Gardens." If you'd like to help with that, call **Daisy Mah** (446-1768). If you would like to help with publicity, or with refreshments for the vendors, call **Noelle Anderson** (731-4648).

Year in Review

Before you know it, a year has come and gone. It's easy to see the past year as a blur. So, with that said, here is a look back on a year of interesting guest speakers and inspiring garden tours. Thank you **Janice Sutherland, Elizabeth Jones** and **Barbara Lane-Piert** for orchestrating a diverse selection of enriching events.

In January, **Pam Bone** and **Fran Clarke**, SPPC members and Master Gardeners, spoke about the "Best and Worst Trees" for our region at the first general meeting of the year. A reminder that there are many knowledgeable and articulate SPPC members willing to share their experiences.

The February general meeting brought us **Scott Chadd** of Lotus Nursery and Gardens. He demonstrated how to style, trim roots and re-pot a nursery plant into a bonsai pot.

March began our busy season with many events. Thanks to **Bobby Frieze** for organizing another enjoyable bus trip to the SF Flower and Garden Show. Kudos to **Madeleine Mullins** and her team of dedicated volunteers for a successful Spring Plant Sale. **Noelle Anderson** worked tirelessly with many volunteers to produce the 12th Annual Vendor Sale. Thanks also to **Saul Wiseman** for recruiting **Nicholas Staddon** to be the guest speaker. Nicholas is the director of new plant introductions for Monrovia Nursery. He was entertaining and informative, while sharing many photos of new and notable plants.

Ellen Zagory, Director of Horticulture for the UC Davis Arboretum, was our April speaker. She shared a number of unusual perennials that do well in our region. Our first tour of the year featured the unique and peaceful Japanese garden of **Boonie Lang**. We also visited **Ruth Ostroff's** Iris Garden and saw hundreds of blooming irises.



Once again, our general meeting in May was led by SPPC members discussing favorite garden tools and safety issues when working with thorny and prickly plants. We had the pleasure of touring **Ralph and Sue Blomberg's** lush garden, **Irvin and Pauline Faria's** enchanting hillside garden and **Emma Ahart's** amazing vegetable and flower garden. The much anticipated event in May was our 25th Anniversary Celebration at Maple Rock Gardens. We toured **Scott Paris's** redesign of the garden and afterward, sat down to a delicious lunch provided by High Hand Conservatory.

The June general meeting featured **Taylor Lewis**, of Cornflower Farms, a native plant nursery. Taylor talked about how to use native plants in our gardens. In addition to bringing many examples of these plants, those in attendance were each given *Festuca idahoensis*, 'Siskiyou Blue' to take home.

July and August were our dormant months with a brief but impressive showing at the Fair Oaks Horticulture Center's *Harvest Day*. Thank you to all the volunteers who greeted and answered questions from attendees.

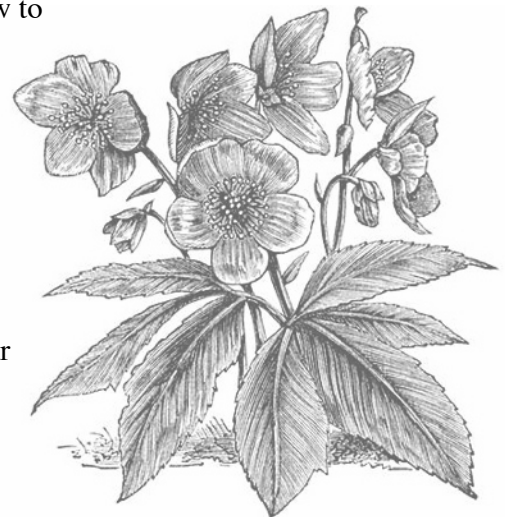


We held a special September general meeting in William Land Park to celebrate **Daisy Mah's** retirement. Daisy led a tour of the beautiful rock garden and we all feasted on tasty salads brought by members.

October brought us another Fall Plant Sale. **Cheryl Buckwalter** of *Landscape Liaisons* and Executive Director of EcoLandscape California was our speaker and gave a comprehensive presentation on how to achieve a river-friendly landscape.

November will bring another tour of **Pauline's Garden** to take in the fall colors of the many Japanese maples.

In December, we'll hold our **Annual Potluck Holiday Gathering** and close out the year with door prizes and song.



Reflections on a Wonderful Career

by Daisy Mah



Being a professional gardener for most of my 34 years with the city of Sacramento has been a rewarding endeavor. I have been able to weather the challenges of working in a system dominated by men and where the gardener job classification is now a distant memory. The care of the rose garden at McKinley Park is currently under contract and high-maintenance flowerbeds have been converted to lawns, ivy or periwinkle. Initially, when I was first hired to maintain the rose garden at McKinley Park, I was quite green and hardly a gardener. As a recent college graduate with an art degree, I was adept and thrived in that dynamic world of constant learning. Honestly, gardening was a little of a letdown and monotonous with the never-ending chores of deadheading and weeding. It took a few years to understand that the efforts expended today may not be apparent until a year or more down the road. By the time I left five years later, I finally began to understand and respect the rhythms and cycles with the various seasons that come, not at our convenience, but that of the natural plant world. I had grown very fond of the rose garden and its many visitors but my hands had become tingly and numb before carpal tunnel syndrome became a household word. It was hard to leave and to where was the big question.

I briefly worked at the city's nursery and learned about the magic of propagation. The next stop and promotion was Old Sacramento, which proved to be a mistake where plants hardly played a role. I finally got to William Land Park to become a lead person with responsibilities that included annual flowerbeds, now dubbed the Valley Oak Border, a forgotten boat pond island, and the "maze" or "jungle" that showcased ivy and wild onion (a.k.a. wretched onion), now renamed the WPA Rock Garden. Despite the neglected condition, I was inspired by the vast possibilities but not terribly aware of the challenges that lay ahead. For much of my career, Parks were generously staffed which enabled me to slowly transform these areas into gardens at William Land Park. For major

undertakings like removing the well-established ivy or pampas grass or shrubs and trees, I could rely on either the Community Service program, co-workers or the good neighbors at Fairytale Town. The recent economic downturn and its additional demands came at a point where I had hoped to edit and fine-tune a more beautiful and picturesque garden. But sadly that dream

was placed on the proverbial back burner. Instead of going forward, it seemed just the opposite when I was saddled with additional responsibilities.

Now 27 years later, many of the dreams have been realized. Although I am in relatively good health, it has become painfully clear that my physical abilities and stamina were being taxed. As I write, there are only a few more days left before I retire. The work and improvements of making a public garden must continue without me. I was honored by both our club and by city Parks. After all the lovely retirement fanfare is over, the work must go on. At this point I am confident that my successor comes with horticultural credentials and aspirations but also painfully aware that I will be gone before he begins. In the interim a couple of dedicated and enthusiastic part-time employees, with the help of a group of equally dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers, will continue to maintain the garden which will make my departure a lot less painful.

There is much to share such as the locations of the weeds gleefully waiting for an opportunity to make a comeback and the many challenges and methods for dealing with public gardens subject to vandalism and theft. The many garden areas of the park have had their distinct flavor and needs. Part of the reason I stuck around so long is that there is always another challenge to fulfill on a shoestring budget. My dream of creating beauty accomplished. Along the way I got involved with the Perennial Plant Club, many wonderful volunteers and park friends and to my astonishment, the respect of my colleagues. It has been a wonderful life.

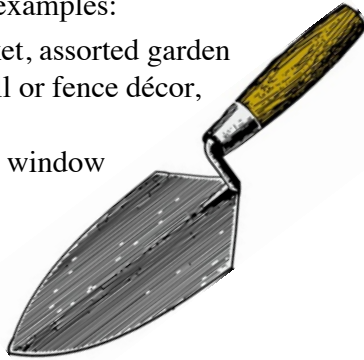
It's Fall Clean-up Time

Before you decide to throw away, you can choose to recycle instead! Our Fall Plant Sale could use that cool, old thing. We're looking for gardening items, tools, and décor. Here are some examples:

Metal: watering can, bucket, assorted garden tools, bird feeders, wall or fence décor, plant stands

Wood: ladder latticework, window frame, chair

Stone and Ceramic: stepping stones, bird bath, assorted pots, teapots



If you have any of these items, please hang on to them just a little longer and send a note to:

Beverly Shilling, b_shilling@sbcglobal.net or
Jane Thompson, artjane7850@sbcglobal.net

Garden Resolutions Wanted

Will you be making any garden-related New Year's resolutions? Like, "I'll focus more on hydrozones in my garden," or "I'll never plant (fill in the blank) again!" If so, send your resolution by **December 20** to: Cheryl McDonald, mcdonald4214@sbcglobal.net to be included in the next newsletter.

Blooms from the Tombs

by Sharon Patrician

Tall asters! When I was a novice gardener and believed that everything written on gardening was gospel, I was convinced asters were for cooler British climates. Little did I know how well they thrive in our hot, waterless summers. I found this out by accident when someone (bless you) gave me an unnamed *Aster novabelgi* which I planted in the spring. It sulked for a bit, started putting out leaves, then stalks, and that fall I had my first blooms.

Now, they are tucked in everywhere in Hamilton Square, and I have even experimented with so-called summer-blooming asters. Caution: They spread by underground suckers and must be controlled, but when they bloom—well, judge for yourself with Big Bill's Blue (see photo at right). This aster got this big in one year. I ordered it from Digging Dog, planted it last fall, and it has rewarded me with luminous color and honey bee attraction.

I am still a novice vis-a-vis asters (it's a huge family) but every year I get better at growing and experimenting with them. They need some water during the summer, but they are surprisingly drought tolerant in my sandy soil and frost is of no concern. Give them a try in your garden; there are smaller species and they come in pinks, blues, purples and whites.



Perennial sunflowers are another crowd pleaser in Hamilton Square. *Helianthus salicifolius* 'First Light' never fails to produce a bumper crop of glowing yellow flowers, especially lovely when viewed against the morning light (see photo on back page). The plant gets about 4 feet tall, increases slowly into a clump suitable for dividing and goes dormant in winter. It is lovely with the lavender and blue asters and blooms for about two months. If you have room, plant both together and stand back for a luscious display of color in the fall.



SPPC Newsletter
Cheryl McDonald
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Perennial sunflowers in Hamilton Square