

The Perennial Post

Newsletter of the Sacramento Perennial Plant Club ☀ Summer 2025



WWW.SACPLANTS.ORG



Sacramento Perennial Plant Club

MISSION STATEMENT

The Sacramento Perennial Plant Club provides educational opportunities for Sacramento area gardeners and horticulturalists to learn about perennials appropriate to our climate and water limitations.

OFFICERS

President:

Vice-President: Cheryl McDonald

Secretary: Catherine Cardozo

Treasurer: Marcia Leddy

CONTACTS

E-Mails: Susan Haumeder

Facebook/Gardener's Market:

Lili Ann Metzger

Grants Program: Anita Clevenger

Membership: Linda Monroe

Newsletter: Cheryl McDonald

Plant Sales: Risë Ryan

SG&AC Rep: Barbara Lane

Speakers: Lori Ann Asmus

Member Garden Tours: Lee Perrone

Propagation Advisors: Daisy Mah &

LaVille Logan

Website: Weston Monroe

Send questions or comments to:

president.sppc@gmail.com

PERENNIAL POST

September 10 is the due date to submit a garden-related article for the 2025 fall issue of *The Perennial Post*. Please send your article to Cheryl McDonald: (mcdonald4214@sbcglobal.net).

WHEN & WHERE?

Club meetings are held the fourth Thursday of the month (except July, August and November) at 7 p.m. at the Shepard Garden & Arts Center in McKinley Park, 3330 McKinley Blvd., Sacramento. Meetings are free and open to the public.

ON THE COVER

Lovely trachelium caeruleum, in Cheryl McDonald's backyard.
Photo: Cheryl McDonald

Critical Need!

The election for SPPC 2026-28 board officers will happen next year during our May meeting or June potluck. Until then
it is critical that we have an interim President.

The interim president and vice-president have an opportunity in the coming months to design and implement a co-presidency. Many duties can be shared.

Consider taking on this important leadership position.

For more information, contact:

Lorraine Van Kekerix ((916) 457-2674; lkvk@dcn.org), or
Cheryl McDonald (916-524-5943; mcdonald4214@sbcglobal.net)

Shepard Garden & Arts Center Update

The SG&AC's Negotiating Committee continues to work with the City's representatives regarding the established of a lease agreement. A lease would likely allow a reduction in rent rates for the clubs. The Committee has so far succeeded in extending the 50% discount on the new rent rates until the end of the 2025-26 fiscal year.

Welcome to Our New and Returning Members

We currently have over 200 members including 40 new and returning members! When you receive the 2025 roster, check that your contact information has been listed correctly. For corrections, please text or e-mail

Alix Baptist	Ian Johnson	Jade Rosario
Rhianna Clifton	Jeannie Kane	Janet Sager
John Chwistek	Amy Lopez	Penny & Don Schatau
Ruth Craft	Bill McFall	Maria Schiffler
Maryann Crawford	Jan Meyer-Schaffner	Anne Seiler
Virginia DeSouza	Katherine Milton	Jill Shepherd
Chris Duane	Becky Mojica	Cynthia Stusiak
Rhonda Fisher	Michael Oates	Marielou Valdez
Barbara Garnier	Michelle Ott	Dierdre Walker
Kathryn Harris	Patti Paddock	Patricia Wells
Sandy Hill	Raegan & Joseph Paris	Shevaun Zakhir
Celeste Hunziker	Karen Philpott	
Lynda Ives	Parijata & Kalpana Prabhakara	

Help Wanted

Give Back to the Club

To keep our organization strong, we need lots of volunteers:

COMMUNICATIONS—Help promote the club:

- Write articles for the newsletter.
- Take photographs of our many activities.
- Design and produce various promotional materials.

Contact: Cheryl McDonald (916-524-5943; mcdonald4214@sbcglobal.net)

MEMBER GARDEN TOURS—Share your garden at one of our member garden tours. It's a great way to get to know fellow members and share advice. Plus, after the tour, you can relax and enjoy your beautiful garden!

Contact: Lee Perrone (916-737-2152; cynicalee2@yahoo.com)

MEMBERSHIP—Always a need for help:

- Greet members and guests at our monthly meetings and events
- Maintain a spreadsheet of members' attendance at meetings
- Help organize forms for updating the roster.

Contact: Linda Monroe (916-996-9985; lmunroe1@ymail.com)

MONTHLY MEETING REFRESHMENTS—Bring your favorite treat to share during the meeting's break time.

Contact: Marcia Leddy (916-213-7743; mcl@williesworkshop.net)

MONTHLY MEETING TECH TEAM—Help our monthly speakers with their presentation needs.

Contact: Cheryl McDonald (916-524-5943; mcdonald4214@sbcglobal.net)

PLANT SALES—Join our committee! The spring plant sale is our primary source of funds. Many volunteers are needed:

- **Plant label writers:** Need clear, neat writing to help make 2000 plant labels.
- **Plant transport coordinator:** Rent a van and coordinate plant pick ups with other drivers and the propagators.
- **Table rental coordinator:** Rent tables and oversee their delivery and return.
- **Hospitality coordinator:** Coordinate healthy refreshments each day for PPC volunteers.

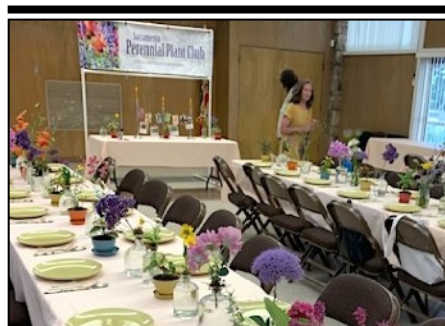
Contact: Risë Ryan (610) 331-1610; riseryan7987@gmail.com)

SAUL WISEMAN GRANTS PROGRAM—Help spread the word about our grants program to any school, community group or non-profit with a gardening project in Sacramento County and the City of West Sacramento.

Contact: Anita Clevenger (916-715-7294; anitac5159@gmail.com)

WPA ROCK GARDEN—Join this fun crew of hard-working volunteers to maintain this beautiful garden in William Land Park. Volunteers meet each Thursday morning, year-round. Bring your garden tools and a container for pulled weeds.

Contact: Daisy Mah (916-605-8039; gardengirlmah@gmail.com)



June Salad Potluck

Thank you to the many volunteers who helped make the June Salad Potluck beautiful and delicious. We had a packed house filled with lots of talk and laughter. We appreciate all the volunteers who took the time and effort to purchase the gift cards and all the members who brought lovely blooms for the centerpieces. Our Holiday Potluck will take place on Friday, December 12.

Trachelium caeruleum or "TC"

Why bother taxing your brain with *Trachelium caeruleum* when TC would suffice? Or writing a label with TC, unnecessary to invite hand cramps—brilliant. But perhaps you search online to satisfy a curiosity, you will find TC is tissue culture. Try its common name, throat flower—BINGO! Along with other beauties, this long-blooming perennial graced our June Salad Potluck. A native to the Mediterranean, it also graces gardens in sun to part sun with average to moderate water and helps sustain pollinators, butterflies and birds. From Greek 'trachelos' meaning neck, once a cure for throat maladies.

—Daisy Mah



A volunteer "TC" that returns every year—
bigger than before.

Changing Our World, One Garden at a Time

By Lori Ann Asmus

The changing environment continues to challenge our gardening experience and knowledge.

The challenges include, but are not limited to, unexpected weather extremes, water quality availability and cost, and natural habitat and pollinator disruption.

Our last meeting highlights one of the best things about a group like ours. We get an opportunity to share concerns and potential solutions with other people who share our interest in the natural world. Our collective experience and thoughtful experimentation continue to amaze me. We all have something to share.

The meeting started with comments from a panel of three of our own members, who graciously shared suggestions and philosophies from their own experiences and gardens. Then we participated in a lively exchange with questions and suggestions from the audience. I would like to recap some of the highlights here:

- ◆ We know our area is becoming warmer and drier in general. In 1976, we were a solid zone 9 with temps down to 14°F. Now we are labeled 9B with lows between 25° and 30°. It is anticipated that by 2080 will be in zone 10. Looking at plants that do well in areas of California that are already drier and warmer than here may help us to get ahead of the curve.
- ◆ Several suggestions for managing soils and drainage were made. Everyone seems to agree that good drainage along with water retention is key.

Amendments. Most of our soils can benefit from amendments. One suggestion was lava fines, which actually retain water in their little

cavities and give it up as soil dries around them. Adding organics (you can make your own compost!) is always good. Having your own compost pile is not that difficult and there are many ways to go about it. The Master Gardener program has compost experts who can help you figure out the best way to make your own. Adding organic material to your soil is critical.

Mounding. Excellent way to control soil makeup and drainage, especially if you are in an area where hard pan or soil fertility are issues.

Mulching for Water Retention.

There are free mulching resources such as SMUD and tree companies that will deliver wood chips and SMUD. Be mindful of the possible need to add nitrogen (preferably from a natural source such as compost or manure) as the break down of some mulches will use more nitrogen than they give. Also, weeds can be introduced in this way, so keep an eye on any new batch.

Irrigation Efficiency. It is very important to check any type of automated system regularly. Measure the output of your drippers, check for clogs or leaks or breaks, check timers. Remember that trees and large shrubs may need additional deep watering. Watering should be done at night. Water saving and water efficiency help us have enough water to grow more plants! You can even save water from your air conditioning unit.

- ◆ There are many strategies for ensuring plant health.

Shading. Even plants that are very tough may need extra shading which can be provided with shade cloth, pop-ups, umbrellas, old

window screens, or even just providing shade for more sensitive plants from a larger tree or shrub in proper orientation.

Plant Selection. Look at the conditions in your yard. Do the research and choose plants that are suited to your conditions. It was mentioned that water wise plants are not always simultaneously heat and sun tolerant so be careful not to conflate the two. Prepare the soil. Plant when the sun is low, preferably in spring or fall.

Pollinators. As our population increases, not only is there less water available (and it's more expensive) but we also have pollinator issues, due in part to natural habitat reduction. It's imperative to plan our gardens to be attractive to the pollinators: bees, moths, butterflies, bats and other insects.

Container Growing. You can't change the climate but you can move plants in pots around so that they are happier in their own little micro-climates. Plastic pots with drainage hold water better than clay. If they are dark colored you can always cover them with the ever present bubble wrap bags that we get so many things in these days or you can even just paint the black pots white. It's an opportunity to grow plants that do well in different zones in one garden.

Tree Planting. More coverage means a cooling of the atmosphere. Trees are amazing CO2 scrubbers and tree roots reduce storm water runoff by retaining and filtering water from the skies.

We are better for all this sharing of information! We will change our world, one garden at a time, slowly and locally.

2025 Spring Plant Sale Huge Success!

Plant Sales are our primary source of funds. They pay our rent at the Shepard Garden & Arts Center and fund our largest budget item, the Saul Wiseman Grants.

As always, behind the scenes work began well more than a year ago. Heather Fargo, former mayor of Sacramento, agreed to host the sale in her huge driveway. Our propagators provided an inventory of 3,000 plants.

VOLUNTEER! If you are interested in helping with future sales, please let **Risë Ryan** know (610) 331-1610; riseryan7987@gmail.com). We can use help in a variety of ways, before and during the sales. Expertise about plants and gardens is welcome, but there are many essential jobs that do not require it. One of our biggest needs is for more day-of-sale help to keep a steady flow of “merchandise” on to the tables and keep it looking organized and tidy.



Save the Date

AUGUST

HARVEST DAY

SATURDAY—AUGUST 2, 2025
8 A.M.— 2 P.M.

Experience, imagine, learn and have fun at this popular gardening event. Stop by the Perennial Plant Club's booth in the educational section.

Visit the Harvest Day website.

FAIR OAKS HORTICULTURE CENTER
11549 FAIR OAKS BLVD.
FAIR OAKS, CA 95628

SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER

GENERAL MEETINGS

Ernesto Sandoval

*Soils in the Ground
and Container Media—
There is a Difference!*

THURSDAY
SEPTEMBER 25, 2025
7 P.M.

Kyle Johnson

*Landscape Design Using
Perennials and Succulents*

THURSDAY
OCTOBER 23, 2025
7 P.M.

DECEMBER

HOLIDAY POTLUCK

FRIDAY
DECEMBER 12, 2025
11 A.M. – 1 P.M.

SHEPARD GARDEN & ARTS CENTER
3330 MCKINLEY BLVD.
SACRAMENTO, CA 95816

2025 Saul Wiseman Grants Program—Recent Site Visits

The grants committee has been in contact with all of the 2025 grants recipients, most of whom have completed their projects, and has begun planning for 2026. We plan to have the new application available by Harvest Day 2025, and will accept applications until January 16, 2026.

Here's a glimpse at a few of the projects:

1. The **HI Sacramento Youth Hostel** has installed a native garden around their property, showcasing many varieties that will thrive in either shade or sun. The top photo shows new plantings along with committee member Kirk Fujikawa and project leader Shevaun Zakhir.
2. The **Southport Elementary School** has started a pizza garden, and looks forward to harvesting and sharing pizza with the committee members this fall. The photo at right is from their May Open House.
3. **A. Warren McClaskey Adult Center** has established a tool library, complete with designated librarians and an organized, colorful space for their many tools. Below are photos that show their clever ideas.





By Barbara Lane

A S I sat beneath the trees in the garden, I thought about our brutal 9b heat to soon arrive. I gave myself a quick pinch to change my thoughts. Our winter, our spring, and our early summer were inspiring. Winter rain arrived on cue as needed, sun shone many days, and the dreaded freeze stayed away. Our gardens exploded with growth, and garden plans were productive. The PPC garden sales were successful, grants for needy gardens and gardeners were awarded, the amazing Gardener's Market was sooo enjoyed AND many new members decided to join the ranks of our Perennial Plant Club. How great it is to belong to such a happy and successful group. Dedicated members work hard to make our club joyous and successful. A new board member said "It is so wonderful to find such a nice group of people getting along so well and enjoying their garden adventures." She was right.

I have changed many of my garden plans, memberships, hobbies, and other activities. Thoughts about the garden have changed. Long retired but still with responsibilities, I want to do more camping, reading, garden planning, and garden and nursery visits. First thoughts: Native plants are becoming popular and many gardeners believe they are easier than our hybridized plants. Not so for me. I have unwelcome natives in my garden and instead of my ruling them, they rule me. My mini rose garden is now a forest of native violets, native strawberries and the ever beautiful columbines. I realize that with more weeding and working, I could eradicate many, but that just does not fit in with my plans. Employing help would work, but the lottery just will not listen. Roses have always been number one in my garden and will continue. Now, I am an Emeritus from judging their

lovely blooms. I shall concentrate on the roses of yesteryear or my beloved 'English' (Austin) roses. Easy, Peasy that is the name of my game. The beauty of the Hybrid Tea, the potted mini roses are now on the garden 'backburners.' Perennials that grow large and easy will be persuaded to share our garden space. More shrubs perhaps. More groundcovers. Cover the dirt (soil) that's what I say.

I do have a garden "helper." My spouse of almost 60 years loves to 'water' (never enough) so I cheat behind his back. He doesn't mind digging holes BUT never follows trimming instructions. This year a ten-year-old (or more) dogwood bit the dust. "Please cut down that dead tree" I said. (a few times). Off to the nursery I go to get my walkaround exercise (keeping the credit card in the pocket of course). Arriving home a shock awaited. The tree that had died was gone BUT so was the beloved dogwood. Cut down in error. Credit card in hand (his) another young dogwood has arrived and I love it. Some 'bad' garden adventures turn into 'good' ones.

Time for tea (Hibiscus) for my afternoon treat and a stroll around the garden to imagine and plan. My thoughts keep drifting toward more vegetables (currently only tomatoes). Maybe that's the next garden adventure. I fancy some fresh peas to be eaten while strolling around. No more herbs (the snails know when I am going to need them and make short work of them). Maybe potatoes? onions? We shall see. Enjoy your gardening days, refresh your spirit with its scent, awaken your eyes to it's beauty, and look forward to our meetings with our great speakers who do their best to keep us on track. Happy gardening.....Barbara.



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SPPC Newsletter
2743 San Luis Court
Sacramento, CA 95818

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CHERYL McDONALD