

WESTERN HORT

January 2025 | PO Box 166, Mountain View, CA 94042 | www.westernhort.org

JANUARY 2025 MEETING

January 8th, 7:30pm

The January meeting will be an in-person meeting. Meetings are free for members, non-member attendees are \$10.00. The meeting room officially opens to members and the public at 7pm but if you can arrive by 6:30 pm to help with set-up, your assistance would be greatly appreciated. Masks are recommended but optional. See page 7 of this newsletter for information about joining the Western Horticultural Society.

SPEAKER: HADLEY DYNAK

TOPIC: WESTERN HILLS GARDEN - PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Learn about the history of the famed Western Hills Garden and what is planned for its future. Founded in 1959, the garden is located on three acres in Occidental, CA and includes a critically important collection of rare plants and trees from around the world. It was transformed from pastureland and redwoods into an incredible example of cultivated biodiversity by Lester Hawkins and Marshall Olbrich. Over their 30+ year tenure they became experts in garden design and botany and inspired new ways of thinking about horticulture on the West Coast. More recent owners made critical improvements that extended WHG's legacy. In September 2021, Hadley Dynak and Kent Strader purchased the garden and are running it as a nonprofit for the first time in its history. The garden's mission is to link people, plants and place with possibility. Hadley will share stories about Lester and Marshall and their collection, discuss current horticultural highlights, and provide insights into future plans to reclaim its reputation as a treasured destination for locals and visitors. A sanctuary to wonder, wander and discover.



Hadley Dynak works with nonprofits and social justice causes to express their vision, raise funds for impact and join up with one another to build momentum. She partners with artists and activists to connect people to issues and to drive change. In September 2021, she and her husband Kent Strader purchased Western Hills Garden in Occidental, CA, a 65 year-old property with a significant history in the horticultural world. They are committed to preserving its legacy and sharing it with the community. Hadley manages garden operations, visitor services, programming, partnerships and communications. She is thrilled to recently hire a Horticultural Manager to care for the garden and will continue to spend time weeding and pruning – her favorite pastimes. She also co-authored a book, released by Countryman Press in March 2023, called *It's a Good Day to Change the World*.

There will be a speakers dinner this month

Meet the speaker and enjoy a wonderful meal at Chef Chu's before the meeting. If you would like to join us, please email Western Hort member Carol Dahout at: caroldahout@yahoo.com by the Monday before the meeting so we can make a reservation for the appropriate attendance. Dinner for January will start at 5:00pm. Chef Chu's is located at 1067 N. San Antonio Road, Los Altos.

CO-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Thank you for attending the WHS potluck if you were able to. The victuals and conversation were scrumptious and scintillating, respectively. Gratitude to Pam Noyer as our welcomer, Eva Huala and Jim Salyards for arranging the gift offerings, Judy Wong for the tribute to Katie Wong (our newest Founder honoree), Lyn Nesbitt's husband Dale for the expert piano jazz renderings and Ursula Haschke for getting the word out. Your board would love to hear feedback to help make 2026's celebration all that it should be; for example, that a note to ladle the mulled cider from the stove should have been placed on the non-heated drinks table.

January is the designated month for Western Hort's business meeting, the 'annual general meeting', at which members vote on new board directors, hear the Society's financial status, vote on gifts and scholarships over \$250, and vote on adjustments to the bylaws. We covered some of these items a few months ago, but will review them to keep ourselves aligned with our stated schedule.

Applause and hope for a Grand New Year! Fallen leaves, bare branches but so many buds!!

~ Grace Tsang & Meri-Beth Bird

DECEMBER POTLUCK FUN



Western Horticultural Society wishes one and all the very best of New Years!



UPCOMING MEETINGS

February 12th – Jim Salyards, *A Garden Lover's Tour of English Gardens and the Many Lessons Learned*

March 12th – Lisa and Kathleen Putnam, *Preventative Medicine for your Summer Veggie Garden*

April 9th – Michael Uhler, *Plants of California's Sierra Nevada*

May 14th – Movie and vendor night, *The Gardener, Frank Cabot's Les Quatre Vents*

2024 FOUNDERS AWARD



Our 2024 Western Horticultural Society Founders' Awardee, Katie Wong.

Our Founders' family shares that our 2024 awardee is the only plant-a-holic in her family! None of them, parents nor siblings share a passion or skill with plants. One states that she has a "Black Thumb" as opposed to our awardee's "Green Thumb".

This founder was born overseas in a region of rivers and caves. Due to political wind changes, the family moved to a number of countries in Asia. In the 1960's, our awardee came to the eastern US and earned degrees in History and later in Business Administration. In the late 1970's, this individual returned to California.

A retail floral shop and a business that services plants in business offices are some of the areas that our founder has pursued. Current interests in the medicinal and healthful benefits of plants finds our Founder educating the public as well as propagating and selling unusual/medicinal plants at Prusch Park plant sales and as well from her home. A friend shares that it is like going to a "candy store" to see the variety and rarities; there are plants "on the ceiling, on the floor and in every nook and corner"!

Our founder is well-known in plant circles; serving as an officer and editor for The California Rare Fruit Growers, active in the Orchid Society and Santa Clara County Master Gardeners. She is known to attend Bonsai events!

Judy Wong & Katie Wong One of her colleagues describes this individual as "super-friendly, also unassuming and very generous with her plants and knowledge".

Western Horticultural Society has been the beneficiary of this awardee's generosity not only in plants and knowledge but she served 10 years on the board from 2008-2019, volunteered to help at the San Francisco Flower & Garden Show, co-organized the plant discussion at our general meetings, shared tastings from an extensive edible plant collection, organized the speaker dinners and our WHS holiday dinners have been memorable for her volunteering to roast a moist and succulent turkey as a centerpiece of the potluck. In May 2015, our awardee spoke to our membership with a talk titled *Upgrade Your Garden—Download Rare Fruits*.

I want you to know this individual is someone you can depend upon! At one of the holiday potlucks, we were awaiting the arrival of the turkey and she finally rushed in with the centerpiece. I later learned a large semi had changed lanes and not seen her little Prius. There were circular whorls in the door where the "spikes" of the truck's wheel had gouged the driver side door. I don't know how she had the presence of mind to get any information and get back into the car and drive again to deliver the turkey!

When not nurturing her extensive and "all favorite" plant collection, our awardee likes to play Mahjong and spend time with her husband, friends and family.

~ Judy Wong



Previous Founder Award Recipients

28 YEARS AGO

On January 8, 1997, Western Hort met to hear Scott Loosley talk about *Gamble Garden*. Working now with the Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County, Scott was the founding horticulturist at Gamble Garden, working with volunteers to renovate the historic property.

President Ed Carman sent out a request for help with the upcoming Landscape Garden Show to be held in April, with the theme *Gardens of the Silver Screen*. “Designs and ideas, inspirations and help, desperately needed!!!! Call Ed and let’s get started!!!!”

I was intrigued to see a note that John Hammerschmidt was looking for a greenhouse. (John, did anyone have one to offer? – NLS)

Elizabeth Garbett, as usual, wrote the plants notes, but she thanked “Mary Kaye for taking the notes on the plant display offerings for me when I was unable to attend the meeting”.

Sherry Austin brought a blooming pot of *Cyrtanthus mackenii*, “an evergreen bulbous perennial from South Africa, where it is called the Ifafa lily”. The species blooms are white or pale yellow, but red and orange hybrids are available, Sherry’s plant had coral-colored flowers. There was a discussion concerning repotting and blooms, the consensus was that the plant blooms better when crowded.

“Sherry found her *Viburnum tinus* ‘Variegatum’ at the Berkeley Hort Nursery. This is a useful evergreen shrub...with pale yellow on green (leaves)...flowers open white from pink buds...adaptable and easy to grow but it is not immune to pests.”

Lastly, Sherry showed *Abelia grandiflora* ‘Confetti’, “a brand new and very exciting cultivar of this familiar shrub, that is not only dwarf but also variegated”. “The white on green variegated leaves are tiny...” and grow on branches about 2’ tall and 3-4’ wide. Sherry got it at Harlequin Nursery in Walnut Creek.

Faith Duhring shared a strawberry pot of *Lewisia cotyledon*, which “demands perfect drainage. The many-petalled flowers are exquisite in white, pink, pale yellow and candy-striped. They are quite easy to raise from seed and the plants seem to flourish in youth but get more fussy and cantankerous with age.”

“Judy Wong grew her *Cestrum elegans* ‘Smithii’ from a cutting brought to the display table last year by John Hammerschmidt. This is a tall, somewhat rangy, evergreen shrub...with pink flowers borne in clusters in the axils of the leaves. Some years this shrub seems never to go out of bloom.”

“Lyn Dearborn brought two orchids to the meeting.” A beautiful, fragrant cymbidium, large (5 ½”) flowers “in chartreuse and yellow, the creamy yellow lip spotted with dark red and the sepals and petals dusted with cinnamon near the throat”.

The second orchid was similar to the kind they call dancing dolls, with large, ruffled flowers in dark red, bright yellow and red-brown with yellow bars. It was a mystery plant that “turned out to be a hybrid between *Odontonia* ‘Rustic Bridge’ x *O.* ‘Hot Lips’ x *Odontocidium crowborough* ‘Spice Islands’.” (Whew, that sounds like crosses only an orchid hybridizer could keep track of! – NLS)

~ Nancy Schramm

Plant Share at the meeting!

Look around your garden and bring us a sample of what you love most. Share it with the membership! Don’t be shy. Even if you think the plant you love most is too common or not interesting enough it could still be something new or inspiring to someone else. Or, it may just be so lovely we will all enjoy just looking at it. Have a mystery plant that you want ID’d? Bring it, share it, let us all enjoy it. Thank you for sharing. Editor

HORTICULTURAL HAPPENINGS

Checkout other ongoing events, Plant Sales, Talks and Workshops at the Master Gardener website:
<https://mgsantaclara.ucanr.edu/events-calendar/>

Want to keep up on horticultural events and exchange ideas with other members?? Join our online forum at:
<https://groups.io/g/WHSmembers>.

Cal Hort Meeting, January 20th at 6:30 pm. This is an in-person meeting at the SF County Fair building on Ninth Avenue at Lincoln Way in Golden Gate Park. Join them for *The Art and Philosophy of the Garden with Ethan Fenner*, Museum Scientist, horticulturist and author. Ethan joined the UC Botanical Garden at Berkeley staff as Museum Scientist and Horticulturist for the Southern African Collection and Cycad and Palm Collections in 2019. He is also co-author with his father of *The Art and Philosophy of the Garden*, published this year, and his presentation will cover major topics addressed in the book, including garden definition, comparisons of gardens to other art forms, whether a garden can be a work of art, what it means to interpret a garden, and contextual matters relevant to garden appreciation.

Friends of the Regional Parks Botanic Garden. Check out the interesting offerings from RPBC with the first one on January 4th at 10:30 am. This lecture by Carol Bornstein will provide an overview of the California native plant cultivars she has selected and/ or been involved with over the course of her career. It will be via ZOOM only. Go to: <https://nativeplants.org/events-and-classes/events> for more information on these events.

Strolling around the internet

“Murder hornets” wiped out in North America in rare victory

The world’s largest hornet, native to Asia, had arrived mysteriously in 2019, but intense eradication efforts prevented the species from spreading.

Read in National Geographic: <https://apple.news/AYRvOTIy1QNioIGa9C9856w>

Officers and Board Members:

Co-Presidents: Grace Tsang & Meri-Beth Bird

Vice President: **Open Position**

Secretary : Jennifer Dungan

Corresponding Secretary: **Open Position**

Treasurer: Eva Huala

Other Board Members: Jim Salyards, Carol Dahout
(More board members welcomed and needed)

Volunteer Committees and Responsibilities:

Plant Sale Table: Carol Dahout

Email and website maintenance: Ursula Haschke

Membership: Ursula Haschke

Publicity and Outreach: Grace Tsang

Meeting Tech: Grace Tsang, Jennifer Doniach,

Janet Hoffmann & John Hammerschmidt

Welcome Table: Pam Noyer

Speaker Program Committee: Leslie Dean (chair),
Nancy Schramm, Judy Wong, Glenda Jones, Eva Huala &
Meri-Beth Bird

Newsletter Editor: Kathy Anberg

Newsletter Contributors: Jennifer Dungan & Nancy
Schramm

Scholarships: Grace Tsang, Jennifer Doniach,
Meri-Beth Bird, & Janet Hoffmann

About Membership in Western Hort:

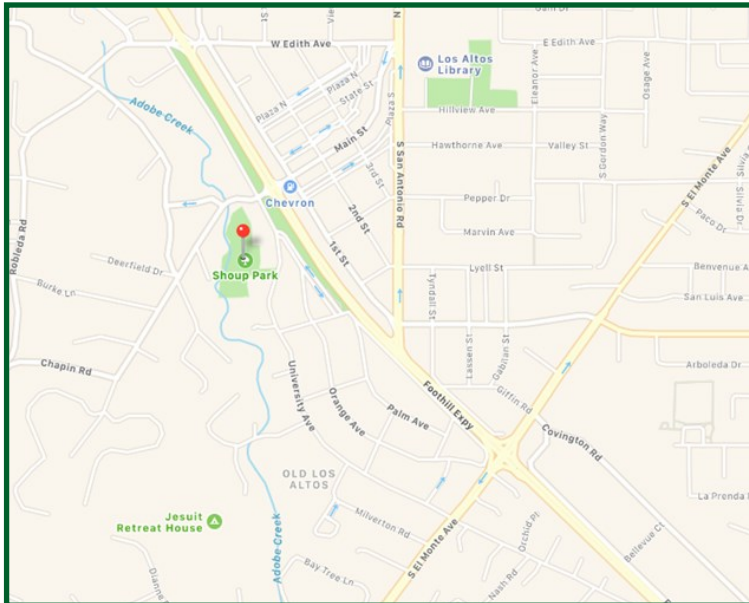
Membership Rates: A one-year membership (Sep-Aug) includes an e-mail copy of this newsletter and admittance to all of our monthly meetings. Regular membership is \$35, Family membership for two or more members at the same address is \$50, and a discounted rate for students is \$20. Please visit the Pac Hort page for more information or to join Pacific Horticulture Society, for whom we are now a sponsoring organization, go to: pacifichorticulture.org.

To join or renew visit our website at: <https://www.westernhort.org/membership> You may pay online with a credit card or print the form and mail with your check to the contact us address below.

To contact us: Please send email to: info@westernhort.org or snail mail to: PO Box 166, Mountain View, CA 94042



PO Box 166
Mountain View, CA 94042
First Class Mail
VISIT US AT WESTERNHORT.ORG



Meeting date & location : January 8th, 2025
In Person at Shoup Park Garden House, 400 University Ave., Los Altos
(Masks optional)
Meeting starts at 7:30 pm.
Would you like to **sponsor a lecture** or suggest a speaker for the WHS that is of particular interest to you?
It would be much appreciated!
Please call Leslie Dean at 650-966-8364.

Newsletter Submissions
The newsletter publishes on the first of the month. **Note: deadline for submission for the next newsletter is the 20th of January.** Submissions after this date will likely appear in the next month's newsletter. Send submissions to: Kjanberg@gmail.com or snail mail to Kathy Anberg, 1332 Peggy Ct. Campbell, CA 95008-6342