

WESTERN HORT

January 2022 | PO Box 166, Mountain View, CA 94042 | www.westernhort.org

JANUARY 2022 MEETING

January 12th, 7:30 in person and on Zoom via Internet

We will be meeting in-person at the Garden House in Shoup Park. All attendees will be asked to provide proof of vaccination and to wear masks while in the building. *The meeting room officially opens to members and the public at 7pm but if you can arrive by 6:30pm to help with set-up, your assistance would be greatly appreciated.* We will also be live-streaming the meeting via Zoom. The Zoom link will be sent out before the meeting for Western Hort and Cal Hort members only.

Meetings are free for members, non-member in-person attendees \$10. See page 8 of this newsletter for information about joining WHS.

Speaker: Del McComb

Topic: Growing Gorgeous Gardens from the Ground Up

As a life-long plantophile, Delmar McComb has grown a huge variety of plants from all over the globe. Cultivating such a range of species has engendered another passion for trying to understand the soil beneath our feet. This accessible and utilitarian talk will emphasize how to enhance and tailor your soils to maximize the health and beauty of your garden and container garden plants using readily available materials and methods. Whether you need to make your Arctostaphylos and Zephyranthes or your artichokes and zucchinis happier, there will be many practical tips and insights given to grow abundant foliage, flowers and fruit, while continually regenerating your soil fertility and structure appropriate to your garden denizens.



Delmar McComb is co-owner, with his partner Carin Fortin, of Blossom's Farm in Corralitos, California, where they grow and process approximately 100 varieties of medicinal herbs which are made into health and beauty care products. He was director of horticulture for Suncrest Nurseries Inc. in Watsonville, California for 5 years where he introduced more ecological growing practices. He designed soil mix recipes and started in-house production of these recipes that were used for the production of the diverse variety of plants grown there. Prior to this, Delmar gardened professionally for nearly 30 years serving as horticulturist, consultant and designer of many California public and private gardens. He was the owner of Checkerspot Nursery, a wholesale grower of perennials and shrubs from 1994-2002. And as an operatic tenor, Delmar has sung many leading roles with opera companies around the state.

January Annual Meeting & Board Election

Our January meeting is our official Annual Meeting for the year. This is the meeting where all members are asked to vote to confirm the board for the upcoming year. This year we have current board members Grace Tsang and Carol Moholt who have completed one full two-year term on the board as well as serving additional months to fill in board vacancies in 2019. Jennifer Doniach and Leslie Dean have served two full two-year terms. Carol will be stepping down since she relocated to New Mexico over a year ago but has gracefully continued to join our board meetings on Zoom. Grace, Jennifer and Leslie have agreed to step up for re-election for another two-year term starting in 2022. Current board members, Janet Hoffmann, Michael Craib, Carol Daholt and Rosalie Shepherd will be completing the second year of their current terms in 2022. If anyone wishes to join the board or has board nominations, this is a good time to speak up. Please join us for this important part of our January meeting.

Register now and submit your questions for the February Meeting with Andy and Charlie!

Our February program is likely to be a popular forum discussion between Andy Mariani and Charlie Olson, with moderator Robin Chapman. To monitor in-person attendance we are asking Western Hort and Cal Hort members to register on Eventbrite if they wish to attend the meeting. Depending on member response we will open in-person registration to other organizations and individuals in late January. Please register using the Eventbrite link in our January newsletter email. If you do not get the email send a message to info@westernhort.org for the link.

This meeting will be a question and answer format. Members are asked to submit their questions for the speakers at least a week before the meeting to: info@westernhort.org. Put your thinking caps on and get those questions asked and answered! February 1st, 2022 is the deadline, so get your questions in this month!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Thank you to all of the intrepid members who turned out for our in-person meeting in December! It was wonderful to see and talk to other members in person again. Thanks also to all who donated to the plant and propagule exchange. Many people went home with a few plants to try in their gardens. It went well enough that I think that we will try it again for January. It is still a good time of year for getting new plants into our gardens before our rains peter out.

I also want to say thank you to those who tuned in on Zoom and forbore our sound and technical difficulties. I think that we had things sorted out well on the sound by the time that Lynn and David started their presentation. I also think that we have the camera problem sorted out so that in January you will be able to see the speakers and view the plants that have been brought in to share. There are photos of most of those that you may have missed in the Plant Share write-up in this newsletter. Feel free to reach out with any feedback or concerns at info@westernhort.org.

This will be my last message as your president. In January I will be passing the baton on to Grace Tsang. I will stay on the board through the end of the year to complete my 6-year term. Hopefully a few of you will step up in the coming months to help. We are still looking for someone to become co-president along with Grace. We could also use fresh faces and ideas on the board.

It takes all of us working together to keep an organization like ours going and we are most appreciative of the members who step forward to help on a regular basis. I particularly want to thank my fellow board members:

Michael Craib, who has brought his wisdom and experience from many years in the nursery industry as well as from serving on both our board and the Cal Hort board in the past.

Carol Dahout who has set up and monitored all of the Zoom meetings to keep them running smoothly and shared her experience from a leadership role in the Iris Society.

Leslie Dean, our Secretary, who keeps meticulous records of all our board meetings and brought me up to speed on so many society protocols and procedures during my term office. She also stepped in along with her husband, John, to help us set up Zoom when we started virtual meetings in 2020 and continues to store our sound equipment and set it up for our in-person meetings.

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Jennifer Doniach, our Treasurer, who in addition to the normal record keeping functions, worked through all of the paperwork and procedures for the Tiede Trust donations and is looking into ways to invest our new funds so that they will continue to keep us sustainable going forward. She and Grace also got our horticulture scholarship program going again this year.

Carol Moholt, who served as our Pac Hort liaison for many years and shared her experience from that organization and many years in horticulture. She worked through the frustrating process to set up our Eventbrite registration so that we can keep track of attendees at our meetings when we need to do so. (Be sure to use the information in this newsletter to register on Eventbrite for our February meeting.)

Rosalie Shepherd, our Corresponding Secretary, who has conscientiously taken care of our correspondence and added her wisdom and past board experience to board decisions.

Grace Tsang, our Vice-president, who has maintained our media presence including transferring all of the meeting recordings to Youtube so that members can view them after the meetings. She has been a valuable liaison to Foothill College and worked with Jennifer to get our scholarship program going again. She also has lent us valuable perspective from her roles in the Los Altos Garden Club. And a big thank you to Grace for agreeing to step into the shoes of president.

Also a big thanks to Carrie Parker for continuing as the Membership Chair even after completing her own term as president. (We really need a better term than Chair because Membership has become a committee of one.)

Thanks to Kathy Anberg for patiently soliciting the articles and photos and putting together our newsletter every month. This fall, Kathy has also taken on the task of mailing the paper copies to members who still want them.

Thanks to Ana Muir for writing up the plant notes for every meeting for at least the past 6 years.

Thanks to Ursula Haschke who has been maintaining our website and creating and sending email reminders for the past 2 years. Also, a big thank you to Ursula for agreeing to take on the Membership role from Carrie this fall.

Thanks to Nancy Schramm, Judy Wong and Glenda Jones who have, along with Leslie, arranged for all of the amazing speakers for our meetings. Also to Nancy and Judy for their consistent contributions to our plant shares. And to Nancy for her monthly contributions to our newsletter.

And thank you to all of you whom I have not mentioned but have stepped up in your own way to help out over the past 3 years of my term as president. This has been a really long final message but I thought that it was worthwhile to point out these people and a few of their contributions that have been so important to keeping Western Hort going as the vibrant organization that we are.

I look forward to seeing all of you in the coming year in person when I have less on my plate and can relax more at our meetings.

~ Janet Hoffmann

Plant Share

You will once again have the opportunity to bring actual plants or cuttings to the January meeting for sharing information with others in attendance and on Zoom. You may also submit photos to share but you will need to be in attendance to share the information about your photos or send information about the plant's geographical location, exposure, soil, water and other growth requirements. Please send photos to info@westernhort.org by Monday, January 10th. If you have plants that you would like help identifying or want some cultural advice on, feel free to submit these or bring them in as well.

PLANT EXCHANGE TABLE

It appeared that our December plant exchange table was popular enough to continue at least for January. It is an added incentive for those of you who are hesitant about attending out meetings. If you have extra plants that have been taking up too much space on your patio or greenhouse or wish to share cuttings, seeds, bulbs or other propagules of plants that you like, please bring them to the January meeting to share with others.

28 YEARS AGO

On Wednesday, January 12, 1994, Western Hort met to hear our own Ted Kipping give one of his many wonderful presentations, this one on *Collector's Gardens*.

Since January is our annual business meeting, the Board of Directors' nominating committee submitted a slate of two new members, a replacement member and three members for their second three-year term. The entire membership had the opportunity to vote their approval at the January meeting. In addition, a financial report was given.

Announcements included an offer of free plants (*Rosa* 'Darlow's Enigma), an offer to trade specimen size uncommon (mostly) succulents (*Euphorbia*, *Calibanus*, *Hoya*, *Gasteria*, *Haworthia*, *Monadenium*, *Jathropha*, *Sanseveria*, *Senecio*, *Xeryosciosis*) for unusual plants or trees. (I sure would have liked to see those in person! – NLS) In addition, succulents left over from a planting that WHS did for Gamble Garden were going to be available at the (February) meeting for 50¢ each.

Were you looking for a job in 1994? "Yerba Buena is looking for a full time employee (nursery worker, horticulturist, plant slave) in native plants."

Plant notes began with thanks to the renowned Albert Wilson: "The wonderful thing about Albert Wilson's contributions to the plant table is the historical dimension he always adds. His flowering apricot, *Prunus mume*, recalls the eminent nurseryman of the thirties and forties, Walter B. Clarke." When Albert spoke about citrus, he told how "Don Dillon of Four Winds Growers in Mission San Jose realized early on the need for dwarf trees that would fit into the suburban landscape." Albert also brought in and praised the adaptability and attractive pest-free *Nandina domestica* (heavenly bamboo). Plant note author Elizabeth Garbett described several lovely cultivars, but had scant praise for "... 'Nana Compacta', a squat abomination, with blotchy red, misshapen leaves..."

According to Garbett, "Betsy Clebsch's opulent bouquet of roses, heuchera, agastache, penstemon, achillea, verbena and much more reminds us again of the importance of microclimates. None of those plants are blooming in my garden where the night temperature has been at the freezing mark for a month or more. But Betsy's garden is on the ocean side of Skyline Blvd and has not had a killing frost this winter." (As I write this early on December 18th, I can look outside at white fields and solid ice on the birdbaths! – NLS)

And speaking of killing frosts, Bill Kurtz brought in a seed pan of blooming *Lachenalia reflexa*, his only specimens since he "...had his entire collection of these South African bulbous perennials wiped out by the notorious freeze of December, 1990."

"Brenda Butner brought three winter blooming manzanitas..." (*Arctostaphylos densiflorus* 'Sentinel', *A. manzanita* 'Dr. Hurd' and *A. refugioensis*) "...from Yerba Buena Nursery where you can not only buy them but can also see them as mature specimens in the botanic garden."

Dick Dunmire brought in *Chimonanthes praecox*. (This, to me, is one of the fragrances of Christmas. One of my dad's customers always brought a blooming branch of wintersweet to the nursery in early December, it would fill the greenhouse with a sweet scent. – NLS)

~Nancy Schramm

STROLLING AROUND THE INTERNET

Holiday Season brings poisonous plants into the home This is a good refresher article for everyone with pets or small children in the home. <https://ucanr.edu/blogs/blogcore/postdetail.cfm?postnum=51096>



DECEMBER SPEAKER NOTES

Our December speakers were our very own Lynn C and David E. Lynn and David are intrepid horticultural travelers visiting gardens in many parts of the world. They shared their incredible photos of some of their favorite gardens as well as travel tips.

They divided up their travels into a garden year with the best months to visit gardens in various countries. These included January and February for lush landscapes in New Zealand, March for Moorish gardens in Andalusia, April for spring bloom in Portugal, May for rhododendrons in North Wales and other U.K. gardens, June for Iris in Oregon, late August to September for harvest season in England, October for villas in Italy, November for fall color in Japan, the Huntington Garden in December, but always to California in July for stone fruits at home.



Their garden photos went from the stark regularity of the Alhambra to the lush opulence of Villa d'Este near Rome. They also spanned the range from natural Mediterranean gardens in Portugal to the carefully manicured temperate gardens of Japan. There were some surprises like the amazing large vegetables to be seen at English harvest festivals in the fall and harvested cork oaks in Portugal. All in all there was an amazing variety of beautiful gardens that they shared through their photographic skills.

Lynn and David shared some travel tips that they picked up along the way. According to Lynn the most important thing to pack is a good pair of rain-proof walking shoes. As their calendar indicates, timing your visits for the peak season for the plants that you want to see is of critical importance when touring gardens. They also emphasized traveling light and giving yourself some time to relax.

For those of you who missed their talk they shared some garden travel resources that you can check into yourself including: Monty Don's Around the World in 80 Gardens on [Youtube](#) and these books, *1001 Gardens You Must See Before You Die*, *Gardens of Europe* and *Gardens of Britain and Ireland*. Websites that they found helpful include [GardenVisit.com](#), [nationaltrust.org.uk](#) and [The Royal Oak Foundation](#) and [greatbritishgardens.co.uk](#). Their Portugal trip was a Mediterranean Garden International tour that they liked. Members present at the meeting also mentioned the Mediterranean Garden Society and Pacific Horticulture Society tours as being good.



~ Janet Hoffmann (Photos courtesy of Lynn C)

Upcoming Meetings

February 9th: Andy Mariani and Charlie Olson, longtime Santa Clara Valley orchardists, with Robin Chapman, author of *The Lost Orchards of Silicon Valley*, moderator, *Olson and Mariani: Farming in The Valley of Heart's Delight*

Remember to submit your questions for our February speakers prior to the meeting date to info@westernhort.org and register to attend the in-person meeting on Eventbrite.

March 9th: Kipp McMichael, web developer and passionate horticulturalist, Berkeley, CA, *Succulents at Large: Designing with Larger Succulents*

April 13th: Patricia Rain, Vanilla Queen, author, educator, culinary historian and owner of *The Vanilla Company*, Santa Cruz, CA, *Vanilla: The Botany, The History, and The Culture*

May 11th: Dave Muffly, arborist, horticulturalist and ecological engineer, Santa Barbara, CA, *Resiliency: Choosing Trees for Climate Adaptation in Coastal California*

DECEMBER PLANT SHARE

Leslie Dean from Mountain View presented:



Schlumbergera truncata (Thanksgiving Cactus) - This evergreen epiphyte from SE Brazil grows in part sun to part shade. Leslie has it growing on her porch in part shade. It has pinkish red blossoms and is blooming now. Leslie showed the differences between the Holiday Cacti: Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter Cactus. The first having more pointed tips on the top on the leaf and its edges than the Christmas Cactus which also blooms during this time. The Easter Cactus blooms in the spring and has more rounded edges.



Nancy Schramm from Gilroy presented photos from her visit to 2 friends private gardens in WA:

Gig Harbor, WA

Nancy thought this metal art fern sculpture was perfect since it will never die and it contrasted nicely with the bright green plants surrounding it.



Metal fern sculpture



Nancy likes this Fiddlehead sculpture



Aspidistra elatior

Aspidistra elatior 'Milky Way' (Cast Iron Plant) - It grows in part shade to full shade in well-drained soil and gets to be 18" tall and wide. The dark green leaves have white spots. It brightens up dark shady places. As a child Nancy remembers when a government plant inspector came to visit her dad's nursery. In those days the inspector would spend several days looking at plants for diseases and pests. That time, her dad came in laughing and said the inspector had given him a "Clean bill" but that there was this one plant that had these spots on it but he (the inspector) couldn't figure out what the bug was. It was a variegated *Aspidistra*.



Bainbridge Island, WA

Sorbus hupehensis 'Pink Pagoda' (Pink Pagoda Mountain Ash) - This deciduous tree, native to China grows in full sun to part shade in well-drained soil with regular water. It gets to be 25' tall x 20' wide and has very greenish-gray pinnately compound alternating foliage. It was raining when Nancy visited and the leaves really glistened. Small white flowers start appearing in spring through summer which later become pink fruit. The tree Nancy saw was covered with fruit. If any of the bitter fruit is not eaten by the birds, it can be used to make jelly.

Cyclamen species unknown - The silver foliage just glowed in the afternoon, almost like it had a light on it. The leaves are smooth.



Judy Wong from Menlo Park presented:



Iris unguicularis (Algerian Iris) - This bulb native to Africa grows in full sun to part shade in well drained soil. It can get to be 18" tall and wide. Judy got it from member Elizabeth Garbett (now passed away). Purple flowers start appearing in early winter. It is very floriferous this year. Judy often gets flowers but usually not as prolific as this year. It is always a nice surprise for Judy when the flowers appear.



Primula vulgaris Belarina Pink Ice (Primrose) - Judy went to visit member Lorena Gorsche (now living in Lake Oswego, OR) who gave her this beautiful plant. This perennial grows in full sun to part shade in well drained soil. It needs regular water. It is compact, only growing to 7" tall x 10" wide. Judy has hers growing outside in a pot. It has beautiful rosy pink double flowers which are supposed to be fragrant but Judy hasn't noticed any fragrance. Theoretically it should start blooming in early to mid-spring, but it is blooming now. It is available from Bluestone Perennials in several colors.



Cuphea 'Blackberry Sparkler' (Cigar Plant) - This perennial grows in full sun to part shade in well-drained soil and gets to be 24" tall x 36" wide. Rosy white tubular blossoms with black magenta tips appear in late winter blooms almost year round. Hummingbirds, butterflies and bees love it. It is cold tolerant to 15 degrees.



Flower picture of Blackberry Sparkler from Planthaven.com

Katie Wong from San Jose presented:

Tetrastigma vainierianum (Chestnut Vine, Lizard Plant) - Katie tore a big chunk of this tropical evergreen Chestnut Vine from her yard which is growing in the shade. It grows very well as a houseplant and she recommends planting this monster if you want oxygen inside the house because it grows 15 feet a year. It has huge leaves that can get to be 18" across and the tendrils cling to everything. It has never flowered for her. It is easy to grow from cuttings and is frost tolerant to 35 degrees.



If you are curious as to what the flower might look like on this rampant vine here is a picture from the plants.ces.ncsu.edu website. (North Carolina Cooperative Extension)

~Ana Muir

HORTICULTURAL HAPPENINGS

California Horticultural Society- Monday, January 17th at 6:30 pm via Zoom, *Applying Site Specific Principles to California Gardens* with Cristóbal Elgueta, Building on his well received presentation last September, Cristóbal will be back to elaborate on how the natural principles he presented then can be applied anywhere you garden. He will take us on a virtual tour of gardens throughout Chile which demonstrate the application of natural principles in making gardens with new plant communities that mix horticulture, ecology, landscaping, architecture and conservation, along with his philosophy on garden design: to satisfy the senses all through the year, aesthetically, ecologically and functionally.

California Horticulture Society annual Seed Exchange. The list of seeds will be available in January.

<https://calhortsociety.org/about/annual-seed-exchange/>

More information about California Horticultural Society and their programs at <https://calhortsociety.org/>.

Everett “Eddie” M. Souza Park and Garden Tour, Wednesday, January 19, 2022 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm 2380 Monroe Street, Santa Clara, CA. If you were inspired by last month’s speakers here is a quick and close adventure you might like to try. The public is invited to visit the Everett N. Eddie Souza Park & Community Garden and tour it's many attractions. Inside the garden we have various demonstration areas that will inspire the gardener and environmental steward in each of you. Take a stroll and discover on your own, or ask city staff to show you around. You can even drop off your old pumpkin from Halloween! Please be prepared to sign in, bring your masks, and gloves (if you want to put your hands in the soil). Some garden attractions you can look forward to see are: Home Composting Demo Area Cold frame/Green House boxes Honey bee and Native bee housing demo Spring Bulb bed is in full bloom 9 citrus trees from around the world CA Native and drought tolerant Demo bed Mini Orchard Let us know you are coming by RSVP'ing on Eventbrite .

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/garden-tours-at-eddie-souza-park-pumpkin-drop-off-tickets-196148343977>

San Francisco Flower and Garden Show will be held at the Alameda County Fairgrounds in Pleasanton, CA this year. The dates are April 7-10th and early bird tickets are \$20.00 / day or a 4-day ticket for \$45.00. Workshops are \$15.00. There will be over 100 seminars which are free with your admission ticket.

<https://sfgardenshow.com/visitors/tickets>

Officers and Board Members:

President: Janet Hoffmann

Vice President: Grace Tsang

Secretary : Leslie Dean

Corresponding Secretary: Rosalie Shepherd

Treasurer: Jennifer Doniach

Other Board Members: Carol Dahout, Carol Moholt, Michael Craib

Volunteer Committees and Responsibilities:

Zoom Host: Carol Dahout

Email and website maintenance: Ursula Haschke

Publicity and Outreach: Grace Tsang

Membership: Ursula Haschke

Speaker Program Committee: Leslie Dean (chair), Nancy Schramm, Judy Wong, Glenda Jones

Newsletter Editor: Kathy Anberg

Scholarships: Grace Tsang and Jennifer Doniach

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. To receive a print copy of this newsletter by mail add \$10 to the membership fee listed above. 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 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

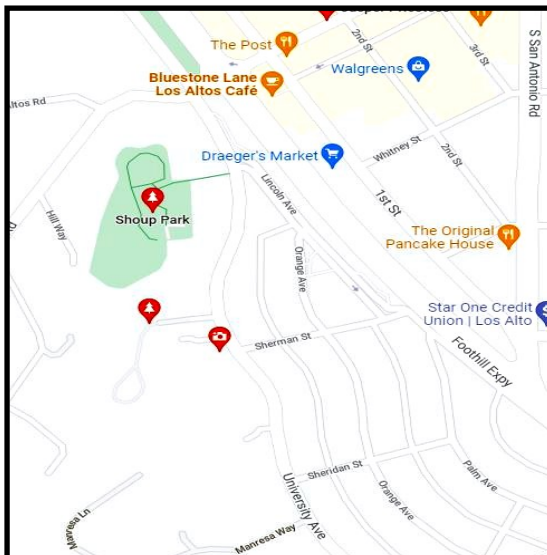
*Happy New Year to all our members! May
your gardens grow the way you want them to
this coming year!*



*Best wishes from Western Horticultural
Society!*



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



Meeting location : January 12th Shoup Park
Garden House, 400 University Ave., Los Altos

Zoom Meeting via internet

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 22nd 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