



November 2012 Speaker

Wednesday, November 14, 7:30 p.m.

John Valenzuela, Chairman of the Golden Gate Chapter, California Rare Fruit Growers

“Fruit Stories: A Cultural History of Some Northern California Fruit Varieties, People and Places.”

After working in Hawaii for fifteen years, John is now Chairperson of the Golden Gate Chapter of the California Rare Fruit Growers. He now lives and grows in northeastern Marin County, where he is diversifying a food forest garden with over 150 varieties of fruit on multi-grafted trees, along with a small nursery, while practicing photography, developing educational materials, freelance consulting, team teaching, planting and maintaining gardens.

John will explore our local indigenous fruits, Old World fruits of the Spanish Mission era, fruits introduced by early pioneers, and others developed by local breeders.



Many personal heirloom stories will encourage you to start preserving and enjoying some of these historic varieties in your own backyard. Check out John’s blog at

cornucopiafoodforest.wordpress.com.

MEETING LOCATION Christ Episcopal Church, Parish Hall, 1040 Border Road, Los Altos. Doors open at 7 p.m. and meetings begin at 7:30.

You are invited to join our November speaker, John Valenzuela, for **dinner on November 14** at 5:30 p.m. at Chef Chu’s, 1067 N. San Antonio Road, Los Altos. Please contact Marianne Mueller to confirm: mrm@sonic.net or 650-326-2029.

Would you like to **sponsor a lecture** for the WHS that is of particular interest to you? It would be much appreciated! Please call Pat Knight at 650-941-6136.

Annual Holiday Party

December 12 ~ 6:30 p.m.

Christ Episcopal Church, 1040 Border Rd., Los Altos

All members are invited for a celebration of good company, good food, and a great after-dinner speaker, **Nancy Norris on “Miniature Gardens.”**



Bring a favorite main dish, salad, or dessert to serve eight, and plates and utensils. The WHS Board will provide appetizers, wine and beverages, and cups and glasses. We will collect canned and packaged food for the Second Harvest Food Bank.

We will be honoring one of our members with the Founders Award. Past recipients include Dick Dunmire, John Coulter, Barbara Worl, Sally Casey, Elizabeth Garbett, Betsy Clebsch, Barrie and Carol Coate, and William Kurtz.

Winter is an etching
Spring a watercolor
Summer an oil painting
And autumn a mosaic of them all.
~Stanley Horowitz

falling leaves
hide the path
so quietly
~John Bailey

Western Hort News

Join the Board

Dear Members— We hope you have enjoyed our presentations and other activities. We need your help to keep this happening! Come join the Board team—find new speakers and members, grow plants, handle a mic, be a greeter, write Thank You notes, and just plain help keep us going.

Don't be shy; everyone brings his or her own perspective and input to the Western Horticultural Society Board, and yours is valuable.

The Board meets every other month for a two-hour meeting at a Board member's house. Contact Richard Tiede (rtiede@pacbell.net or 408-251-6618) or any other Board member listed on page 3 (contact info is in the WHS Roster). ~Richard Tiede, President

Raffle Table

Thanks to Annie's Annuals for donating plants for the raffle table last month. We also had many interesting plants from members. November's Raffle Table is brought to you by the Raffle Committee. Members are welcome to bring plants or gardening items. ~Roberta Barnes for the Raffle Committee

Defending Dinner

The October 2012 issue of Pacific Horticulture magazine features an article on protecting your garden from hungry deer. Innovative yet simple, the author's solution was to build "two wooden fences, five feet high, separated by a five-foot gap. The gap was hard-packed soil, as if it might have been used for walking or a dog run, but the caption made it clear that deer could not jump over those two five-foot fences, placed five feet apart. The combination of height and breadth was too difficult for them to attempt." Good luck to everyone blessed – or plagued – by deer!

Wanted: Your Short Articles for the Newsletter—or Photos

"Plant of the Month" ... a book review ... a description of a garden you visited, here in the Valley of Heart's Delight or on your travels ... ruminations on pruning ... a poem ... tips on propagating that tricky plant ... or a favorite photo of a plant in its seasonal glory ... Email submissions to Marianne Mueller, mrm@sonic.net, or mail to 333 Kingsley Ave., Palo Alto, 94301. ~Marianne Mueller, Editor, Western Hort News

28 Years Ago

On Monday November 12, 1984 WHS met to hear that "Dr. Robert Raabe of the Department of Plant Pathology, at the University of California at Berkeley, will be speaking about the effect of soil problems on plant growth. His educational background and experience make this a meeting you won't want to miss." Speaking personally, Dr. Raabe's column *Laboratory Report* was always the first thing I read completely through when I got my new *Pacific Horticulture* magazine in the mail!

There were several amusing bits in the plant notes: "The plant table ... was greatly enhanced by the many specimens brought by Janet Eldridge. Her admission that she is unable to resist the lure of a new and untried plant struck a responsive chord in many of us ..."; and "The small, ill-smelling flowers in October are of no decorative importance ..." (*Disanthus cercidifolius*); and lastly, "Mr. Kennedy warns that eating the unripe fruit (of *Carica quercifolia*—related to commercial papaya) will leave the tastebuds numb for several days." ~Nancy Schramm

Horticultural Calendar, November 2012

Pruning Shrubs to Maintain Natural Form and Beauty.

Saturday, November 3, 10-11 a.m., Master Gardener Palo Alto Demonstration Garden, 851 Center Drive, Palo Alto. Taught by Roberta Barnes, this workshop will cover how to keep your landscape shrubs shapely and in bounds by understanding the three basic ways to maintain them (pruning, thinning and shearing), and knowing when to prune. Pruning techniques will be demonstrated. Followed by tours of the edible and waterwise gardens.

Making a Wreath with Succulents.

Saturday, November 17, 1-3 p.m. Master Gardener Sunnyvale Teaching and Demonstration Garden, 433 Charles Street, Sunnyvale. Succulents are wonderful materials in wreaths, as well as beautiful additions to your garden. We will review the materials needed to create a wreath with these plants, and demonstrate how to put one together. Followed by tours of the edible and waterwise gardens.

October 2012 Speaker

When the words “Mexico” and “holiday” are first uttered, the mind often conjures up the usual images of sun, beach, margaritas, and mariachis. So what’s a field botanist’s holiday in Mexico all about? Well, Jeff Chemnick, Research Associate at Lotusland, Santa Barbara, explained through slides and prose in his presentation “Hither and Yon in Mexico.”

After a few minutes into his talk, Jeff came across as anything but the scholarly, stuffy botanist one might expect. In a lighthearted yet engaging style, Jeff took us on a trip to Oaxaca, showing us the wonderful diversity of plant and animal life this state has to offer. To be sure, Jeff’s field trip participants have fun, as witnessed by some slides of festivals and parties.

The state of Oaxaca’s diversity stems from its great geographical divides, with high mountains and deep canyons. From this, different climates emerge, and with them a fascinating mixture of plants, as our speaker’s slides attested. We were treated to a smorgasbord of Oaxacan delights, including echeverias, yuccas, agaves, palms, salvias, orchids, and cacti. Jeff has a penchant for palms (actually cycads and dioons), as evidenced by his slides and the specialty nursery he owns.

Quoting the San Marcos Growers website, “Jeff Chemnick's Nursery is by open by appointment only. It is located in a garden-like setting in the foothills of Santa Barbara. Jeff specializes in the cycad genera *Encephalartos* and *Dioon* as well as other plants of distinction. Here in the garden, you will have the opportunity to see mature cone-sized cycads, and discuss all manner of cycad horticulture as well as matters of general botanical interest and biogeography. Contact Jeff Chemnick at 805-965-0895.”



Encephalartos horridus, an unusual and rare cycad from South Africa. Read all about it: cycadsociety.org/horridus/horridus.html.

Photos: cycads-n-palms.com



At the conclusion of his presentation, Jeff gave us a strong desire to book the next tour to Oaxaca and see first hand all of the amazing beauty this region possesses. Until then, I guess I’ll have to wait and wonder. Come to think of it, a margarita sounds good right now. ~Mark McCabe

Western Horticultural Society Officers and Board Members

President: Richard Tiede

Vice President: Christine Bate

Recording Secretary: Mark McCabe

Treasurer: Daxin Liu

Other Board Members: Roberta Barnes, Liz Calhoun, Jon Craig, Abby Garner, Rosalie Shepherd, Steve Staiger, Judy Wong and Katie Wong.

To contact us, please send email to info@westernhort.org, or contact Chris Egan at 650-948-4614, or send mail to Western Horticulture Society, PO Box 60507, Palo Alto, CA, 94306.

About membership in Western Hort:

To join or renew, send your name, address, phone number and a check made out to “Western Horticultural Society” to PO Box 620673, Woodside, CA 94062-0673.

Membership Rates: A one-year membership (Sep-Aug) includes four issues of Pacific Horticulture magazine. Regular membership is \$35, Sustaining is \$45, Contributing is \$60 and Plant Lover is \$100+. We have also added a Family membership of \$50 for two or more members at the same address, and a Student rate of \$20.

Please visit our website at westernhort.org for a membership form.

Newsletter Submissions and Address Changes

Please send info for the December 2012 newsletter by November 18 to Marianne Mueller, mrm@sonic.net or 650-326-2029.

Please send address changes to grew@pacbell.net or 650-851-5162.

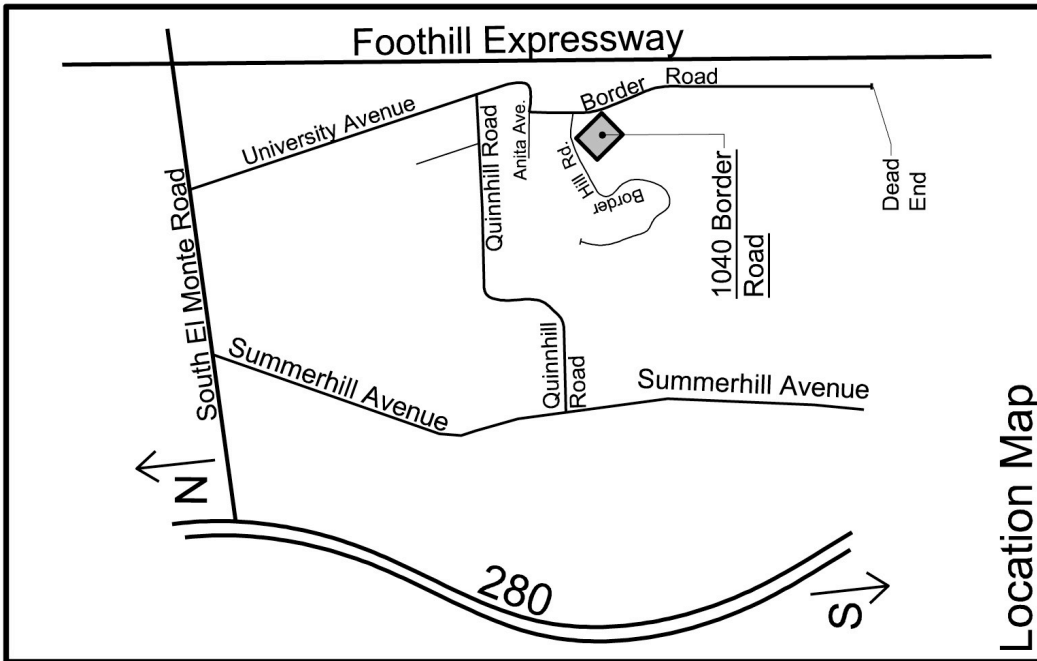
Don’t miss a great article about cycads, Lotusland, and Jeff Chemnick in the New York Times: nytimes.com/2003/08/17/magazine/the-cone-heads.html (or do an internet search for “nytimes chemnick cycads”)



PO Box 60507
Palo Alto, CA 94306

First Class Mail

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Location Map

Western Horticultural Society
Monthly Meetings
Christ Episcopal Church
Parish Hall
1040 Border Road, Los Altos