

## DECEMBER 2019 HOLIDAY PARTY

Wednesday, December 11th, Los Altos Youth Center, 1 N San Antonio Rd, Los Altos  
(Please arrive by 5:30 pm if you can help with set-up)

### Program for the evening:

6:00 Hors d'oeuvres and wine provided by WHS board

6:30 Potluck Dinner (Please bring dish to share if you wish to participate)

7:30 Speaker Jennifer Jewell, *The Earth in Her Hands: 75 Extraordinary Women Working in the World of Plants*

8:45 Social time

9:15 Clean-up (Please stay to help with this if you can.)

9:45 Close the doors

WHS will provide a turkey along with hors d'oeuvres, wine, sparkling cider and non-alcoholic beverages including coffee and tea. **Please bring a dish serving six to eight to share - side dish, salad, entrée, or a dessert. Please bring your own plate and eating utensils.**

*Share the holiday spirit, bring canned or dried food for donation to Second Harvest Food Bank.*



### Jennifer Jewell, *The Earth in Her Hands: 75 Extraordinary Women Working in the World of Plants*

Jennifer Jewell is the creator/ host of *Cultivating Place*, an award-winning public radio program & podcast on natural history and the human impulse to garden. Her first book, *The Earth In Her Hands, 75 Extraordinary Women Working in the World of Plants*, centering on women transforming horticulture around the world, is due out in early 2020 from Timber Press.

Focusing in a wholly unique way on how horticulture intersects with our every day world and on women whose work has enriched and expanded these intersections in the last 25 years, her book *The Earth in Her Hands: 75 Extraordinary Women Working in the World of*

*Plants* explores and celebrates how the plant world is improved by not only greater representation of women generally but also by diversity amongst those women. It chronicles how working in the world of plants is a more viable and creative career path for women than ever before and how the plant-work world is demonstrating greater social and environmental responsibility, in large part due to women's contributions. These profiles of women doing current and innovative work in all fields horticultural – botany, environmental science, landscape design and architecture, floriculture, agriculture, social justice, plant seeking and breeding, seed science, gardening, garden writing and photography, public garden administration, research, and public policy – often represent larger issues or shifts in our world. The work of these women illustrates how the many challenges of our world – environmental, economic, cultural/societal, individual – can and are being met through cultivating an interdependence with plants. The group of 75 includes representatives from the United States, England, Ireland, Wales, Canada, Australia, India and Japan. These paradigm-shifting women range beautifully across race, ethnicity, socio-economic and religious backgrounds, sexual orientation and age – in a way that transcends preconceived notions of what horticulture/gardening are and what plant people/gardeners look like. These women and their work have profoundly positive impacts on the larger world – aesthetically, environmentally, culturally and economically – making them joyful and encouraging role models for us all.

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

In the spirit of the busy holiday season when we all have too much on our plates, both literally and figuratively, I am going to keep this short and sweet. I wish you all a wonderful holiday season and am hoping to see you at our Western Hort celebration on December 11<sup>th</sup>. Also please consider including giving some of your time to help our organization as part of your resolutions for the coming year. We are still looking for additional board members to cover members whose terms have ended including someone to step in as our Vice president. We are also still looking for someone to handle our electronic communications. This is a position that does not require attendance at monthly WHS meetings or any other scheduled meetings and can easily be done from home in about 8 hours each month Sept-May. Please consider stepping up yourself or talk to others whom you think might be a good fit. Email me at [info@westernhort.org](mailto:info@westernhort.org) for more information or suggestions. ~Janet Hoffmann

## **Upcoming Meetings**

**January 8, 2020 Meeting at Garden House at Shoup Park**—Aaron Ryan, Professional Secrets for Successful Succulent Propagation

**February 12, 2020**—Cynthia Sandberg, Tomato Mastery: Best Practices for Productivity and Healthy Plants  
Cynthia is our Louisa Beck Speaker this year

**March 11, 2020**—Juanita Salisbury, Build it and They Will Come: Creating a Native Garden Buzzing with Pollinators

**April 8, 2020**—Jason Dewees, Designing with Palms: From Understory Gems to Perfect Small-Garden Trees

## **NOVEMBER SPEAKER NOTES**

Our November speaker who graciously agreed to fill in on short notice was Brian Lavin, who is chapter chair of the Golden Gate Rare Fruit Growers. He greatly expanded for us the spectrum of fruits that one can grow in the Bay Area. Brian is an evolutionary microbiologist by profession but has an expansive hobby of growing and seeking out rare fruits throughout the state and from other areas of the world with similar climates to ours. He grows these plants either in the ground or in containers in protected locations around his home in Concord.

According to Brian the families of fruiting plants which have the most potential for our area include familiar groups like the *Rosaceae*, citrus, guava, carob, *Olea* (sweet olives), pistachio, figs and loquats. He mentioned specific varieties of many of these which are better than the selections usually grown commercially.

Mr. Lavin then expanded his scope to more unusual fruits from around the world including Kai apple, African water-berry, African tree fuchsia, honey berry, African persimmons, Natal plum, marula, monkey orange, jacket plum and Kafir plum from South Africa. From Australia Brian has grown Burdekin plum, Davidson plum, *Syzygium*, bunya bunya and the more familiar macademia nut. His forays in the Indian subcontinent have yielded jambolana, sherbet berry, pheasant berry, Ceylon gooseberry and Nepalese lapsi. A more familiar fruit from India, the mango, Brian says grows better in southern California. It needs winter protection and does not like cold wet soil. This is also true of bread fruit and the Indian gooseberry.

Plants from Asia that Brian has experimented with were lychee and longan which he has grown in pots but has not gotten to set fruit. He likes jujubes but says the commercially available Li and Lang are not the best fruit. One called "Sugar Jar" is better. Star fruit is another tropical fruit that he says will tolerate temperatures into the 20's so can be grown in a sheltered spot out of winter wind. Other more unusual fruits from this area include wampee, Mandarin melon berry, *Gingko*, raisin tree, rose apple and yangmei. Mulberries also hail from China and Brian recommended dwarf fruiting varieties as being more suitable for home gardens.

Some other fruits from tropical and subtropical areas of the world that Mr Lavin discussed included Texas persimmon, which tastes like black licorice, paw paw, which tastes like bananas and cherimoya which needs hand pollination to bear fruit. He also has grown black sapote which needs protection and white sapote, *Caimiroa spp.* which he says are better for this area and very productive. True *Sapotaceae* apparently need more heat than we have in the Bay Area.

Brian also included in his conclusion several other unusual fruit that he has tried. Basically I think one could say that he has explored just anything that bears edible fruit that could possibly be grown here. If you are interested in growing any of these, I would recommend going to the Golden Gate Rare Fruit Growers meetings and talking to Brian Lavin.

If any members have fruit questions feel free to email him at [brianrlavin@gmail.com](mailto:brianrlavin@gmail.com)

~Janet Hoffmann

## **NO PLANT SALE TABLE AT THE DECEMBER MEETING**

Please continue propagating plants and collecting books, garden décor, or other items of horticultural interest and bring them to our January meeting.

## NOVEMBER PLANT NOTES

Richard Hayden from Palo Alto brought 3 plants that are all growing in the pollinator garden at Gamble Garden.

**Encelia californica** (California Bush Sunflower, California brittlebush, Coast Sunflower) This native and mostly evergreen perennial grows in full to part sun (zones 9b-10) in well-drained soil. It gets to be 4' tall x 6' wide. Yellow daisy-like flowers (2") start blooming in the spring and go through fall. It attracts bees, insects and butterflies. It is hardy to 25°. It readily reseeds so be careful. Drought tolerant once established.



**E. californica** 'Paleo Yellow' – A more compact plant, the petals are a lighter yellow and it has both smaller flowers and foliage than the one above. Although smaller than the species it has the same horticultural requirements. The seedling was discovered at the Natural History Museum and was named by Richard's goddaughter because of all the dinosaurs at the museum.

**Echibeckia** 'Summerina Orange' – This short-lived perennial is a cross between Echinacea and Rudbeckia. It grows in full to part sun (zones 5-9) in all types of soils but will do better in moist and well-drained soil. It gets to be 2' tall and wide. Richard bought a 4" pot from Morningsun Herb Farms (Vacaville) and put it in the pollinator garden in July and it has bloomed non-stop. This plant blooms longer and has bigger blooms that last longer than its parents. It is a real showstopper and pairs very well with blue salvias.



Photo: smgrowers.com

Photo: Wikipedia.org

Nancy Schramm from Gilroy brought:

**Nyssa sylvatica** (Black Tupelo, Sour gum, Black Gum) – This slow growing deciduous tree grows in full sun to part shade (zones 5-9) in almost any type of soil. It can get to be 30' – 50' tall and 30' wide. There are male and female trees. The oblong leaves turn a brilliant orange, a glossy red or multicolored in the fall. It is very drought tolerant. They are incredible right now in Gamble Garden.

**Prunus** – Nancy would like to know the species of this plant that came out of Victor Reiter's garden. It is a suckering shrubby plant with great fall color and a single pink flower that produces tart, miniature cherries.

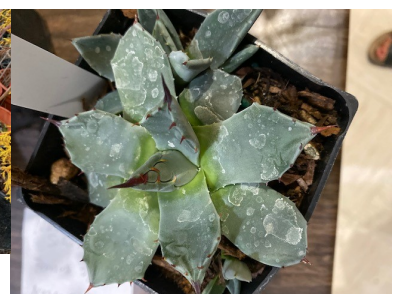
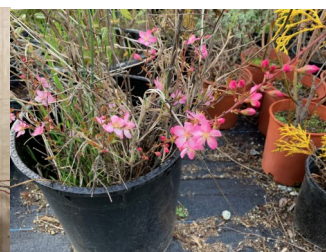
**Agave** – Nancy needs help identifying this agave which was given to her at the Carmel Valley Flower show. She thinks it might be a dwarf agave since it is pupping at a really young age.



*Nyssa sylvatica*



*Prunus*



*Agave*

Judy Wong from Menlo Park brought:

**Nerine sarniensis** (Guernsey Lily, Red Nerine) - This bulb grows in full sun (zones 8-10) in well-drained soil. It is a beautiful plant with red flowers. It comes in all kinds of colors, whites, pinks, lavender and rose. Judy starts watering in late summer and it starts blooming in the fall. It is hardy to 32°.





## NOVEMBER PLANT NOTES CONTINUED

**Polyxena ensifolia**- This South African bulb is grown in full to part sun in well-drained soil. Flowers start appearing in the winter and have a nice little scent. It readily seeds and flowers in the first year. It is hardy to 32°. It goes dormant in the summer. Don't water South African bulbs at all during the summer!



Photo: [pacificbulbsociety.org](http://pacificbulbsociety.org)



Photo: [dorsetperennials.co.uk](http://dorsetperennials.co.uk)

**Iris unguicularis** (Algerian Iris, Winter Iris) – This bulb grows in full sun (zones 7-9) in well drained soil. It gets to be 18” tall. Wonderful purple flowers start appearing in late fall through early spring. The original plant was given to Judy by Elizabeth Garbett. It is hardy to 32°.



Photo: [seedempire.com](http://seedempire.com)

**Cosmos sulphureus** (Sulfur Cosmos) – This annual grows in full sun in well drained soil. It gets to be 3’ tall and wide but Judy’s is only 1’ tall. Stunning orange flowers start appearing in the summer. It is a perfect match for California poppy. Judy brought back the seeds from the Padua Garden in Italy. It is very floriferous and hardy to 40°(zones 3-10). There was a generous donation of these seeds on the plant sale table from Judy.

Katie Wong from San Jose brought:

**Crotalaria cunninghamii** (Green/Regal birdflower) – This Australia native evergreen shrub grows in full to part sun (zones 10-11) in well-drained soil. It can get to be 9’ tall. The shrub is very floriferous; hers is covered with blooms right now. The base of the flower and the petiole look like a green hummingbird is drinking from the stem. It is pretty drought tolerant. Katie never remembers to water it and it survives. It is hardy to 30°.

~ Ana Muir

~Jennifer Doniach



Photo: [bgpa.wa.gov.au](http://bgpa.wa.gov.au)

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

As mentioned in the president’s message we are in desperate need of one or more volunteers to take on the following tasks:

**Website manager:** Update through [Wix.com](http://Wix.com), a cloud-based drag and drop web development tool that is super easy to use! Monthly task includes replacing current newsletter and adjusting speaker info. Annually updated to reflect new speaker schedule. Additional edits as needed by Board. Image adjustment needed occasionally. Basic understanding of web administration and publishing helpful (domain/server management, html, etc.).

**E-newsletter:** Monthly newsletter messages sent and mailing list managed via Mailchimp, and occasional other messages to members as requested by the Board. Coordinate content with President. Coordinate current mailing list with Membership. Image adjustment needed occasionally.

**Board members:** Attend board meetings every other month from Sept through May. Help with coordination of set-up and take-down for monthly member meetings. Help with coordination of December potluck dinner and June potluck picnic. Assist with volunteer recruitment and other tasks as needed (program planning, plant propagation and sales, etc.)

## 28 YEARS AGO

The December 11<sup>th</sup>, 1991 Western Horticultural Society Potluck Party was also a celebration. “*The Bancroft Library at the University of California at Berkeley has been working on a project to record oral histories of outstanding horticulturists in California, among whom is our own Gerda Isenberg. To celebrate the completion of the project, representatives of the library will honor Gerda in a presentation ceremony at this Christmas party. We, at WHS, who have benefitted in so many ways from Gerda’s knowledge and generosity, are very pleased to have been chosen to host this happy occasion.*”

Four new members were welcomed to Western Hort, one of whom (Judy Wong) is a member to this day!

“*The nominating committee...submitted names to fill the four upcoming vacancies on the Board of Directors. The slate will be presented to the members for approval at the January annual meeting.*” We remember two of those prospective board members with fondness, Jean Fowkes (I believe she was also newsletter editor at the time) and Michael Marlow, whose wife recently donated all the wonderful garden tools that have been appearing at our meetings.

The November plant notes detailed examples of fall color, seasonal fruit and autumn blossoms. “Ed Carman brought an example of the pawpaw, *Asimina triloba*, that turns clear yellow, and *Hydrangea quercifolia*, the oakleaf hydrangea, a sort of russet red in Ed’s specimen but which is capable of the whole range of yellows to scarlet.” Plant note author Elizabeth Garbett said “*I must confess to having had a secret longing to taste one (pawpaw) since kindergarten when we picked them up and put them in our pockets without a clue as to what they were.*” (I hope her wish was realized!) “Albert Wilson brought fruits of the season, persimmons and pomegranate...the persimmon is a medium sized tree...useful for its fruit and ornamental for its handsome form and foliage and exceptional fall color. *Punica granatum* is a large shrub...with arching branches, shiny green leaves and very showy orange-red flowers. The leaves turn a clear yellow in fall.” Vivian Hawkins shared a branch of *Osmanthus fragrans aurantiacus*, with “small fragrant orange flowers that smell like apricot brandy.” “Mary Kaye took a trip to her home state of Oklahoma and brought back leaves and acorns of the bur or mossy cup oak, *Quercus macrocarpa*. These are impressive acorns, several times bigger than those of our (CA) native oaks.” (Indeed, at up to 2” long and 1½” broad, the largest acorn on the continent.)

Additional plants noted for good fall color included *Cotinus coggygria* ‘Purpureus’ (purple smoke tree), *Ceratostigma plumbaginoides* (dwarf plumbago), *C. griffithii* (Burmese or Griffiths plumbago) and *Parthenocissus quinquefolia*.

Betsy Clebsch brought *Chrysopsis* (or *Pityopsis*) *graminifolia* (silky grass) that is actually in the aster family. “This 18” tall plant blooms in the fall (a yellow composite) but the silvery foliage makes it attractive throughout its growing season.” It’s a good pollinator attractor. Betsy also brought two true grasses, *Panicum virgatum* (switch grass) and *Chasmanthium latifolium* (sea oats).

And finally “The really spectacular display in November was Day Boddorff’s proteas. We saw three species, *Proteus nerifolia* (oleander protea), *P. burchellii* ‘Pink Mink’ and *P. obtusifolia*.”

## MEMBER SURVEY

Board member Richard Hayden circulated a member survey at our November meeting asking members for their opinions on how we should spend funds generated through generous donations.

A tabulation of survey results from our November meeting shows that members favor:

Funding a scholarship for a student to attend Foothill College or another college level horticulture program (no other programs were suggested)

Give a grant to a local non-profit horticultural organization (suggested organizations were Hidden Villa, school programs, Canopy, Santa Clara Master Gardeners, Open Space District or local county parks)

Fund a famous, big ticket horticultural speaker for one of our regularly scheduled meetings

We welcome your feedback so we have included a copy of the survey in this newsletter and will have copies available for the next couple of general meetings. You may mail surveys to our P.O. box listed on the last page of the newsletter, send copies to [info@westernhort.org](mailto:info@westernhort.org) or bring them to a meeting and deposit in the green box on the welcome table.

# WESTERN HORT

## Member Survey

Thanks to a series of generous member donations, Western Horticulture has identified \$3000 in funds that we feel should be used to promote horticulture and enrich our society and our community. How do you think these funds should be used? Please check your favorite idea below, or write in one of your own:

\_\_\_\_ 1. Fund a scholarship for a local horticulture student to attend Foothill College or another College level horticulture program.

\_\_\_\_ 2. Give a grant to a local non-profit horticultural organization. Write in some names here: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ 3. Underwrite the beautification or restoration of a high profile public area, median, government office etc. Write in ideas here: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ 4. Use the funds for a member event, party or picnic. Perhaps fund a rental fee for an unusual garden location or for catering a nice lunch.

\_\_\_\_ 5. Fund a famous, big ticket horticulture speaker for one of our regularly scheduled speaker meetings.

## Speaker Recommendations

The speaker committee would like input on potential speakers that you would be interested in hearing or might recommend: they could be local or feel free to dream big on a national scale. Please provide some ideas for speakers or speaker topics below:

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

## Upcoming 2020 WHS Membership Roster

Every other year we update our membership roster.

For the upcoming 2020 WHS Membership Roster, we would like our members to submit quality black & white photographs of plants to be printed on our cover and inside back cover of our roster. The size of the print will be 5" x 7". Guidelines for printing: 1500 x 2100 pixels is needed for best quality photo. 625 x 825 pixels is minimum for a good photo. We will choose two photos for our upcoming roster.

Please submit your photographs to [membership@westernhort.org](mailto:membership@westernhort.org) for an opportunity to have your photograph in our upcoming roster.

Also, if you want to add or change any of your details for the upcoming roster, please contact Carrie at [membership@westernhort.org](mailto:membership@westernhort.org). **Deadline for all submissions is January 15th, 2020**

## Horticultural Happenings

### Katie Wong will be at the San Jose Craft Holiday Fair 2019

Saturday Dec. 14 and Sunday Dec.15

11 am to 5 pm both days

South Hall 435 South Market Street

Indoor event Free admission All ages

Stop by and say hi to Katie and support local craftspeople!



## Strolling around the Internet

Nancy Schramm couldn't believe her eyes when she saw this story from the United Kingdom's Royal Horticultural Society. Taxonomists are renaming Rosemary into the Salvia family. Check out the full story at : <https://telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/11/22/rosemary-not-rosemary-rules-rhs-sage-tell-gardeners-change/>

### Officers and Board Members:

We are still looking for someone to fill the Vice President position.

President: Janet Hoffmann

Vice President: Open

Secretary: Leslie Dean

Corresponding Secretary: Laurie Schofield

Treasurer: Jennifer Doniach

Other Board Members: Richard Hayden, Laura Wilson, Carol Dahout, Grace Tsang, Carol Moholt

### Volunteers:

Plant Discussion Host: Katie Wong

Guest Speaker Dinner Host: Katie Wong

AV Co-Ordinator: John Hammerschmidt

### About Membership in Western Hort:

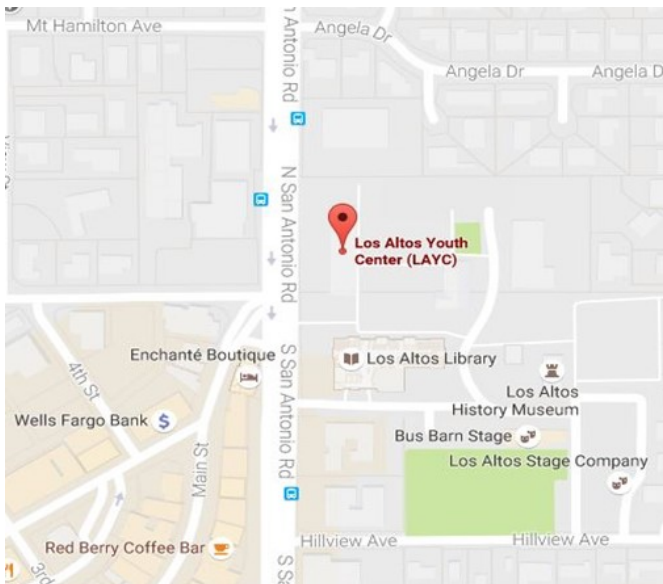
**Membership Rates:** A one-year membership (Sep-Aug) includes an e-mail copy of this newsletter and an e-mail copy of Pacific Horticulture Magazine. Regular membership is \$35, Family membership for two or more members at the same address is \$50, and a discounted rate for students is \$20. To receive a print copy of this newsletter by mail add \$10 to the membership fee listed above. To receive a print copy of Pacific Horticulture Magazine you will need to join Pacific Horticulture at: [pachort.org/join](http://pachort.org/join). WHS members can get a 10% discount on Pac Hort membership. Affiliate Organization Discount Code available by e-mailing us at contact e-mail below.

**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](mailto: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 location December:**

**Los Altos Youth Center  
1 North San Antonio Road  
Los Altos, CA 94022**

Main entrance and parking are on the north side of the building. Turn off San Antonio at the sign for the City Hall and Police Dept.

Set up starts at 5:30 pm. and party starts at 6:00 pm.

Would you like to **sponsor a lecture** 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 22 of December.** Submissions after this date will likely appear in the next month's newsletter. Send submissions to: [Kjanberg@gmail.com](mailto:Kjanberg@gmail.com) or snail mail to Kathy Anberg, 1332 Peggy Ct. Campbell, CA 95008-6342