

FEBRUARY 2021 MEETING

Wednesday, February 10th, 7:15 pm, on Zoom. To receive the Zoom link follow the instructions in the box below. Meetings are free for Western Hort and Cal Hort members, non-members \$10. See page 6 of this newsletter for information about joining WHS.

Speaker: Toni Gattone, Author, Speaker, Blogger
You CAN Garden for Life!

This informative and inspirational ‘how-to’ seminar delivers dozens of tips, tools, and techniques enabling gardeners of all ages and abilities to adapt and be resilient when your body doesn’t work the way it used to, so you can garden for life in comfort and safety, with ease and joy.

Take home tips:

- Cultivate new ways to garden to save time, money, and above all, energy.
- Re-envision your garden’s size and accessibility for greater comfort and ease.
- Re-think your garden to include containers, raised beds and vertical gardens for no-bend gardening.
- Replace uneven flagstone paths with solid surface hardscapes for greater safety.
- Adapt your favorite garden tools for little or no cost.
- Discover new ergonomic tools to make gardening easier on your hands, back, hips, and your entire body.

Toni Gattone is a speaker with a passion to help gardeners of all ages and abilities to garden for life. Toni knows from experience that physical limitations are the reason we need to re-evaluate how and when we garden, and how we can rework our gardens for greater comfort and safety. Toni speaks to audiences at garden clubs, national flower and garden shows, Master Gardener symposiums, women and senior groups.

After college, Toni taught school then had a career delivering presentation skills to corporate executives. She joined the National Speakers Association and served on their local board of directors. In 1990, her entrepreneurial spirit bloomed when she created her sales company in the gift and garden industry. In 2011, Toni became a Master Gardener and began teaching as a way of giving back to her community.

Now an author as well as speaker, Toni’s book, *The Lifelong Gardener, Garden with Ease & Joy at Any Age*, was published by Timber Press in August 2019 and is resonating with so many gardeners that it's now in its second printing.



To register for this meeting go to: [eventbrite.com/YouCANGardenforLife](https://www.eventbrite.com/YouCANGardenforLife)

Eventbrite sends you a confirmation email with the Zoom login-information.

Please remember to save the Eventbrite confirmation email with the link to get into the Zoom meeting.

If you don’t see this confirmation, check your spam folder. Also ignore any references to tickets for this virtual event. Scroll through the entire confirmation email for the part that lists a Zoom link. That link and associated passwords are what you will need to access the meeting. One suggestion is to copy this into your calendar when you receive it so it will be readily accessible on the night of the meeting. To test your Zoom connection you can log on anytime after 7:00 pm. (The meeting will start at 7:15pm). For help on setting up and using Zoom visit our resource page, [Zoom Assistance](#).

Note: This meeting will not be recorded so if you want to hear it you will have to register and view the presentation on February 10th.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Another month into the year and things seem to be looking up. We have a new administration and vaccines are starting to be distributed more broadly. Our speaker committee has our spring line-up of speakers buttoned up and is already planning for next season. If you have speaker suggestions, you are welcome to share them with committee chair, Leslie Dean or other committee members, Nancy Schramm, Judy Wong and Glenda Jones. They are also looking for new committee members who have ideas for and are willing to work on contacting and coordinating with new speakers. If you would like to help, please email lesliekdean@sonic.net.

We had a fruitful business portion of our Zoom meeting last month. Rosalie Shepherd agreed to join the board and take on the role of Corresponding Secretary. This will round out our board for the upcoming year with no vacancies. Of course, we would still welcome anyone who has an interest in joining the board. We currently have 8 board members but can go up to as many as 10. The board meets every other month from September through May. Our meetings currently are only via Zoom but we probably will keep a virtual attendance option even if we go back to meeting in person later in the year.

Your board is currently working on reviving our scholarship program, which has been on hiatus for the past couple of years. We would like to make scholarships available to a broader range of horticultural students beyond just those at Foothill College where we have awarded our scholarships through their internal scholarship program in the past. We are working to set up scholarship guidelines and an online application form. The next step will be to advertise the scholarships to eligible students and then to evaluate the applications and determine scholarship awardees. Jennifer Doniach and Grace Tsang have agreed to head up the Scholarship Committee. If you have an interest in joining the committee, you can contact them directly or contact me at info@westernhort.org. ~ Janet Hoffmann

JANUARY SPEAKER NOTES

To me, the sign of an excellent speaker is one who can keep you engaged even if the topic is not one that peaks your interest by itself. Our January speaker, Riz Reyes, fit that description for me. Mr. Reyes sees indoor plants as more than just a home accessory but important elements of the overall indoor space creating a feeling of “nature at home”. He also sees potential for indoor plants as a “gateway to gardening” for newcomers to horticulture.

Riz developed his passion for tropical plants growing up in the Philippines where many of our houseplants grow outdoors. He had an early interest in collecting and growing orchids which he still is pursuing. His current apartment in the Seattle area is full of plants growing with the aid of artificial light and a humidifier. These were two of the fundamentals of creating an environment for plants indoors which he reviewed. They included light, temperature, water, humidity and sanitation to control diseases and pests.

Mr. Reyes also shared some of his excitement about the current trends in houseplants and the way that social media is being used to promote them. He highlighted some of the current trendsetters and currently hot plants like *Anthurium spp.* grown for their foliage colors, variegated *Monstera*, *Philodendron* ‘Pink Princess’, and some unusual African violet and *Begonia spp.* Riz also discussed some of the houseplants that he considers indestructible and easy for beginners like *Aspidistra*, some bromeliads, *Sansevieria* (which has been reclassified as *Dracaena*) and the ZZ plant, *Zamioculcas zamiifolia*. His plant discussion included many others, too numerous to list here. You can learn more about them on our recording of the talk if you missed it or want to refresh your memory [whs-youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=whs-youtube). To learn more about Riz Reyes and his work visit his website rhrhorticulture.com. (Note that this and some of our other recordings, per the speaker’s requests, will only be available for a few months. We will be taking down some of our recordings that have been up for a while.)

Riz concluded his presentation with some important lessons that he feels that one can learn from indoor gardening:

- understanding the basic needs of plants
- understanding plant diversity
- learning botanical nomenclature
- learning to appreciate the economics of plants and the importance of their conservation and preservation
- building a sense of community and collaboration

I hope that listening to Riz Reye's presentation and being part of Western Hort deepens our understanding and appreciation in these areas as well. ~ Janet Hoffmann

28 YEARS AGO

Western Hort met on February 10, 1993 to hear "Brigette Mismaken of New Leaf, a gardening store in Berkeley which has everything from garden statuary, garden lighting, etc. to plants. They are located at 1286 Gilman." Her talk was titled *Art for Gardens, Gardens for Art*.

Announcements included changes to the Board of Directors enacted during the annual January election. Mary Kaye and Judy Wong (still current members) began their first three-year terms. "Our new officers are: Roz Bray - President, Ed Carman - Vice President, Daphne Dorney - Recording Secretary, Jean Fowkes - Corresponding Secretary and Fran Pillsbury - Treasurer. Congratulations!"

The newsletter editor, Dorothy Rodal, asked members to consider being a part of the upcoming Fourth Annual Members Slide Presentation in April. Members could share 15-20 slides each.

"A nursery in Scotland is looking for one or two students for summer positions. See Ed Carman for details"

"Dr. Malcom A. Nobs of Portola Valley, who was a founding and longtime member of WHS died on September 5, 1992. Dr. Nobs worked at the Carnegie Institute at Stanford doing research on many kinds of plant material. He was 77."

Three pages of plants notes are proof that WHS members were happy to share interesting plants in 1993. Please take a stroll through your gardens and consider sharing something this month! Beyond individual plants, how about sharing a particularly pleasing combination of several plants or plants plus garden art?

Bob Young showed a mystery six foot long pendant crassula and Lucia Ulvang's mystery red-berried shrub was id'd as *Ardisia crenata*.

"Tim Hyland from Yerba Buena Nursery showed a handsome specimen of the coffee fern, *Pellaea andromediaefolia*" (drought resistant native of CA & OR) and Daphne Dorney shared a daphne with pure white flowers that "seems to be very similar to the non-variegated *Daphne odora* in habit and time of bloom."

Ed Carman brought *Justicia rizzinii*, Brazilian fuchsia, firecracker flower (now officially *J. floribunda*, a small, compact shrub hardy to 27°), *Michelia doltsopa*, (now *Magnolia doltsopa*, erect and narrowly conical tree with fragrant white flowers) and *Podocarpus totara aurea*, "another potentially tall evergreen tree with a narrowly upright habit. The leaves turn a dull gold in winter, changing back to gray-green in summer."

Another plant from Carman's Nursery was "a new rosemary with brighter bluer flowers than *R. 'Benenden Blue'* (aka *R. 'Collingwood Ingram'*)... This form was one seedling from a number of crosses Ed made back in the '70's. It is called 'Mozart'."

Betsy Clebsch shared blossoms of *Helleborus niger* and *H. niger* 'White Magic' (her plants are so happy in shade, well-drained soil and no fertilizer that they have produced seedlings) and *Rosa chinensis* 'Old Blush' (almost evergreen and still blooming all winter).

Sherry Austin presented a remarkable selection of pittosporum including *P. tenuifolium* "The species is a 30' tree from New Zealand", *P. tenuifolium* 'James Stirling' "a cultivar with smaller foliage than the type, more bushy and smaller overall, a good hedge plant", *P. 'Garnettii'* "...a hybrid with variegated foliage to about 7-10", *P. t. 'Marjorie Channon'* "grows to about 5' for a smaller hedge plant", *P. t. 'Tom Thumb'* "even smaller (with) foliage that starts green but turns purple later" and *P. t. 'Theodore'* "also known as 'Mrs Gorman' is only 3-4' with small tight foliage and is, in Sherry's opinion, a better plant than 'Wheeler's Dwarf' and that's saying a lot."

Sherry also brought *Osmaria burkwoodii*, “an intergeneric cross between *Osmanthys delavayi* and *Phillyrea decoria*. It is “a good, reliable evergreen shrub...slow growing to 6’ high and wide...small, white, fragrant flowers...a good hedge plant, tolerant of sun and drought.” ~Nancy Schramm

JANUARY PLANT NOTES

Judy Wong from Menlo Park shared:



Mimulus 'Jelly Bean Fiesta Marigold'

Mimulus 'Jelly Bean Fiesta Marigold' – Judy got this sticky monkey flower hybrid from Annie’s Annuals. This compact perennial grows in full sun to bright shade and gets to be 1-2’ tall and wide. Judy is growing hers in a container that gets sun in the mornings and early afternoons. Hot cocoa red 2” flowers with yellow margins can bloom year-round. It grows best with low fertility, some watering, is tolerant of heat and is hardy to 20°.

Fuchsia splendens (chili pepper fuchsia) – This Central American semi-deciduous perennial is from the cloud forest. It grows in bright light to part shade and gets to be 6’ tall and wide with regular watering. Judy is growing hers under a Redwood tree. Tubular 1-inch red flowers with green petal tips usually start blooming in the spring but this year they started blooming in December. Possibly due to the warm fall days and cool nights that we’ve had. The berries have a sweet and lemony taste. It is intolerant of drought (remember it grows in the cloud forest), high heat or frost. Judy prunes hers every year since it is growing in a 1 gal pot to manage its size.



Fuchsia splendens

Massonia depressa and *Massonia bredasdorpensis* – This is the first time Judy is growing this genus of S. African bulbs (SW Cape). She acquired the seed through the Cal Hort seed exchange in 2015. It was fairly early to grow. Like our natives, these bulbs start growing when the first rains appear and will bloom in December through January. They grow in gritty well-draining soil with weekly watering once the leaves start appearing and light. They have 2 prostate leaves from where the inflorescence appears. Stop watering once you see the leaves drying up. The bulbs are summer dormant so keep them bone dry in the summer.

M. depressa - has a yeast-like scent and the nectar in the flowers attracts pollinators (gerbils and other rodents).

M. bredasdorpensis - has a very sweet fragrance. In the past it was known as *M. echinata*.

According to PBS, there are ongoing taxonomic studies with new species being described. She was able to obtain the correct name of *M. bredasdorpensis* by consulting a person that specializes in Massonia, Bert Zaalberg, www.massonia.com. His gallery of photos is impressive if you are curious.



Massonia depressa



Massonia bredasdorpensis



Janet Hoffman from Campbell shared:

Ribes malvaceum var. *viridifolium* 'Ortega Beauty' (Ortega Beauty chaparral currant) – This upright, late summer deciduous shrub grows in full sun to part shade and gets to be 8' tall and wide in well-drained soil. Janet has hers growing in filtered shade and waters it about once a month during the summer. In 4-5 years it has gotten to be about 5' tall and wide. It has peeling reddish brown bark and deep green leaves. Tubular pink flowers have already started blooming (which is earlier than usual). The hummingbirds love the flowers. The resulting red currants turn blue/black when they are ripe. It is very drought tolerant and hardy to 15°.

~Anna Muir

UPCOMING MEETINGS

March 10th: Sue Milliken and Kelly Dodson, Far Reaches Farm in Port Townsend, WA, *Beauty and Botany in the Far Reaches*

April 14th: Saxon Holt, photo journalist and life-long gardener, *The Summer-Dry Garden: Beyond the Mediterranean*

May 10th: Steve Fennimore, Extension Specialist and Weed Scientist UC Davis, *When is a Weed a Weed? How to ID and Control Them.*

HORTICULTURAL HAPPENINGS

California Native Plant Society, February 3, 7:30pm via Zoom or youtube, *Gardening for Biodiversity with Native Plants*, a talk by Shelkie Tao. Native gardens provide so many benefits. They are beautiful, low water, low maintenance and support a wide variety of wildlife. A major advantage of native gardens is that they can be a great place to help us preserve biodiversity. For more information about this talk and other CNPS-SCV presentations go to cnps-scv.org.

UC Master Gardeners Santa Clara County, February 6, 11:30am-1pm, via Zoom, *Winter Fruit Pruning*, with UC Master Gardener Allen Buchinski. Winter is the best time to prune fruit trees because they are dormant and you can see the tree structure. Proper pruning, timing, and technique allow your trees to produce the best fruit. More information about this and other events at <http://mgsantaclara.ucanr.edu/events/>

Gamble Garden, February 10, 5-6pm, via Zoom, *Getting to Know Our Native Oaks*, with Elise Willis, an ISA Certified Arborist and Tree Programs Director at Canopy. Getting to know our native oaks is a powerful way of remembering the past, observing the present, and giving us hope for the future. Join us to learn about and celebrate native oaks in our midst. More information about this and other classes at gamblegarden.org/event/.

UC Master Gardeners of San Mateo and San Francisco, February 12, 1-2:15pm via Zoom. *Spring Edibles Series: Planning a Year-Round Garden*. Our mild Mediterranean climate allows us to easily grow vegetables year-round. This overview class will help you focus on the wonderful fresh garden vegetables that you can enjoy year-round by using the Planting Calendars for San Mateo and San Francisco Counties available for downloading from the Master Gardener website. More information about this and other classes at <https://ucanr.edu/>

California Horticultural Society presentation, February 15, 2021, 6:30 pm via Zoom, "Additions to *California Native Plants for the Garden*" with the authors of the book, Carol Bornstein and Bart O'Brien. This talk will cover some of their favorite native plants that didn't make the book's final cut. Watch your email for a link to this presentation.

Also, the Cal Hort 2021 Seed Exchange List is out! For information about participating go to calhortsociety.org/about/annual-seed-exchange/.

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: Carrie Parker
Newsletter Editor: Kathy Anberg
Speaker Program Committee: Leslie Dean (chair),
Nancy Schramm, Judy Wong, Glenda Jones

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



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Newsletter Submissions

The newsletter publishes on the first of the month. The deadline for submissions for the next newsletter is the February 22nd. Submissions after this date will likely appear in the next month's newsletter. Send submissions to: kjanberg@gmail.com