WHS December Potluck Party and Program

Wednesday, December 9, 6:30pm at Christ Episcopal Church, 1040 Border Road, Los Altos.

We are looking forward to seeing you all at our annual potluck! Please bring a favorite main dish, salad, or dessert to share, including plates and utensils for you and your guests. The WHS Board will provide cups, glasses, wine and beverages, appetizers and Jeanne’s special turkey that we all know and love to eat.

Our special December program featuring Aaron Dillon’s talk about the history of local nurseries starts at around 8pm. Come and find out who will be the recipient of the WHS Founders Award this year!

Join us for a celebration of good company and good food! Please also bring nutritional food in cans or sturdy containers to help struggling food agencies feed the growing number of needy people in our communities, if you are able. Thank you—we hope to see you all there!

“Everyone must take time to sit and watch the leaves turn.” ~ Elizabeth Lawrence
**More Western Hort Business and News...**

**Raffle Table**
The November raffle table had something for everyone. Our speaker Patrick Anderson brought many cactus and succulents from his own garden, and board member Kerry Barrs kept the daffodil lovers happy with a couple dozen selections. We would especially like to thank the nurseries who donated plants this month: Yamagami's Nursery (408) 252-3347, Terra Sole Nurseries (831) 724-0802, Carman's Nursery (408) 847-2313, and (newly nominated WHS board member) Jon Craig--Alluvial Terrace Nursery (415) 517-7693. There will be no raffle in December.

**CEU Credits**
The WHS is pleased to be able to offer Continuing Education Credits for CCN Pro's (CANGC) and for the Assn of Professional Landscape Designers (APLD). You know who you are—bring your fellow members with you and sign in at the registration desk. ~Nancy Schramm

**28 Years Ago**
WHS met on November 9, 1981 to hear Roger P. Scharmer talk about "The English Landscape Style." He focused on the contributions to the English design concept by leaders in the field such as Capability Brown, Humphrey Repton, Lawrence Johnston, Harold Nicolson, and Vita Sackville-West.

It sounds like many flowers were on the discussion table, despite the time of the year. Mabel Crittendon brought in *Leschenaultia formosa*. Emily Brown noted that "...(this) species was not known by the authors of Hortus III." Additionally, the species name *formosa* was explained to have the definition of beautiful, not that it was a native of Formosa. Gerda Isenberg promised that she was not abandoning her beloved natives, but did bring in "a chocolate orchid, a stanhopea, with an extraordinary bloom." Dick Dunmire brought in "a gingerlily from India, hardy to about 20 degrees, with an amazing fragrance." And Richard Terril brought in (my own very favorite) *Camellia 'Yuletide'*. ~Nancy Schramm

**New: Commentary on Last Month’s Speakers**
Our October meeting’s speaker was the author of *Roots Demystified*, Robert Kourik. Mr. Kourik, who was scheduled to talk earlier this year but became ill, was re-scheduled with much anticipation, and he did not disappoint us.

His main topic was to dispel the myths and older horticultural planting practices that still occur today. Most plants do not possess a true taproot, but rather a primary root that, after time, grows slowly or ceases to grow altogether. It is the fibrous system, growing horizontally, where the plant receives its support, water and nutrients. Roots can grow well beyond the drip line of a tree, and sometimes five times or more the distance of the canopy. Mr. Kourik touched on the importance of humus, mulching and proper planting practices (he prefers planting on a mound) and other unconventional ideas such as no added amendments or fertilizers, and his preference for tube-grown plants.

He is also the author of *Drip Irrigation for Every Landscape* and a book on the genus Lavandula, both of which, along with his ‘Root’ book were available at the meeting for sale and signing. I would recommend any and all for the serious gardener’s library.

An enthusiastic and engaging horticulturalist was November’s featured guest, Patrick Anderson of Fallbrook, California. Mr. Anderson’s topic was *Bringing Succulents Into the Garden*, which, to the uninformed, seems a daring, if not difficult task. Yet the speaker’s informative and enlightening slides and words showed the wide range of colors, shapes, and textures cactus and succulents can offer us.

Using his garden as a prime example of the use and care of succulents, Mr. Anderson showed his slides of an old citrus orchard transformed into a premier garden. It seems that Patrick’s forte is design, based on the wonderful examples of succulent combinations he offered us. Patrick prefers introducing species that are appropriate to the climate and architecture of the house. He reinforced this notion with some humorous slides of out of place cacti in the landscape.

As a gardening audience, it is always a treat to receive some printed information for future reference. Mr. Anderson obliged with three excellent handouts that we will surely refer to for years to come. Judging from the way our group received Patrick Anderson’s lecture, it seems there will be quite a few more Western Hort gardens with cactus and succulents making a home.

~ Mark McCabe

“Science, or para-science, tells us that geraniums bloom better if they are spoken to. But a kind word every now and then is really quite enough. Too much attention, like too much feeding, and weeding and hoeing, inhibits and embarrasses them.”

~Victoria Glendinning
Other Horticultural Events...

Principles of Grafting
December 12th 1:00-3:00pm
Location: Erikson Adult Ed Center, 4849 Pearl Avenue, San Jose
Master Gardener Bader Kudsi will again share his knowledge of grafting at our free World Garden Workshop. Come learn how to collect scion wood from one tree and graft it onto another to extend the harvest by growing fruits that ripen at different times. Bader will teach us how collect and store the scion wood, when and how to graft and how to care for the graft for the best chance of success. To sign up for this free workshop, please phone our office during regular business hours (408)723-6450 or email ritab@metroed.net. Space is limited and this workshop has been very popular.

Sudden Oak Death Preventative Treatment
A free training session for professionals and home owners; register by email.
Wednesday December 9th 1:00-3:00pm
Held by the California Oak Mortality Task Force
Location: Tolman Hall Portico, UC Berkeley, Hearst Avenue at Arch/Le Cont, Berkeley. Call (510)847-5482 to register or email SODtreatmentnature.berkeley.edu

Trees in Containers
A class and demonstration on growing trees and shrubs in containers, with aesthetic pruner Grant Foerster.
Saturday December 12th 10:00am-1:00pm
Location: The Gardens at Heather Farm, 600 North San Carlos Drive, Walnut Creek. Fee $25.00; pre-registration required; call (925)947-1678.

Annual Holiday Wreath Making
December 12th 10:00am-12:00pm and 1:30-3:30pm (two sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon)
Fees: $15 members/$25 non-members
Location: Guadalupe River Park and Gardens, 438 Coleman Avenue, San Jose
This annual workshop is so popular, we’ve added an additional time slot. Join us in the morning at 10am or in the afternoon at 1:30pm for a two-hour hands-on workshop.
Get ready for the holidays the old-fashioned way by making your own wreath to adorn your front door! Master Gardener Milli Wright and friends will show us how to look through our gardens to find unusual items that can be incorporated into the wreaths. After a basic design lesson, and examples of other clever projects, you will be ready to create your own personal gift for your home. All basic materials will be provided, but if you have some special greenery, lights or ornaments that you would like to incorporate onto your wreath, feel free to bring them along.

“Gardening is a matter of your enthusiasm holding up until your back gets used to it.” ~ Author Unknown

December Classes at Common Grounds, Palo Alto

Soil Foodweb
Alane Weber Saturday, December 5 10:30-12:30pm, $30

Rainwater Harvesting
Sherri Osaka Saturday, December 12 10:30-12:30pm, $30
This class explores methods of rainwater harvesting and storage from roof materials, to tanks and their costs, to landworks, and finally to using rainwater in your garden. We'll discuss permitting, mosquitoes, and calculating the amounts of rainwater against the cost of storage. We'll show how rainwater harvesting not only saves water, but energy and infrastructure as well, and how it can be a part of every garden.
To register for classes call (650)493-6072.