

WESTERN HORT

March 2021 | PO Box 166, Mountain View, CA 94042 | www.westernhort.org

MARCH 2021 MEETING

March 10th, 7:15 on Zoom via Internet

Our meeting this month will once again be a Zoom presentation. [Register for March meeting with this link: Eventbrite.](#)

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

There is no cost for members but visitors will be asked to pay \$10. **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.](#)

Speakers: Sue Milliken and Kelly Dodson, Far Reaches Farm, Port Townsend, WA.

Topic: Beauty and Botany in the Far Reaches

A look at some of the unique plants in the Far Reaches Botanical Conservancy collection that are suited for mild climates. We will do a bit of plant hunting in southern China, Vietnam and Argentina and look at some of our favorite rarities which we (zone 7b) have to coddle in greenhouses.



Kelly and Sue have spent their lives learning and working with plants in nurseries, botanic gardens and plant hunting expeditions.

They are owners of Far Reaches Farm whose extensive collection of plants is spectacularly unfocused.

The nursery has been featured in Pacific Horticulture, Horticulture, Garden Gate and Martha Stewart Living and they are contributing editors for Fine Gardening magazine.

They are also directors of Far Reaches Botanical Conservancy, a non-profit whose mission is the acquisition and conservation of vulnerable plants of wild and cultivated origin that are new to North America.

Visit them at www.farreachesfarm.com or [Far Reaches Botanical Conservancy](#)

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Spring is approaching as well as the busier gardening season. I am sure that many of you, like me, have taken advantage of the good weather this winter to clean up, divide, weed and take care of other delayed maintenance in your gardens. We welcome your sharing of plants from your own yard or that you encounter elsewhere for our monthly plant share at the start of the Zoom meeting. The advantage to the Zoom format is that it doesn't have to be something that you can transport. All that you need to do is take a picture and send it to me and then be ready to discuss some of the plant's attributes at the meeting.

I am going to keep this short and sweet and that is the only ask that I am going to make this month. However, if you have other ideas about how to improve our organization or our meetings feel free to contact me. As always, I am available at info@westernhort.org.

I hope that you are all having a good month.

~ Janet Hoffmann~

FEBRUARY SPEAKER NOTES

February's speaker was Toni Gattone and her topic was *You CAN Garden for Life!* It was obvious from her presentation that Toni lives this vision. She took up what she calls "adaptive gardening" or "growing your resilience" to deal with her own bad back. The adaptations that Toni discussed ran the gamut from self-care to tool choices and planting ideas.

Toni began with some self-care ideas including using a SPF 45+ sunscreen, wearing a UPF 50+ hat, using gloves with a tight fit and good grip and drinking plenty of water. Toni also recommended a good stretching routine to warm-up before hitting the garden and timing your yard work for time periods when it is not too hot, like early morning and late afternoon in the summer. Another idea that she shared was to share garden chores with friends by taking turns hosting garden parties.

Ms. Gattone also shared some practical planting tips to reduce the amount of effort needed to grow things. These included choosing plants of the appropriate size for your space to reduce pruning, grouping plants with like water needs and using self-watering planters. She also recommended using lightweight planters or pot lifters and casters to move heavier pots. Another of her recommendations was to build raised planters for easier tending of plants like vegetables that need more regular attention.

Toni is a big proponent of choosing the right tool for the job. Her tool suggestions included some favorites for weeding like the hori hori knife, Radius Garden weeder and CobraHead weeder cultivator. Another favorite was her soil scoop with a serrated edge that made digging small holes for planting easier. These and many other tool links are available on her website tonigattone.com.

For those of you who missed her talk, unfortunately we were not allowed to record it. You can download her [handout](#) with an outline of some of her ideas or go to Toni Gattone's website to order her book or other materials. Remember that other presentations from this program year will be available for a limited time on the [Western Hort youtube](#).

~ Janet Hoffmann~

UPCOMING MEETINGS

April 14th : Saxon Holt , Photojournalist and lifelong gardener. *The Summer Dry Garden: Beyond Mediterranean*

May 12th: Steve Fennimore, Extension Specialist and Weed Scientist UC Davis. *When is a Weed a Weed? How to ID and Control Them.*

2021 Founders' Award

Our Founders' Award is given out to members whose outstanding contributions over many years brought new members, new ideas and new activities to our society. This year's recipient is Liz Calhoon. You can read about her contributions and other past Founder's Award recipients at www.westernhort.org/founders-award.

Liz and her husband are moving to Massachusetts to start a new adventure, but in the midst of packing she took the time to send us the following thank you. Her presence will be missed when we are finally able to gather again for meetings.

“Thank you to the Board and all of Western Hort for giving me this Founder's Award—2021!!! It is a great honor to be a recipient of this award! Those that have received it ahead of me have made a variety of wonderful contributions to this esteemed organization. I appreciate the efforts several of you have made to research my ‘history’!!! I have thoroughly enjoyed being a part of this organization. There is such a depth of knowledge among the members and such a willingness to share that information. It is a diverse group of professionals—nursery owners and employees, landscape architects and designers, arborists, Master Gardeners, and amateur gardeners—that collectively have been a great resource for each other through the years. I have learned a lot by being involved and interacting with many of you.

I take many happy memories and much knowledge with me as Stuart and I head to Provincetown on Cape Cod to start a very different chapter in our lives, assisting our younger son Brian and his husband Tom with their inn. They both have musical backgrounds, so it'll be quite the adventure!!!

My phone number and email will remain the same, (650-823-8270; Gardenlizard3@gmail.com) so we can continue to connect with each other. I still have some family in the Bay Area, so I hope to see you from time to time!

Meanwhile stay safe!!! Keep growing and sharing information and plants with each other!!! Liz Calhoon



28 YEARS AGO

Western Hort met on March 10, 1993 to hear what was most certainly an informative and dynamic presentation: “Our own *very knowledgeable* Ted Kipping will speak about *Tree Pruning*.”

There were a number of announcements starting with several plant requests from Clayton Neece. On a whim I decided to research the availability of *Abutilon megapotamicum* ‘Aurora’ (and what it looks like) and rediscovered how much fun it is to read the Monterey Bay Nursery catalog like a novel. Luen Miller includes not only physical descriptions and cultural requirements, but tid-bits about the solar system (This is one of the “dog stars,” higher in the sky and farther west than Sirius, in Canis Minor), fun comments about bugs (Leaves...have a felty texture, especially underneath where it counts most and *are therefore highly bug resistant!!!* (!!!).) and other outbursts of humor--it's too long to include, but please go and read the description of *Abutilon* ‘Challo’: <https://montereybaynsy.com/A.htm>

WHS members were in demand as local speakers: David Rodal was talking about *Clematis* at Gamble Garden, Betsy Clebsch's talk at the Heritage Rose Group meeting was titled *Companion Plants for Roses* and Dick Dunmire was speaking at the Saratoga Horticultural Research Foundation's open house on *Low Water Using Plants for Hedges and Screens*.

Plant notes again described a marvelous array of blooms.

David Rodal showed three selections of *Clematis armandii*, the species (profuse white blossoms), *C. a.* ‘Henderson's Rubra’ (deeper pink outside, almost white inside) and *C. armandii* ‘Trost's Fragrant’ (larger, though not so profuse as the species, intensely fragrant).

(Does anyone know who Trost is/was? I assume the same person as *Betula pendula* ‘Trost's Dwarf’? - NS)

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28 YEARS AGO CONTINUED

Dorothy Rodal shared *Pulmonaria longiflora* (useful shade-loving groundcover), *Tulbaghia fragrans* (evergreen, fragrant winter-bloomer. Just for fun, did you know about *Tulbaghia simmleri* ‘Cheryl Renshaw’, named for one of our WHS members?!) and *Cestrum elegans* ‘Smithii’ (hardy to about 25°F but will resprout from the roots).

“Tim Hyland of Yerba Buena Nursery showed the native checkerbloom, *Sidalcea malvaeflora*, whose pink hollyhock-like flowers are a feature of the California spring wildflower scene...will go completely dormant in summer if un-watered but can be kept blooming throughout the summer if watered.”

“Allicin Rauzin sent several treasures from her Green Sun Nursery for our delectation, three of which would be choice additions to the rock garden.” *Potentilla alba* ‘Snowflake’ (mat-forming, large white flowers like single roses) *Narcissus triandrus* subsp. *triandrus* ‘Angel’s Tears’ (several flowers per stem, white or yellow) and *Primula* ‘Tawny Port’ “...probably one of the *Juliae* hybrids, the color of a glass of red wine seen against the light”. (I’d be delighted to get my hands on any of the different *Juliae* hybrids—I have ‘Snow White’ and it’s a real gem – NS)

“Ed Carman brought a most curious but at the same time most elegant and beautiful plant, *Sinningia leucotricha* (*Reichsteineria leucotricha*) called the Brazilian edelweiss. ...The curious thing about it is that the aerial parts grow from a caudex, or aboveground woody tuber, a scaly flattened ball-shaped structure.” (I was horrified to read the last sentence of Elizabeth Garbett’s description: “Ed has been growing this plant for 35 years!” since this is one of the many plants I’ve lost over the years – NS)

~Nancy Schramm~

FEBRUARY PLANT SHARE

Nancy Schramm from Gilroy presented:



Moringa oliefera (Miracle Tree, Drumstick tree) – This fast growing tropical tree, can grow 10-15 feet a year if not cropped, until it reaches 35’ tall. However it is usually kept between 9-12 feet tall so that the leaves can easily be reached and harvested. You can chop it to the ground and it will send up new shoots. It grows in full sun in well-drained or sandy soil. The Moringa Farms website says it will drop its leaves if the temperature drops below 70° but Nancy is growing it in an unheated 20’ x 30’ greenhouse with the doors open all winter long and it has kept its leaves. This plant hit the news a few years ago because it is very nutritious and almost all parts of it can be eaten or used medicinally. This magic plant has been planted in areas where there’s not enough to eat. The leaves provide 7x the Vitamin C found in an orange, 4x the Vitamin A found in carrots, 3x the potassium found in bananas and is high in iron. It is reported to help with diabetes and high blood pressure. However, you shouldn’t eat this if you are already taking medicine for those conditions. Nancy soaked 48 seeds and within a week and a half every single one had germinated. She was thinking of taking some plants to the Heirloom Expo but the leaves looked funny since they were puckering so she didn’t take them. A month later she ran into Kathy Echols who

said it was a nitrogen deficiency. Small white flowers are edible or can be used to make tea or other remedies. The resulting pods look like drumsticks. Nancy has plenty of plants.

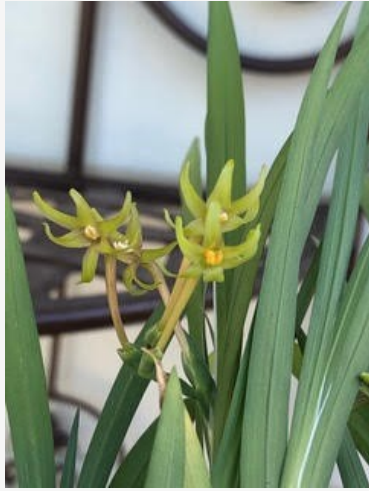


Jasminum nudiflorum (Winter Jasmine) – This trailing vining shrub grows in full sun to part shade (zones 6-10) in well-drained soil. It can grow to be 15’ tall x 6’ wide. Leafless arching branches with pretty yellow flowers start appearing at the end of winter. Nancy noticed that its branches were draping over a rosemary plant and the dark blue purple flowers against the yellow flowers looked fantastic. However when a branch touches the ground it will root and in ideal conditions it could become invasive. A few years back Nancy got a batch of 12” cuttings. After all the cuttings rooted and were potted up into soil, Nancy noticed one plant with strange growth. It started growing downward and then it righted itself and grew upward. It seems she had planted the cutting upside down. This shows how anxious the plant is to grow. Prune after flowering.

~Ana Muir~

FEBRUARY PLANT SHARE CONTINUED

Judy Wong from Menlo Park presented:



Freesia viridis (previously known as Anomatheca viridis and Lapeirousia viridis) - This South African bulb grows in full sun (zones 8-10) in well-drained soil. Growing 1' tall it blooms from December to February when spikes holding ½ inch green flowers growing on unusually flattened creamy white stems appear. The flowers are unscented. The leaves are bitter making it unpalatable to animals. Judy sowed seeds a couple of years ago and this is the first time it is blooming. It is self-fertile and reseeds easily. Do not water it in the summer.

Gladiolus flanaganii (Suicide Lily) – This South African bulb grows on cliffs and it got its name because plant collectors would go down to see the 2” red blossoms or collect the plants. It grows in full sun (zones 8b-10) in well-drained soil with occasional water. However more watering is needed during hot weather. Judy got it from Annie’s Annuals.



Judy has a nice collection of Lachenalia. This genus of 90 species of bulbous perennials are found in grassland or rocky sites in South Africa. Commonly called Cape Cowslip they typically bloom in late winter or early spring.

Lachenalia splendida – It grows in full sun (zones 9-10) in well-drained soil. It is very floriferous and pale purple sessile flowers start appearing in late winter. Judy thought it was *L. elegans* until the flowers opened and she noticed the exerted stamens. There is a slight swelling on the stem where the flowers are attached. It is one of 2 Lachenalias that are sessile with long stamens. Splendida means brilliant colorful flowers. It is hardy to 32°.



Lachenalia bulbifera (previously known as L. pendula) – Judy got some of these South African bulbs from Janet Hoffman last year and this is the first year she is growing them in a pot. This deciduous bulb grows in full to part sun (zones 8-10) in sandy or loamy soil. It is a prolific bloomer and it spreads quite easily. It started blooming in November and should continue through March. Flower colors range from orange to scarlet to crimson with the tips being either purple or green. The leaves are semi-erect, ovate, lance shaped or strap-shaped and may be a simple green or have some mottling to them. It is frost tender. Grows to 1'

Lachenalia quadricolor ‘Namakwa’ – Formerly known as L. aloides var. quadricolor, was changed in 2012 and got its own species. Namakwa is from the African Beauty Series. Grow in full sun (zones 9-10a) in well-drained soil. It gets to be 8” tall and wide.

Tubular flowers each having 4 different layers of colors start appearing in late winter. With distinctive mottled leaves this plant is quite hardy, offsets readily and the bulbs have doubled every year since Judy started it from seed many years ago.



Lachenalia bulbifera



Lachenalia Namakwa



Lachenalia reflexa

Lachenalia reflexa – This bulb is a dwarf species that grows in full sun (zones 9-10) in well-drained soil. The downward bending leaves to 6 inches long and 1 ¼ inch wide may be spotted or have an undulating form. Grows to 6”, or rarely taller. Bright yellow flowers appear just above the foliage. Judy started the seeds in May of 2018 and by the following September she was already dividing them since they grew so well. It tolerates frost and is summer dormant. It is considered a noxious weed in Australia.

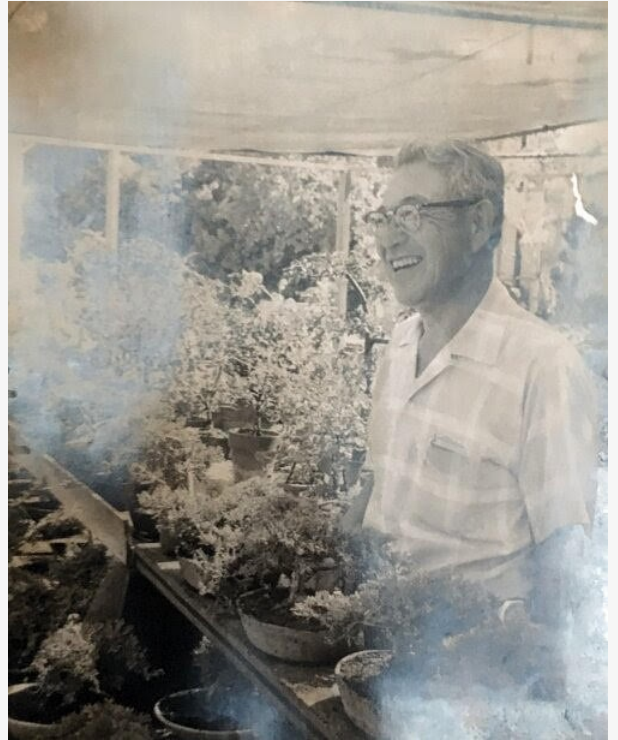
BONSAI HISTORY

By Eric Hsu — *with image courtesy of the Domoto Family*

Those who resided in California long enough before Silicon Valley swallowed the Peninsula may remember the Domoto Nursery in Hayward. Its proprietor Toichi (1902-2001) was the eldest son of Kanetaro and Teru Domoto who was raised at the Domoto Brothers Nursery, the largest of its kind in California before its abrupt closure during the Great Depression. Toichi sold nursery plants especially to a large clientele that ranged from home gardeners to large estate owners. The Gamble Garden and Filoli today have azaleas, camellias and tree peonies from the Domoto Nursery.

Although Toichi was better known for his breeding work with camellias, tree peonies and other flowering shrubs, he cultivated an active interest in bonsai. His granddaughter Sachi noted that each morning he would read his bonsai magazines along with the newspapers. Tending his bonsai was a daily ritual that gave him tremendous joy long after he had retired from his business. At his nursery, he commissioned his friend and landscape architect Ernest Wertheim to design a sales enclosure for his bonsai, pots and supplies. Toichi was not afraid to refuse sales to prospective customers who did not have the right conditions or the dedication. “To do bonsai, you have to have a state of mind...if you don’t have the patience you might as well forget the bonsai, and grow annuals so you can go from seed to flower in six months, and that’s it.”

One of the bonsai that came under Toichi’s care had been a ‘family heirloom’, having been purchased from the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition’s Japan Pavilion. This bonsai, a trident maple (*Acer buergerianum*) survived the Domoto Brothers Nursery’s bankruptcy in 1930s and the neglect at the nursery during Toichi’s exile at the Amache internment camp in Colorado. Now 200-plus years old, the maple holds a prized location in the Pacific Bonsai Museum, Federal Way, Washington State. The story of the maple bonsai is told in greater detail on the site: [50 Objects/Stories: The American Japanese Incarceration](#).



Toichi Domoto with his bonsai

On an interesting sidenote, Toichi’s youngest brother Kaneji who was a well known architect and an acolyte of Frank Lloyd Wright, took up bonsai late in life and even consulted for bonsai nurseries in the Chicago area. There is a nice obituary about Toichi written by Richard G Turner Jr. in Pacific Horticulture <https://www.pacifichorticulture.org/articles/toichi-domoto-1902-2001/> Eric Hsu is doing research on Asian-Americans who have contributed to horticulture to potentially write a book on the subject. He is currently working on a profile of Toichi Domoto and would welcome any personal experiences or materials related to Toichi, the Domoto Nursery or the Domoto Brothers Nursery. He can be reached at eric.hsu03@gmail.com ☞

In 1947, Charles “Budge” Garbett and his wife, Elizabeth, purchased 3 acres of land in Los Altos Hills. The couple built a home and raised horses, goats, chickens and a Jersey-Guernsey cow. Elizabeth recalled, “I read ‘Five Acres and Independence’ as a young woman, and I said, ‘That’s for me.’... I just love the whole farming ethos.” The Garbetts’ story was featured in the Los Altos History Museum exhibition “Many Communities, Many Voices: Personal Narratives from the Oral History Collection” on display in 2016.

Photo courtesy of Los Altos History Museum

Peek into the Past



COURTESY OF LOS ALTOS HISTORY MUSEUM



BAY VISIONS SYMPOSIUM

January 13th, 2021

10:00 – 11:30 AM Program

9:30 AM Opening Slide Show

The Power of Plants Will Protect the Bay

Join us for an inspiring look at adaptation, regeneration, and the role plants play in mitigating the challenges facing San Francisco Bay.

Register Here

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/bay-visions-tickets-127648342629>

Program Highlights

Karina Nielsen, professor and director of the Estuary & Ocean Science Center, San Francisco State University, will provide an overview of the complex issues facing the Bay. <https://eoscenter.sfsu.edu/content/karina-nielsen>

Dr. Katharyn Boyer, professor of Biology-Wetlands, Community and Restoration Ecology, will highlight mitigation and restoration efforts using plants as buffers, filters and habitat for the Bay Area Biome. www.tedxmarin.org/speaker/katharyn-boyer/

Josie Iselin, author of *The Curious World of Seaweed*, will discuss the vital role of seaweed in maintaining our Bay ecosystem while she shares her ethereal photos of seaweed's shape-shifting colors, revealing a rich botanical world not often seen. www.josieiselin.com

Diana Benner and Laura Hanson, co-owners of The Watershed Nursery in Richmond, will provide an up-close look at the native plants they grow, the nursery's involvement in large wetlands restoration projects, and the use of local wetland species in Bay Area gardens. www.watershednursery.com

Sponsored By

Piedmont Garden Club, Woodside-Atherton Garden Club, Marin Garden Club, Orinda Garden Club, Hillsborough Garden Club, and Carmel-By-the-Sea Garden Club

Questions? Contact Julia Burke at juliaburke94610@yahoo.com



PO Box 166
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First Class Mail
VISIT US AT WESTERNHORT.ORG

Meeting location March 10th
Zoom Meeting via internet
Meeting starts at 7:15 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 March.** 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