

# WESTERN HORT

December 2020 | PO Box 166, Mountain View, CA 94042 | [www.westernhort.org](http://www.westernhort.org)

## DECEMBER 2020 MEETING

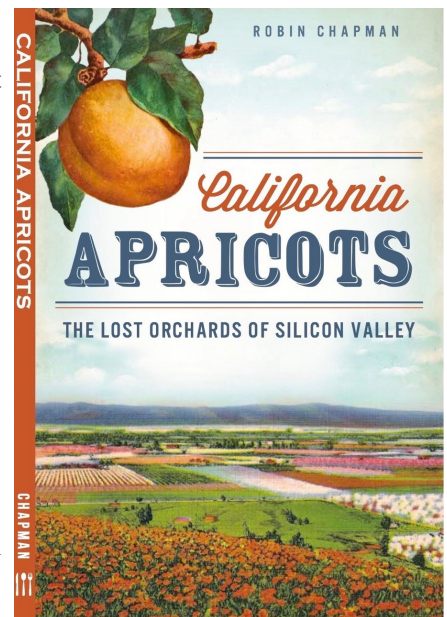
### December 9th, 7:15 on Zoom via Internet

Our meeting this month will once again be a Zoom presentation. **Register for December meeting on Eventbrite.** <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/california-apricots-the-lost-orchards-of-silicon-valley-tickets-130191746017?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch> 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. <https://www.westernhort.org/zoom-assistance>

**Speaker:** Robin Chapman, Journalist and Author

**Topic:** *California Apricots: The Lost Orchards of Silicon Valley*

The land south of San Francisco, now home to Silicon Valley, was once the largest commercial orchard the world had ever seen. From just after the Civil War until 1972, agriculture dominated the economy of the Santa Clara Valley and was an international powerhouse. Here, small, family-owned orchards produced prunes, apricots and other stone fruits to enrich the tables of millions of Americans and improve the diets of people around the world. Yet none of these fruits are native to California. How did they come here? Why did they vanish? That is the story of *The Lost Orchards of Silicon Valley*.



Robin Chapman is a journalist native to Los Altos, California. She worked at KRON-TV in San Francisco and several other stations in the West before heading to Washington D.C. There she covered the White House and other big stories for the ABC-TV station. In 2009 Robin returned to her hometown to care for her parents, and in the years since has published *California Apricots: The Lost Orchards of Silicon Valley* and *Historic Bay Area Visionaries*, both from the History Press publishers. She is working on a book based on a collection of her columns for the *Los Altos Town Crier* on Bay Area history.

## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

We had another fantastic Zoom presentation last month with a sizable virtual audience. A big hand to our speaker committee for setting this up. For those of you who missed it, check out the link in the speaker write-up to view the recording on YouTube.

At our board meeting on November 7<sup>th</sup> we discussed our board for the coming year which you will be asked to vote on in January. We are looking for more board members so feel free to step up or nominate someone who you think would be willing to help. We changed the commitment to 2 years with our Bylaws update last February. I have agreed to stay on as president for one more year but we need more people to step up and learn the process. It is a great way to make new horticultural friends!

Member involvement is what keeps our organization going! There are many small tasks that put together make things work. Ursula Haschke stepped up this year to handle our website updates and email postings. Carol Dahout has taken on the hosting of our Zoom meetings. Carol Moholt set up and is currently handling the meeting registrations on Eventbrite.

Kathy Anberg is willing continue as our newsletter editor but we can use more input on the content. I was looking through some of our old newsletters recently and the content has definitely changed over the years. We would appreciate any comments on whether the newsletter is still relevant to you in this digital world and which parts of it you read and find most useful. Also feel free to submit articles or links to virtual content that you think that others might be interested in.

If you are willing to explore ways that you could help or have input on any of the above, feel free to contact me at [info@westernhort.org](mailto:info@westernhort.org).

~ Janet Hoffmann~

## NOVEMBER SPEAKER NOTES

Lech Naumovich of Golden Hour Restoration Institute provided an inspiring talk about his work on the restoration of the summit of Mount Umunhum. He began his talk with a clip from an inspiring video about the peak and its history and cultural heritage which you can watch here <https://vimeo.com/243187810>. One objective of the restoration was to honor the cultural heritage of the Amah Mutsen people for whom the mountain has great importance. From the mid 1950's to 1980 the site was an Air Force radar station. It is located in southwest San Jose, was purchased by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District in 1986 and opened to the public in 2017.

Lech discussed the challenging climate and exposure of the site which receives more winter rain than much of the Bay Area but is also hot, dry and windblown in the summer. The landscape plan aimed to preserve some of the plants and protect some of the animals that are endemic to the area. The initial site development involved moving rocks on the previously cleared areas of the mountain top to create planting islands with crevices to help provide protected spaces and better drainage for the native plantings that they hoped to establish.

Many of the original plants were raised from seed that was gathered near the site and nursery grown into mostly 3" pots that would fit into the tight spaces between rocks. More recent plantings have been directly seeded onto the site. They used the soil excavated from the holes and added native soil with some organic components that had been harvested from areas where the plants grew naturally to inoculate the holes with micro-flora. Each hole was filled with water and allowed to drain before the planting to give the new plants adequate moisture to get started. Natural rock mulch was used around the plants.

The initial island planting was very intensive with an abundance of plants to ensure survival of an adequate number of them. Supplemental water during the initial growing season had to be supplied via water trucks. After that the plants were pretty much left to make it on their own. Many seedlings did not make it but by planting so many plants in a small area, enough survived to "self-recruit" and establish natural looking patchy plantings in a couple years.

The work of many dedicated volunteers contributed most of the manpower for the planting and continued maintenance of the site. Future plans include a Native American learning garden further down the slope. If you missed the presentation of Lech's talk and would like to review it to learn more about this project you can view our video recording of the presentation at <https://youtu.be/97RQoZYr5wI>.

~ Janet Hoffmann~

## 28 YEARS AGO

Western Hort members gathered on December 9, 1992 to PARTY! “Because we cannot serve alcoholic beverages on school property, and because we had such a good time at our Christmas party last year at the Jennings Pavilion...we have decided to go back there to have our December, *Potluck Christmas Party*. ...next month we will go back to the Loyola School in Los Altos. We found the sound system at Loyola much to our liking and we were delighted to be able to hear again. But for December we need only hear the diner bell. I hope you will join us.”

Planning details for the party included food and gifts: “...The rest of the group may bring his or her favorite potluck dish to share. We shall hope that it is not all dessert... We will have our usual gift exchange. Please wrap your gift (value of \$5.00 or less) if possible and place it on the gift table.”

Other news included a message about the upcoming Board of Director election in January. Still WHS members to this day, Mary Kaye and Judy Wong were two of the names submitted by the nominating committee. (I would like to add my plea for members to volunteer to join the WHS Board of Directors. I truly enjoyed the six years I served. It really didn't take too much time, and it was a great way to get to know other members better. –Nancy)

Plans were already in the works for WHS to create a booth at the “Landscape Garden Show”. A committee was formed that included Sally Slavin, Elizabeth Garbett, Mary Kaye and two others.

Area nurseries were thanked for plant donations to the WHS raffle table during the past year: “Rosendale’s Nursery of Watsonville, Heritage Garden Growers, Suncrest of Watsonville (2 times), Redwood City Nursery, Roger Reynolds of Menlo Park, Baylands Nursery of East Palo Alto.”

I wondered why I couldn't find the November plant notes in either my parent's collection or the binder given to me by Judy Wong, then I re-read the November newsletter. Ahh-haa! “SPECIAL DOUBLE PROGRAM—*Because of this special program there will be no plant discussion.*” It turns out that the regularly scheduled program of the panel of garden experts became a double feature because John Fairey of Yucca Do Nursery, Houston, Texas was a surprise guest of Betsy Clebsch.

~ Nancy Schramm

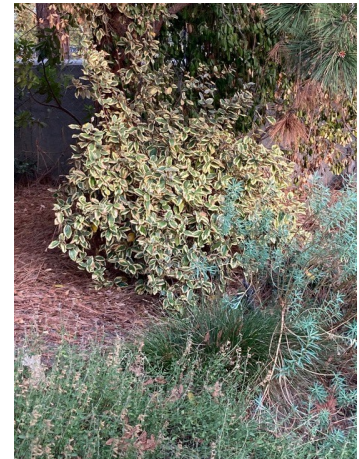
## NOVEMBER PLANT NOTES



*Cuphea micropetala*  
‘Candy Corn’



*Sansevieria kirkii*  
Star Sansevieria



*Elaeagnus pungens* ‘variegata’  
Variegated Silverberry

***Cuphea micropetala* ‘Candy Corn’** - This perennial grows in full sun in well drained soil and gets to be 6' tall x 3' wide. Its glossy leaves contrast nicely with 2.5" bicolor “candy-corn” tubular flowers that start appearing in the summer and can flower year round in our area. They start off yellow and then darken to orange from the base up. Hummingbirds love this plant. You can cut it to 1.5' tall in winter if you want a shorter shrub.

***Sansevieria kirkii* (Star Sansevieria)** - Leslie has a collection of Sansevierias because her house is dark and they do well in low light. It has beautiful mottled leaves which can get to be 6 FEET long but hers are only 2.5' long. She has it growing in a north facing window that is bright enough to get it to bloom. This is the 2nd time it has bloomed for her. The flowers have a slight scent. She doesn't water it much in the winter time because they don't like having soggy feet. She has never fertilized it. However you could dilute an all-purpose fertilizer and apply it a couple of times during its growing season in the summer. It is hardy to 35 degrees.

## PLANT NOTES CONTINUED

*Eleagnus pungens* 'Variegata' (Variegated Silverberry) - This hardy broadleaved evergreen shrub grows in full sun, in well drained soil and can get to be 8' tall and wide. Leslie does not water hers so it's growing slowly and is only 5' tall and wide. She loves the variegated olive green leaves edged in creamy yellow. Turn the leaves over and you will see tiny gold specks against a silvery background. The small creamy white, tubular flowers it produces might have a fragrance but since she doesn't walk by it Leslie doesn't know. Nancy says the berries are edible. Deer resistant, USDA zones 4-24



'Masked Man'  
by Joe Ghio



'Wine and Cheese'  
by Vernon Wood



'Finger Pointing'  
by Joe Ghio



'Premonition of Spring'  
by Garry Knipe

**Carol Dahout**, San Jose, presented four Pacific Coast Iris Hybrids

We're lucky on the coast that we can grow them since they grow from Washington to Northern California. Carol encouraged members to start growing them and to join an Iris Society to have access to newer varieties that are not commercially available. They grow in full sun to part shade in well drained soil. They require no summer water and should only be watered in the summer if you have very excellent drainage. Otherwise their roots will rot. They come in many jewel toned colors which is fitting because Iris means Rainbow in Greek. Now is the time to plant them.



**Judy Wong**, Menlo Park shares:

*Justicia carnea* (Brazilian Plume Flowers, Blood of Jesus, Flamingo flower or Jacobinia) - This semi deciduous perennial is native to eastern Brazil. It grows in full to part shade (but likes morning sun) in well drained soil with regular water. It gets to be 3-5' tall x 1.5' wide. It starts flowering in the spring when plumes of tubular scented flowers start appearing. Flower colors range from red, orange, purple, yellow, mauve, apricot or white. In the past it was used to treat anemia and when the red flowers were boiled the resultant liquid looked like blood (giving it one of its common names). Judy got two flushes of bloom this year. Sunset recommends it for zones 8, 9, 13-24, H1, H2; elsewhere as annual or indoor/outdoor plant.

*Justicia carnea*  
Brazilian Plume Flower



*Polyxena ensifolia*

*Polyxena ensifolia* This South African bulb is closely related to Lachenalia and in 2004 were transferred to that genus. Found widely distributed in the drier areas of Cape Province, occurring in moist flat areas in clay or sandy soils. Producing a tiny plant with 2 or 3 lance shaped leaves, it is one of Judy's earliest bloomers with delicately scented white, mauve or pink flowers. It grows in full sun with moderate water. The plant produces lots of seeds and it should flower in one or two years following germination. It is summer dormant.

## MORE PLANTS!

*Ursinia anthemoides* 'Solar Fire' - Judy got this easy growing S. African annual from Annie's Annuals. It grows in full sun in well drained soil with regular watering and gets to be 15" tall and wide. It starts flowering in the fall when a mass of 2.5" wide orange flowers which have a purple colored section between the orange disk and ray flowers start appearing. They totally cover the fern like foliage. It is drought tolerant once established and self sows easily.



*Ursinia anthemoides*  
'Solar Fire'

Nancy Schramm shared :

*Ficus carica* 'Jolly Tiger' -

This attractive edible fig originated in Japan. Nancy got it a year ago from an Heirloom Expo participant. She loves variegated plants and this fig's leaves have varying shades of green and cream colors. It will grow in sun to part shade but it is susceptible to sun burn. It can grow to be 15' tall (shorter if grown in pot) and when it's 3 years old it should produce striped or even splotched looking fruit that is tasty. However hers is still in a pot and is only 18" tall, so she has a while to go. She's hoping it stays variegated. If any leaves revert back to green Nancy will prune them out then.

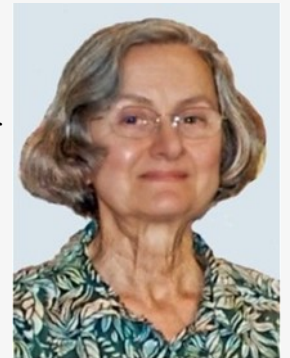


*Ficus carica*  
'Jolly Tiger'

## In Memorium

We would like to honor the memory of long-time Western Hort member, Marcia Fein who lost her battle with cancer this fall. Marcie was a long-time Master Gardener and shared her garden expertise through gardening classes and a series of gardening columns in the Mountain View Times in 2001. She maintained a plot in the Mountain View Willowgate Community Garden for many years where she grew produce for her family and friends. She also helped with the design and installation of the demonstration garden at Eleanor Pardee Gardens in Palo Alto.

Marcie was a life-long advocate for housing access and fairness. Throughout her life she worked for many fair housing non-profits and consulted for government agencies. More recently she was in charge of the landscape plans for the Calderon Avenue co-housing project and supervised the landscape implementation and continued maintenance.



Marcie's many contributions to the community will be remembered and truly missed by those who had the privilege of knowing and working with her. For more complete information about her life and work and on memorial donations go to [In Memory of Marcia Fein](#).



## HORTICULTURAL HAPPENINGS

**Pacific Horticultural Society Digital Classroom**, ongoing and available through their website:

<https://www.pacifichorticulture.org/digital-classroom/>. Our partner organization has this series of gardening videos as well as interesting gardening articles and still publishes their digital magazine every month. We urge everyone to join and help to support their ongoing work.

**Eventbrite Program, Bay Visions 2021 “The Power of Plants will Protect the Bay” Virtual Symposium**  
**January 13<sup>th</sup> 9:30 am**, Slide Show, 10:00 – 11:30 am

There are many reasons to love the Bay: the stunning scenery, countless recreation opportunities on the water or the trails, fresh salmon, oysters and crab, or the opportunity to live close to all this. In order to sustain these attributes, the Bay’s special ecological system needs protection against the risks posed by development, industry and climate change. Tune in on January 13<sup>th</sup> for Bay Visions 2021, an inspiring look at adaption, regeneration, and the powerful role plants play in mitigating the challenges facing San Francisco Bay.

Learn how Bay Area scientists are collaborating on ways to protect and restore the Bay shoreline’s resiliency utilizing plants: underwater, in the wetlands and along the shoreline. The results so far tell an encouraging story. Restoring the tidal marshes provides not only resilience to climate change and protection from flooding, but also productive wildlife habitat and increased recreational access to this waterway gem at the heart of our region.

Karina Nielsen, Professor and Director, Estuary & Ocean Science Center, San Francisco State University, will start the morning program off with an overview of the issues facing the Bay. Building on this framework, Dr. Katharyn Boyer, a force in the global movement to restore shoreline resiliency, will describe her team’s efforts utilizing natural buffers of eelgrass and shell reefs. These natural infrastructures absorb the shock of storm surges as oceans rise. They also act as a nursery for microalgae that feed invertebrates eaten by larger fish, shrimp, crabs and birds.

Diving deeper into the topic of eelgrass, Josie Iselin, author of *The Curious World of Seaweed*, will discuss the vital role of seaweed in maintaining the Bay’s ecosystem while enchanting us with her mesmerizing photos of the ethereal beauty of seaweed. A highly productive keystone species, eelgrass stabilizes sediments, regulates water flow, and provides critical habitat for animals, including commercially important species like clams and migrating waterfowl. Her stories will reveal a rich botanical world that we don’t often see. Explore more and/or buy the book *The Curious World of Seaweed* at [www.josieiselin.com](http://www.josieiselin.com).

Our program will conclude with an up-close look at the native plants being utilized in Bay wetlands restoration efforts, and in Bay Area gardens to increase biodiversity. Diana Benner and Laura Hanson, owners of The Watershed Nursery, specialize in growing native California plants that improve habitat from backyards to the Bay. They will share the nursery’s involvement in large wetlands restoration projects, as well as highlight species to grow in our gardens to provide habitat for birds and beneficial insects.

“There’s a renaissance of restoration going on in the Bay” John Krause, a biologist with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, says. Adaptation and regeneration *are* possible. Register now for the Bay Visions symposium and be inspired.

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

## ***STROLLING AROUND THE INTERNET***

Be sure to check out the **Master Gardener** event site for current happenings in that organization.  
UC Master Gardeners, Santa Clara County, Event Site. <http://mgsantaclara.ucanr.edu/events-calendar/>

Article from Wired Magazine about **Reforestation**, let nature do it or plant it?

<https://www.wired.com/story/is-it-better-to-plant-trees-or-let-forests-regrow-naturally/>

South African flower pollinated by a lizard! This story ties in to what the Cal Hort speaker, Carlos Magdalena, touched on.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/nov/25/is-it-a-bird-is-it-a-bee-no-its-a-lizard-pollinating-south-africas-hidden-flower-aoe>

## ***UPCOMING MEETINGS***

**January 13th: “Riz” Reyes**, Horticulturist, Designer,  
Lecturer. *Houseplants: The Hottest Horticultural Trend*

**February 10th: Toni Gattone**, Author, Blogger, Speaker.  
*You CAN Garden for Life!*

**March 10th: Sue Milliken and Kelly Dodson**, Far Reaches  
Farm, Port Townsend, WA.

**April 14th : Saxon Holt and Nora Harlow**, Summer Dry  
Gardening

<https://www.westernhort.org/speakers-events>

### **Officers and Board Members:**

President: Janet Hoffmann

Vice President: Grace Tsang

Secretary : Leslie Dean

Corresponding Secretary: Laurie Schofield

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

Speaker Program Committee: Leslie Dean (chair),  
Nancy Schramm, Judy Wong, Glenda Jones

Newsletter Editor: Kathy Anberg

### **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](http://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](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 9th**

**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 16th 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